



UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

MOROCCAN NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO

INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION ON THE PRESERVATION OF
POPULAR CULTURAL SPACES
- DECLARATION OF THE ORAL HERITAGE OF MANKIND -
(Marrakech, Maroc, 26-28 June 1997)

FINAL REPORT

**INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION ON THE PRESERVATION
OF CULTURAL SPACES
(Marrakech, Morocco, June 26 - 28, 1997)**

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INTRODUCTION

1. The international consultation of experts on the preservation of cultural spaces took place in Marrakesh, Morocco, from June 26th to 28th 1997. It was organized by UNESCO in cooperation with the Moroccan National Commission for UNESCO. This consultation was part of the follow-up to the *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional and Popular Culture* (UNESCO, 1989) and to the work of Moroccan and international experts on expressions of popular culture in Marrakesh.
2. The objective of the consultation was (i) to examine the interdisciplinary study conducted on Jamaa'el-Fna Square; (ii) to solicit the opinion of experts on the prospect of launching a program on "the oral heritage of humanity"; (iii) to propose appropriate procedures for the launching of such a program (agenda at Appendix I)
3. The documents presented at the consultation also focused on two specific aspects: (a) the actual case of Jamaa'el-Fna Square in Marrakesh and (b) the launching of a possible system to recognize the "oral heritage of humanity" to be funded through extrabudgetary resources. The studies of Jamaa'el-Fna Square had been prepared by a group of Moroccan experts and by the Spanish author Mr. Juan Goytisolo. Furthermore, a proposal to establish a procedure to proclaim certain remarkable cultural spaces as "oral heritage of humanity" had been formulated jointly by the UNESCO Secretariat and by a Canadian heritage lawyer, Mr. Marc Denhez.
4. Twenty nine participants (ministers, experts and observers) from a dozen countries participated in the consultation (list of participants at Appendix II). Five documents from UNESCO (listed at Appendix III) and twelve documents with information from the participants (list at Appendix IV) were also distributed.
5. Eleven foreign specialists (from Brazil, Venezuela, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Lebanon, Pakistan, Vanuatu, Spain, France and Canada) and five Moroccan specialists participated. The participants included two Ministers of Culture from regions whose "oral heritage" is even more important than their "physical heritage". The ministers were H.E. Bernard Zadi Zaourou of Côte d'Ivoire, a writer and specialist in African oral tradition; and H.E. Father Walter Lini of Vanuatu, founder of the country and advocate of traditional culture and folklore. There was also the First Counsel of the Embassy of Guinea in Germany, Professor Namankoumba Kouyaté.
6. This meeting was funded by UNESCO and by the Moroccan National Committee for UNESCO.

OPENING SESSION

7. The consultation was called to order by H.E. Idriss Khalil, Minister of Higher Education, Executive Training & Scientific Research. His gracious welcoming speech underlined the importance which Morocco ascribed to this initiative.
8. The opening address was delivered by Mr. Mohamed Knidiri, Rector of Kadi Ayyad University in Marrakesh. His theme was the historic and artistic contribution of spaces like Jamaa'el-Fna to collective memory. For centuries, according to the Rector, public places squares have represented not only meeting places, but also "centres of expression" for artistic traditions whereby "populations renew their bonds to their own culture."
9. The Rector also mentioned the important role of NGOs, of communities, and of governments (including officials for culture and tourism) ; in his conclusion, he emphasized the necessity of joint action for public recognition of the value of these spaces.
10. Mr. Albert Sasson, the representative of the Director General of UNESCO, also used the example of Jamaa'el-Fna as the starting point for a discussion of the fundamental character of cultural spaces. "This gathering of the interpreters of folklore ... emerged quite spontaneously and survived throughout history; it cannot be replaced by some other artificially-induced event."
11. Mr. Sasson then described UNESCO's experience in the realm of tangible and intangible heritage which are "of universal significance". Despite the great success of the World Heritage List, which recognizes the great monuments of the world's cultural and natural heritage, there was no counterpart for the great accomplishments of intangible heritage. This was a gap that UNESCO had undertaken to fill. However, the task was to find the most appropriate means.
12. Mr. Sasson then described the lead-up and follow-up of the 1989 Recommendation, including the difficulties encountered by the so-called "intellectual property" approach, and by legislative measures. The first step recommended by UNESCO remains a campaign for public awareness, including an inventory of intangible heritage within a given Member State. UNESCO also supports the program entitled "Living Human Treasures." Finally, Mr. Sasson hoped that a program of "Proclamations of the Oral Heritage of Humanity" would induce Member States "to inventory their intangible heritage and to take the measures necessary for its protection."
13. While describing the linkage between cultural spaces and human knowledge, Mr Juan Goytisolo alluded to "the model and the symbol" of Jamaa'el-Fna. Such cultural spaces offer to populations the opportunity to "take the stage and thereby encounter

their own identity.” Furthermore, he said, these popular expressions offer a foundation for a wealth of original art.

14. In response, the Minister of Culture of Côte d’Ivoire, H.E. Bernard Zadi Zaourou, focused on the international importance which was attached to this reexamination of the question of intangible heritage. The Minister revisited that theme in his speech later during the meeting.
15. According to H.E. Father Walter Lini, Minister of Culture of Vanuatu, oral knowledge merits a supportive system comparable to written knowledge. The Vanuatu delegation gave a presentation describing several important cultural activities within the country, and the Minister suggested joint international efforts for the recognition of cultural spaces.
16. At the conclusion of the session, the Moroccan Minister Mr. Khalil emphasized the role which belongs to the population, to governments and to researchers concerning the implementation of the measures necessary for the preservation of these forms of expression.

REVIEW OF THE REPORT ON INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES OF POPULAR CULTURAL EXPRESSION IN JAMAA’EL-FNA SQUARE

17. During the next session, chaired by Mr. Mohammed El-Mustapha Kabbaj, Secretary General of the Moroccan National Commission for UNESCO, Mr. Kabbaj conveyed the opinion of His Majesty Hassan II mentioning the educational value of Jamaa’el-Fna Square and the importance of its vitality. His Majesty also expressed the view that these efforts should not be confined to theoretical discussion. Finally, the Secretary General reiterated the necessity for practical planning based upon a consistent approach.
18. The discussion then turned to the studies conducted by specialists on the subject of Jamaa’el-Fna. The participants had already received a document containing seven chapters outlining the importance of the square and of the threats which it faced. There was unanimous agreement among the experts concerning the exceptional artistic and historical quality of the cultural expression at the square. Mr. Hassan Jallab, Dean of the Arab Language Faculty of Karaouiyne University and Mr. Jaafar Kansoussi, editor, reviewed the history of the square, and of its role as a cultural meeting-place.
19. The urban planner Mr. Rashid El Houda observed that heritage programs generally “do not attach as much importance to the contents as to the container.” The Regional Delegate for Culture, Mr. Mohammed Hassan El Joundi, then outlined his own

experience concerning awareness of the square by the public and by governmental authorities.

20. The commentary by Professor Kouyaté of Guinea described a range of cultural activities, as well as various strategic and procedural options. He suggested that in due course, the appropriate strategy should be built around three questions:
 - (A) What is the role of the bearers of this heritage?
 - (B) How can the transmission of these skills be guaranteed?
 - (C) How can authenticity be conserved?These fundamental questions were also the basis for the professor's speech, which he gave the following day.
21. The commentary of Mr. Georges Condominas, Professor at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences sociales, also emphasized the "concern about effectiveness". Instead of an intellectual game practiced in closed circles, the moment had come, he said, to implement "the science of the specific." In his view, it was also essential to avoid fossilizing cultures via "folklorization", since they are living phenomena.
22. Mr. Daniel Mato, professor at the Central University of Venezuela, also emphasized the evolutionary aspect of popular cultures. He then underlined the importance of apprenticeship as a technique in the revitalization of these cultures.
23. H.E. Barnard Zadi Zaourou and Professor Condominas mentioned the sometimes negative impact of commercial activities such as tourism on popular cultures.
24. H.E. Bernard Zadi Zaourou and Professor Mato expressed support for the suggestion, in the report by the Moroccan experts, to reinforce public awareness among youth by introducing traditional artists and performers to the school population.

COUNTERPARTS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

25. The following session was also chaired by Mr. El El-Mustapha Kabbaj. Mr Michel Jabre, of the Institute for Stage and Audio-Visual Studies in Lebanon, outlined how military destruction had changed an entire way of life. He also mentioned how the threats of modern life can weigh on cultural heritage. He nonetheless offered Lebanon as an important illustration of the possible role of intangible heritage as a method of communication and as a "factor for reconciliation and reunification ."
26. Professor Daniel Mato, whose two articles had been distributed before the meeting, explained the concept of "cultural space" by offering the example of storytellers from his country, Venezuela, and to the risk of isolation encountered by minorities and by women.

27. Professor Mato broached several other themes such as the participation of the bearers of this heritage who have the respect of their peers. Recognition of bearers of this heritage should stem from others like them and from their community. The transmission of this heritage requires not only bearers who are willing to take charge of such transmission, but also of youth which is ready to take up these cultural expressions. Finally, Professor Mato offered an eight-point plan for the implementation of his concept:
- (A) The value of oral heritage, and the skill of the interpreter, are two distinct assets which should not be confused.
 - (B) The recognition of the interpreters should be based upon their reputation within their own cultural community.
 - (C) The term “oral heritage of humanity” is preferable to “oral heritage of mankind.”
 - (D) There should be a research program concerning cultural spaces and traditional forms of expression.
 - (E) Research should proceed via cooperation between experts and the population concerned, without imposing external biases.
 - (F) These populations must play a role in the preservation of their own heritage, and have access to the technical support necessary for this purpose.
 - (G) The technological tools for heritage preservation should be at the disposal of these populations.
 - (H) Any program should foresee exchanges of information and joint training between professionals and the populations concerned.
28. During the following discussion, Mrs Kishwar Naheed, Director-General of the Pakistan National Council for the Arts, asked the following questions:
- (A) What is the role of women?
 - (B) Would the title for these proclamations take account of women?
 - (C) What is the correct response to charlatanism?
- Mr. Jabre asked how to avoid dilution, and particularly, how to avoid repeating the phenomenon of cultural *exclusion* which ravaged Lebanon and which could occur in any other country. Mr. Kouyaté cited the other examples of Liberia and Sierra Leone, and Mr. Condominas observed that even if tangible heritage could be restored, intangible heritage could not - hence the obvious urgency of protective measures. A comprehensive vision at the international level, to respond to all the applicable questions was a long-term project, but there were also measures that could be considered more immediately.
29. According to Mr. Goytisoló, one element in the success of Jamaa’el-Fna was the very absence of monumentality, suggesting that any intervention should be “as light as possible.”
30. Mr. Mato commented on the total absence of any strategy for the protection of the intangible heritage concerned. The current initiative might allow possible plans to

become known. Finally, the mere recording of this heritage is not an adequate alternative, because various cultural expressions (such as storytelling) rely upon the interaction between the interpreter and the audience.

31. Discussion continued into the third session (on the same topic), chaired by the Minister of Culture of Vanuatu. The first speaker was Mr. Fernando Augusto Gonçalves, professor at the University of Olinda in Brazil. His presentation described oral traditions in Brazil, notably puppet shows and other such forms, as a microcosm of the variety of folkloric expression which deserves UNESCO's support at the international level. "This is the only way that succeeding generations will have the opportunity to dive into this magical and compelling universe, to discover it, and to reveal to the future the greatness of their country."
32. In describing the cultural spaces of his country, Professor Kouyaté of Guinea focused on examples of the conservation of songs and other traditions while linking them to their educational role (sosso-bala, for example). The importance of cultural spaces, he believed, is based upon the "mutual genesis of cultural spaces and the folkloric expression that occurs there. This relationship represents a permanent mutual strengthening."
33. Professor Kouyaté also suggested to UNESCO a strategy in three steps:
 - (A) A campaign for public awareness on the importance of inventories of cultural spaces and of local traditions;
 - (B) Refinement of programs based upon comparative analysis at the regional and international levels;
 - (C) Nomination of an international scientific committee on this subject.
34. The next speaker was H.E. Bernard Zadi Zaourou, Minister of Culture of Côte d'Ivoire. The minister described the ethnic diversity of his country, while mentioning that certain forms of expression are common to numerous contexts (masks, procedures for traditional justice, poetry dealing with daily problems etc.). These activities often congregate at the entrance to the village, and sacred woods also play a role in the transmission of skills. There could be certain kinds of cultural space which are common to several countries.
35. Mr. Souleymane Coulibaly, Director of the Street Arts Festival of Grand-Bassam in Côte d'Ivoire, explained that even if the Festival is still somewhat experimental, it should be helpful in training new interpreters. Furthermore, its objective was specifically "to organize a popular festival without extensive financial and technical support, ... (so as) to provide access to folklore on behalf of all." The success of the Festival suggests that this could be an example that would interest other countries which want to capitalize on their popular culture.

36. Mrs. Kishwar Naheed, Director-General of the Pakistan National Council for the Arts, described the context for cultural practices in her country, as well as the forms of cultural expression which occur around sacred places. These forms of expression, as well as traditions at the village level, are threatened by the impact of media. Public places are also losing their role as cultural crossroads, and the interpreters of traditional arts can no longer make a living as they could in the past. A renewal of public attachment to traditional culture could have beneficial effects at several levels, including the revitalization of these spaces.
37. The following session, on the same subject, was chaired by the Minister of Culture of Côte d'Ivoire. The next speaker was H.E. Father Walter Lini, Minister of Culture of Vanuatu. He commented on the presentation, by his delegation, of two videos which underline the importance of cultural spaces in Vanuatu. Finally, the minister reiterated the formal commitment of his country toward international efforts in support of oral heritage.
38. Professor Georges Condominas offered several examples of oral heritage and cultural spaces, including those of Southeast Asia. He focused on the continuity of Jamaa'el-Fna Square, and recommended a typology in relation to such continuity not only for sites like Jamaa'el-Fna, but also for "more modest" social spaces which are particularly threatened. Finally, he recommended the dissemination of a typology on oral heritage, adapted to its evolution over time.
39. The discussions gave rise to many ideas concerning:
- (A) The principal characteristics of oral heritage:
- ◆ Oral heritage is as important as tangible heritage, as a guardian of the memory of humanity.
 - ◆ Oral heritage, composed of various forms of cultural and folkloric expression which are performed and transmitted orally, is fragile and threatened with disappearance.
 - ◆ Oral heritage is a living phenomenon in constant evolution. It is important to be aware, as well, of oral cultures which are being newly created.
 - ◆ The oral heritage under consideration is expressed either in public or private places, or in urban or rural settings. In fact, it was noted that female interpreters tend to be more important in private and rural settings than in public and urban settings.
- (B) Apprenticeship and transmission:
- ◆ Traditional apprenticeship and transmission for the skills involved in oral heritage should be studied attentively before launching protective measures.
 - ◆ It is important to respect the traditional social structures within which this apprenticeship and transmission occur.

(C) Protective measures:

- ◆ It is essential to undertake the necessary measures to protect oral cultural expressions from undue commercial pressure and international tourism. “Folklorization” in response to the demands of international tourism would cause paralysis of authentic forms.
- ◆ The impetus and integral participation of the communities concerned are essential for the undertaking of protective measures. In that context, the Moroccan experts recommended creation of an NGO or of an association of “Friends of Jamaa’el-Fna Square”, and that recommendation was strongly supported.

PROCEDURES TO PROCLAIM ORAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY

40. After comparing the measures already undertaken for the tangible heritage with the current situation of intangible heritage, Mr. Marc Denhez, a Canadian lawyer, presented a working paper concerning the proposal for “proclamations of the oral heritage of humanity” and for a fund for intangible heritage (Appendix V). Mr. Denhez then invited the comments and suggestions of the participants.
41. On the model of the World Heritage List, UNESCO would confer the title of “oral heritage of humanity” to certain remarkable cultural spaces.
- (A) These cultural spaces could be defined as “locations where cultural activities occur, having the characteristic of shifting over time and whose existence depends on the presence of these forms of cultural expression.”
- (B) The new proposed program would achieve this objective without creating a new convention or amending an existing convention.
- (C) The principal goal would be to encourage governments, municipalities, NGOs and local communities to undertake activities to identify, preserve and promote their oral heritage.
- (D) The selection of cultural spaces would be based on two criteria:
- (i) exceptional universal value; and
 - (ii) organizational criteria, i.e. action plan.
- (E) In order for the program to have an impact on Member States, it appears essential to link it to a Fund or Prize, to reward notable achievements in the field of traditional culture consistent with the objectives of this new program.
42. Further suggestions were offered by the participants. Should there be a comparison between social spaces? Should the criteria also specify tolerance, multiculturalism and the role of women? What is the role of local NGOs in nominations and as potential

recipients? Should there be insistence on the continuity or permanence of cultural expression within the cultural space? If it is acknowledged that cultural spaces may move, does that open the possibility of involuntary displacement or erosion of cultural spaces like Jamaa'el-Fna? Is there a distinction between sacred spaces and lay spaces, and between urban spaces and those in the countryside? Those kinds of questions were postponed until the final session, when Mr. Sasson explained how they could be handled.

43. On the other hand, it was possible to proceed immediately to several amendments which were made to the working paper. Furthermore, since the purpose of the consultation was to provide UNESCO with a mandate for the eventual creation of a *jury* which would handle proclamations of the oral heritage of humanity, Mr. Denhez explained that the present meeting did not need to finalize an exhaustive definition of oral heritage (or of cultural spaces): deliberations on that subject could continue within the jury when the latter was established.

CONCLUSION

44. During the final session, chaired by Mr. Albert Sasson representing the Director General of UNESCO, the discussion of the working paper concerning proclamations of the oral heritage of humanity reached the following conclusions: it is necessary to confer on UNESCO the immediate mandate of putting this system into operation, even if the procedures and technology of this initiative require ongoing consideration over the long term.
45. The initiative can be launched by a Member State of UNESCO and must be submitted to the General Conference for approval. Mr. Kabbaj expressed the hope that for this purpose, Morocco would draft a persuasive and logical proposed resolution, which would earn the political support of the international community. Mr. Sasson observed that the preliminary step, which consisted in obtaining an international expert consensus on the urgency of this initiative, had now been taken at this meeting.
46. The discussion turned to the Recommendation to flow from the meeting. After a series of amendments dealing principally with format, the Recommendation (Appendix VI) was adopted.
47. Mr. Mato then suggested that special recognition be given to the forms of cultural expression at Jamaa'el-Fna Square (the "halqas"), and that the special contribution of the Square (as a meeting place) to the development of strategies also be recognized (Appendix VII). Mrs. Naheed asked the organizers to arrange for a more visible role for women in the future, and also to favour local dances as opposed to imported ones. In response Mr. Kabbaj explained what occurred at Jamaa'el-Fna Square and the position of his National Commission on the subject.

48. The Rector of Kadi Ayyad University brought the consultation to a conclusion by summarizing its principal themes and by thanking the individuals who helped make the meeting possible.



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A G E N D A

1. Opening sitting
2. Examination of the report on the interdisciplinary studies of the cultural and popular events on Djamâa-El-Fna square, Marrakech, Morocco
3. Presentation of examples of places similar to Djamâa-El-Fna square
4. Proposal of appropriate procedures for the launching of a programme on the oral heritage of mankind
5. Conclusions and recommendations



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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

COMMISSION NATIONALE MAROCAINE POUR L'UNESCO

CONSULTATION INTERNATIONALE SUR LA PRESERVATION
DES ESPACES CULTURELS POPULAIRES
- DECLARATION DU PATRIMOINE ORAL DE L'HUMANITE -
(Marrakech, Maroc, 26-28 juin 1997)

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INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION ON THE PRESERVATION OF
POPULAR CULTURAL SPACES
- DECLARATION OF THE ORAL HERITAGE OF MANKIND -
(Marrakech, Maroc, 26-28 June 1997)

WORKING PAPER ON A PROPOSED SYSTEM
TO HONOUR "CULTURAL SPACES" WITH REMARKABLE
INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

by Marc Denhez

Although there is a World Heritage List to honour the world's **tangible** immovable heritage of universal significance, there is no direct counterpart for the world's **intangible** heritage. There were many reasons for this, including the difficulty in applying a legal framework like the *World Heritage Convention* to the realities of such oral cultural expression.

Rather than attempt a new or amended Convention (which could take years), a prospective alternative is to recognize intangible heritage via a “**Proclamation of the Oral Heritage of Humanity.**” The suggested strategy is as follows.

OBJECTIVE: The intent is not only

- to **honour** exceptional examples of oral heritage (i.e. traditional culture),
- to **raise awareness** of the richness and diversity of the world's intangible heritage, but also
- to **encourage governments, municipalities, non-governmental organizations (“NGOs”) at the international, national and local levels and communities to undertake actions and action plans for the identification, preservation and revitalization of that heritage.**

TARGETS AND DEFINITIONS: The mechanism is to honour “**cultural spaces**”. A “cultural space” is not necessarily a specific definable piece of territory *per se*, because it can *shift* in location (for its own purposes) from time to time (and sometimes from day to day). A “**cultural space**” is where cultural activities can occur, and whose existence depends on the presence of the activities themselves.

The strategy is to approximate, as much as possible, what is already being done by UNESCO in other fields. For instance, UNESCO administers

- the World Heritage List, which **honours** great sites of immovable heritage (and, through the World Heritage Fund, provides financial assistance, as described later); and
- prize programs which **encourage** actions (and action plans) for other features of culture, ecology, world understanding, etc. (e.g. the Higashiyama Fund for the Prize for the Promotion of the Arts, the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, the Sultan Qaboos Prize for Environmental Preservation, the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education, the Félix Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize etc.).

Since the present initiative intends to honour cultural spaces, raise international awareness and encourage action plans, it is not surprising that it combines features of the World Heritage List, the World Heritage Fund and of the prize programs, as described later in this working paper.

In a way roughly similar to the World Heritage List, the new program would focus on “cultural spaces” (albeit without a necessary relation to geographic coordinates, for the reason above). The program would honour cultural spaces in which there was an exceptional **concentration** of oral heritage, and/or in which there was an **exceptional oral cultural tradition**.

As in the case of the World Heritage List, the criterion would be “**universal significance**” (see Annex).

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The definition of “oral heritage” would be drawn *verbatim* from the *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore (1989)*. Otherwise, many of the procedural aspects mirror (on the international level) what UNESCO has already recommended (at the national level) in its “*Living Human Treasures*” *Guidelines*. For example, the latter *Guidelines* recommend a focus on the bearers of tradition and on training, relevant criteria, and the possibility of cancellation over time in the event of non-compliance; these features are repeated in the annexed draft Statutes for this program.

TITLES: The cultural spaces themselves would be titled “**Masterpieces of the Oral Heritage of Humanity**”. An emblem can be developed in due course.

The proposed program also foresees naming important features of the program after sponsors (e.g. awards, if that is their wish) as is described later in this paper.

A FUND FOR INTANGIBLE HERITAGE: Although tangible heritage has access to monetary resources that signatory States established at UNESCO (the World Heritage Fund), to be as effective as the World Heritage List, there has been no direct counterpart for intangible heritage. Therefore, if UNESCO wishes the above system of Proclamations to be as effective as the World Heritage List, UNESCO could develop a monetary fund for intangible heritage. This would be based on extra-budgetary resources (notably international philanthropy), on the model of several other funds now administered by UNESCO (e.g. for the promotion of the arts).

The **name** of this fund is being left open for now, to allow UNESCO the freedom to name it according to the **wishes of sponsors**, which have yet to be determined. For example, if sponsors would wish the fund to be used for one or more prizes, the fund could be named after the prizes — or in honour of any other appropriate name agreeable to the sponsors. In the interim, this document will use the working name of “Fund/Prize”.

The proceeds (but not the capital) of the above Fund/Prize shall be used by UNESCO in pursuit of the objectives of the above *Recommendation* and in accordance with the wishes of sponsors, to be discussed by UNESCO with them.

NOMINATIONS: Rather than the elaborate procedures of the World Heritage List (which take up fully 15 pages of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention), it is suggested that UNESCO follow the simpler model of its award programs (which typically take up 1-2 pages). The appended draft corresponds to the wording of the Statutes of several such award programs. In order to draw the *governments* of Member States more intensively into the field of intangible heritage, it is proposed that nominations be made by

- States, or
- intergovernmental organizations.

Nominations could also be made by Non-Governmental Organizations (“NGOs”) with UNESCO consultative status, all in consultation with the country’s National Commission of UNESCO.

TWO FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES FOR APPLICATIONS: Each nomination would focus on two specific components:

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- a) the merits of the **cultural space itself**, and
- b) the merits of an *Action Plan* which details how the oral heritage will be protected and promoted (including how the **recipient of any award will apply the proceeds** for same, if such is the case).

In other words, **this is not just a recognition system for good cultural spaces: this is a system to honour cultural spaces which have a good plan for preservation and promotion.**

EVALUATION PROCEDURE: It is proposed that the nominations be judged by an **impartial Jury** to be selected by UNESCO. However, since it is too early to predict

- the **volume** of nominations, or
- the **kind of oral cultural expression** on which these nominations might focus,

one cannot yet predict the exact quantity and quality of expert work which will be required on the Jury. Accordingly, it is proposed that the **number and composition** of the Jury be left to the **discretion of UNESCO** for now, to be determined *ad hoc*.

CRITERIA: Subject to the modifications mentioned above (notably pertaining to the *plan*), the proposed criteria (appended) are basically a synthesis of those of the World Heritage List and of the Living Human Treasures Guidelines.

PROTOCOL: It is proposed that the Proclamations of the Oral Heritage of Humanity (with any accompanying award, if such is the case) be made by the Director General of UNESCO (on the advice of the Jury, and with the consent of the State in which the cultural space exists).

PERIODICITY: Although it would be desirable to make these Proclamations regularly every one or two years approximately, it is suggested that UNESCO should retain a certain flexibility in timing (for the reason e.g. that if Proclamations are eventually accompanied by an award, the periodicity may vary according to funding. The amount of any award would also depend on funding. It is expected that award money, if such were the case would not be paid to winners in a lump sum, but in **installments** over several years).

FOLLOW-UP: Since the Proclamation is being made, at least partially, in honour of the *Action Plan*, it is essential to assure that this plan is pursued. It is proposed:

- that the recipient enter into a binding contract to that effect,
- that like listings on the World Heritage List, a Proclamation could be formally **rescinded** if elementary conditions were not met,
- that any award payment, if such is the case, be staggered over time (e.g. 5 years), and
- that the contract reserve the right for UNESCO to discontinue further payments on any award, if such is the case, in the event that certain specified circumstances make its continuance improper.

ADMINISTRATION AND FUNDING: As mentioned earlier, size and composition of the Jury can be determined later by UNESCO *ad hoc*. For working purposes, one may presume a three-person Jury, at the outset plus an ongoing Secretariat of one person-year, devoted primarily to **publicity/liaison** for the program. Ideally, all relevant expenses would be covered by the

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Fund/Prize. Rules for the investment and management of that Fund/Prize could again follow the precedent of similar accounts at UNESCO.

A N N E X

Statutes for Proclamations of the Oral Heritage of Humanity and for the Fund/Prize for Intangible Heritage

1. Purpose

- (a) The purpose of the Proclamation is to recognize to cultural spaces where there is an outstanding concentration of intangible cultural heritage and oral traditions. These spaces would be **“proclaimed” to be “Masterpieces of the Oral Heritage of Humanity.”** This purpose includes **raising awareness generally** of intangible heritage and its importance.
- (b) The Proclamations would also be made to encourage outstanding contributions by individuals, groups of individuals, institutes or organizations in the management, preservation or promotion of the relevant cultural heritage and oral traditions consistent with the policies, aims and objectives of UNESCO, and in relation to the Organization's programmes in this field, notably the follow-up to the 1989 *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore*.
- (c) For the purposes of this Proclamation, “oral heritage” and “cultural heritage” are defined in the same way as “folklore or traditional and popular culture” in the above *Recommendation*, namely **“the totality of tradition-based creations of a cultural community, expressed by a group or individuals and recognized as reflecting the expectations of a community in so far as they reflect its cultural and social identity; its standards and values are transmitted orally, by imitation or by other means. Its forms are, among others, language, literature, music, dance, games, mythology, rituals, customs, handicrafts, architecture and other arts.”**
- (d) For the purposes of this Proclamation, a “cultural space” is defined as the space at which cultural activities occur, with the characteristic that its location may be variable from time to time, according to its own needs, and that the existence of the space is therefore dependent on the presence of the activities themselves.
- (e) In parallel with the above system of Proclamations, UNESCO shall create a capital account with the interim title of **“The Fund/Prize for Intangible Heritage” (“the Fund/Prize”)**, with proceeds to advance the oral heritage of humanity.
- (f) When, in the opinion of UNESCO, the Fund/Prize has the resources to do so, the Fund/Prize may be used to support a monetary Award system to accompany Proclamations or for such other purposes that advance the oral heritage of humanity, and particularly those sites which

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have been proclaimed above. An Award system, if such is the case, would be announced by the Director General.

2. Names

- (a) Cultural spaces which are recognized under the present Statutes will be referred to as having been **“proclaimed Masterpieces of the Oral Heritage of Humanity.”**
- (b) The Fund/Prize may be renamed by UNESCO at any time, in its discretion, in honour of sponsors and/or in accordance with sponsors’ wishes.
- (c) Any award system announced by the Director General under section 1(e) above may be named, in UNESCO’s discretion, in honour of sponsors and/or in accordance with sponsors’ wishes.

3. Periodicity

- (a) The Proclamation(s) shall be announced (every one or two years) by the Director-General on the recommendation of the Jury, at a public ceremony to be held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, or such other location as the Director-General chooses.
- (b) In a given year in which a Proclamation would normally be made, the Jury (defined below) reserves the right to recommend no such Proclamation if, in its discretion, it finds that no applications sufficiently met the Criteria.
- (c) If and when a monetary award system is announced under Section 1(e) above, the Jury may decide, in its discretion, to make a given award over time, in periodic payments not to exceed a period of five years.

4. Selection Process

- (a) The selection of cultural spaces to be proclaimed Masterpieces of the Oral Heritage of Humanity shall be made by a Jury whose number and selection shall be determined by UNESCO.
- (b) The Jury may adopt its own rules of procedure for the selection of cultural spaces. The decisions of the Jury should normally be taken unanimously; if the Jury does not reach unanimity in favour of a given nomination submitted, it should take its decision by a majority of the members present.
- (c) The Jury shall pursue its mandate irrespective of any consideration of nationality, race, sex, language, profession, ideology or religion of the individual or individuals concerned.
- (d) In the event of any award announced under Section 1(e), the award may be awarded only once to any individual, group of individuals, institute or organization.

(e) Cultural spaces within the Member State of a sitting Jury Member may not be considered.

5. Nomination of Candidates

Candidates for the Proclamation shall be proposed to the Director-General of UNESCO

- by governments of Member States,
- by intergovernmental organizations or
- by appropriate Non-Governmental Organizations (“NGOs”) which have consultative status with UNESCO,

in consultation with the respective National Commissions for UNESCO, each of which may make one nomination in any biennium.

6. Criteria

(a) **Proclamations of the Oral Heritage of Humanity** shall be announced by the Director General on the recommendation of the Jury, as based upon the following criteria.

(b) There are **two sets of Criteria of equal weight**, to be applied by the Jury to nominations:

- Cultural Criteria, and
- Organizational Criteria.

(i) Cultural Criteria:

Cultural spaces which are proclaimed Masterpieces of the Oral Heritage of Humanity must be of outstanding universal value, by virtue of

A. the **concentration** of oral heritage that assemble there; **and /or**

B. An **oral heritage of outstanding universal value** from an historical, aesthetic, sociological, ethnological, anthropological linguistic or literary point of view.

In assessing the universal value of the intangible heritage involved, the Jury shall consider:

1. Its **authenticity**,
2. Its **cultural and social role** to the community concerned today,
3. Its **creative** value,
4. Its **testimony** to a cultural tradition and history of the **community** concerned,
5. Its **technique** or know how,
6. Its **skill**,
7. Its **distinctive** characteristics, and
8. The **danger** of its disappearing.

(ii) Organizational Criteria:

Nominations, for cultural spaces to be proclaimed Masterpieces of the Oral Heritage of Humanity, shall be accompanied by:

A. An **Action Plan**, appropriate to the cultural space concerned, outlining the measures foreseen over the next decade for the preservation, support and promotion of the oral

heritage. This Action Plan shall provide a complete explanation of the measures proposed, and how they would be implemented.

- B. An explanation of the **linkage** between the Action Plan and the measures foreseen in the *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore*, as well as the other important UNESCO objectives including tolerance, multiculturalism, the role of women and the culture of peace.
- C. An explanation of measures to empower the **community concerned** to preserve and promote its own oral heritage.
- D. The name of responsible parties, at the community and/or government in question, who are prepared to enter into a **binding contract** with UNESCO, assuring that the future use of the cultural space will be consistent with that described in the nomination.
- E. If and when any award is announced under Section 1(e), the nomination would also be accompanied by a detailed outline of **who is being nominated to receive** the award, the credentials of the proposed recipient as they relate to the support of oral heritage, and how the **recipient will apply the proceeds** of the award in support of the Action Plan.

In assessing the appropriateness of the Action Plan, the Jury will consider:

1. The **mandate** of public authorities and of NGOs in assuring the protection and transmission of the relevant cultural values as described above;
2. The arrangements to **raise awareness** of the value of this heritage and the importance of its preservation among people belonging to the **community** concerned;
3. The **role** assigned to the **community** concerned;
4. The role assigned to the **bearers** of the heritage targeted;
5. The arrangements with the local **community** to **preserve** and promote this heritage;
6. The arrangements to **record** this heritage and make such information available for cultural research domestically and internationally;
7. The arrangements, with the bearers of this heritage, to **advance** the relevant skills, techniques or cultural expressions; and
8. The arrangements, with the bearers, to **pass on** the relevant technique, know-how, skills or cultural expressions to trainees and/or youth generally.
9. Except in unusual circumstances, the Jury will give preference to applications wherein the proposed recipient of an award (if such is the case) is a local **NGO**, whether or not with UNESCO consultative status.

- (c) In due course, the consent of the State, in which the cultural space is located, should be secured before announcement of the Proclamation.

7. Administration

- (a) The work of the Jury shall be supported by a permanent Secretariat to be named by UNESCO.

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(b) Administration of the Fund/Prize shall be governed by separate Financial Regulations.



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(Marrakech, Maroc, 26-28 juin 1997)

RECOMMANDATION

**Consultation Internationale sur la préservation
des espaces culturels populaires
(Marrakech, 26-28 juin 1977)**

Recommandation

Préambule

Nous, les participants à la "Consultation Internationale sur la préservation des espaces culturels populaires" organisée à Marrakech du 26 au 28 juin 1977 par l'UNESCO et la Commission Nationale Marocaine pour l'Education, la Science et la Culture,

1. Félicitant le groupe des spécialistes marocains ayant élaboré le document intitulé : "Les arts populaires de Marrakech : oralité et musique à Jamaa'El-Fna" qui a permis le développement d'un nouveau concept concernant le "Patrimoine oral de l'humanité" ;

2. Considérant que le patrimoine oral, composé de diverses expressions culturelles populaires réalisées et / ou transmises oralement, telles que les traditions orales, les musiques, les danses, les arts du spectacle populaires, les savoir-faire de la médecine et de l'artisanat traditionnels, sans négliger les cultures orales en formation, fait partie du patrimoine universel de l'humanité;

3. Reconnaissant que le patrimoine oral, pour de nombreuses populations, constitue la source essentielle d'une identité profondément ancrée dans l'histoire;

4. Considérant que, à l'époque où la globalisation mondiale de la culture s'accélère, la préservation du patrimoine oral spécifique à chaque communauté doit contribuer au maintien des cultures locales dont le renforcement est indispensable pour perpétuer la diversité culturelle de l'Humanité. Cette diversité même est le préalable au développement du multiculturalisme considéré comme l'une des stratégies pour la construction de la paix dans le monde : mission principale de l'UNESCO et des Nations Unies.

5. Prenant en compte le fait que l'étude du patrimoine oral permet de comprendre le mode de pensée traditionnel, le fonctionnement des sociétés locales et les méthodes traditionnelles de production et que cette étude contribue par conséquent à préparer des stratégies pour un véritable développement humain durable;

6. Soulignant le rôle oral en tant que source d'inspiration pour la créativité contemporaine;

7. Reconnaissant la nature du patrimoine oral qui ne peut survivre que par la transmission orale et gestuelle de génération en génération, ou grâce aux enregistrements sous forme tangible;

8. Préoccupés par le sort du patrimoine qui est menacé de disparition par la domination de la modernisation de la vie socio-économique et par le progrès technique de la communication et des médias;

9. Affirmant la nécessité et l'urgence de défendre, de sauvegarder, et de transmettre le patrimoine oral;

10. Reconnaissant le rôle essentiel des détenteurs du savoir-faire relatif aux expressions orales, seuls acteurs capables d'assurer la véritable survie de ce patrimoine;

11. Soulignant l'importance de respecter les méthodes traditionnelles de transmission du savoir-faire et la nécessité de les prendre en compte lors de l'élaboration de stratégies pour encourager leur transmission;

12. Rappelant qu'il relève de la responsabilité des générations présentes à l'égard des générations futures de sauvegarder le patrimoine oral encore existant de l'humanité;

13. Convaincus de la nécessité de sensibiliser les gouvernements, les organisations non-gouvernementales, les municipalités et surtout les communautés concernées, à la valeur de leur patrimoine oral ainsi qu'à l'urgence et à l'importance de le sauvegarder et de le revitaliser;

14. Convaincus que les autorités doivent s'engager à entreprendre des actions en faveur de la sauvegarde et de la revitalisation du patrimoine oral, notamment par l'introduction de programmes relatifs à ce patrimoine dans le curricula d'éducation formelle ainsi que dans les médias,

15. Rappelant que l'Acte Constitutif de l'UNESCO prévoit une aide au maintien, à l'avancement et à la diffusion du savoir relatif à la conservation et à la protection du patrimoine universel;

16. Tenant compte des dispositions de la Recommandation sur la sauvegarde de la culture traditionnelle et populaire adoptée en 1989 par la Conférence Générale à sa 25ème session;

17. Exprimant notre approbation pour le programme de l'UNESCO "système des Trésors humains vivants" qui encouragera la transmission du savoir-faire des formes culturelles traditionnelles et populaires;

18. Nous appelons la communauté internationale à reconnaître la valeur du patrimoine oral, le rôle qu'il joue pour la communauté internationale, nationale et locale, son droit à l'existence et à être protégé, ainsi que l'urgence de le sauvegarder et de le revitaliser;

19. Invitons l'UNESCO à mettre en place un mécanisme pour la proclamation des "Chefs d'oeuvre du Patrimoine oral de l'humanité",

20. sollicitons des Etats membres de l'UNESCO ainsi que les mécènes à constituer un fonds ou un prix en vue de renforcer les actions de sauvegarde du patrimoine proclamé.