11-1371036-000131-10

ISSN : 1975-3586

International Journal of Intangible Heritage

Vol.14 2019

Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism
National Folk Museum of Korea

ICOM international council of museums Korea Rep.

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

http://www.ijih.org

The *International Journal of Intangible Heritage* is a refereed academic and professional English language journal dedicated to promote understanding of all aspects of intangible heritage worldwide, and to the communication of research and examples of best practice.

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Published on 28 June, 2019
Government Publication Registration Number: 11-1371036-000131-10
ISSN: 1975-3586, E-ISSN: 1975-4019

Accreditation

The *International Journal of Intangible Heritage* has been accredited by IBBS (International Biography of the Social Sciences) 2007, A&HCI (Arts and Humanities Citation Index) 2010, Scopus 2011, MLAIB (Modern Language Association International Bibliography) 2011, BAS (Bibliography Asian Studies) 2011.

The views expressed in the articles presented are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the editors, the editorial board or advisory committee, nor of the National Folk Museum of Korea.

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Foreword



It is a great privilege for the National Folk Museum of Korea (NFMK), to announce the recent publication of Volume 14 of the *International Journal of Intangible Heritage.* Since its inception, the *Journal* has consistently served as a medium to consolidate diverse research work on intangible cultural heritage (ICH) from around the world, and is therefore dedicated to preserving the intrinsic value and meaning of ICH as well as to promoting essential research and social activities to sustain it. The *Journal* was successfully indexed by the International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS), the Korean Citation Index (KCI), the Arts and Humanities Citation Index (A&HCI), Scopus 2011 and other reputable scholarly journals, both domestic and international, thus increasing public confidence in the *Journal* worldwide.

The 14th volume contains eleven articles, carefully evaluated and chosen - all of which go well beyond mere case studies on ICH by providing viable suggestions for proactively safeguarding ICH in today's ever-changing environment. The articles discussing the utilisation of virtual reality and other relevant digital technologies as a way to safeguard ICH provide good examples. It is noteworthy, moreover, that the research article on the preservation of *Pansori*, a Korean genre of musical storytelling performed by a singer and a drummer, was produced and submitted by an Irish researcher, while the memory of social housing in Hong Kong is the subject of research by Canadians. This is a clear demonstration of our commitment to the dissemination of inclusive research and mutual understanding. As in the examples mentioned above, significant efforts from both technological and cosmopolitan perspectives have been made to safeguard intangible heritage.

We at the NFMK consistently seek ways to use the research articles on ICH productively. In addition to strengthening the bonds of cultural diversity within regional communities, etc., we aim to establish a network hub through which productive communications can take place among locals, ICH inheritors and others.

At NFMK, we are currently in the process of upgrading our official website to more effectively serve readers, practitioners, policy makers, and researchers worldwide. The enhanced website will eventually serve as an online cultural space in which researchers from diverse backgrounds will greatly benefit from sharing and engendering ideas with others. As an established research institution of ICH, we are dedicated to continually and faithfully serving its critical missions by sustaining collaborative efforts with international institutions such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the International Council of Museums (ICOM).

Finally, we are indebted to the researchers for selflessly sharing their research findings with us, and to the editor-in-chief, Alissandra Cummins, for taking the time to review and select the articles for the current publication. We are equally indebted to others – including the advisory council, the editorial board, the text editor and staff members - for their enduring assistance and wisdom. We want to take this opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation to them.

We hope the *Journal* will provide a valuable opportunity for many others to truly appreciate the value and importance of ICH.

Yoon Sung-Yong
Director-General
National Folk Museum of Korea (NFMK)

Editorial



From the historical to the contemporary, from the rural to the urban, from the local to the global, from the commonplace to the ceremonial, the eleven articles presented in this 14th volume of the *International Journal of Intangible Heritage,* provide a multiplicity of perspectives, disciplines and locations, examining the importance of addressing cultural heritage beyond the boundaries set by fixed administrative categories. 2019 is the UN's International Year of Indigenous Languages which aims to raise awareness of the world-wide endangerment of Indigenous languages, and to establish a link between language, development, peace, and reconciliation; several authors have referenced this issue, both directly and indirectly. They all speak to some aspect of the ongoing transmission of traditional knowledge(s) and practice(s) safeguarding against such language losses through continual communication - whether verbal, visual or virtual.

In ***Wangkarra*** the authors present an insightful study of a 'Living Heritage' with their intimate examination of the verbal arts of the Ngaanyatjarra people of Australia's Western Desert. While they highlight the fragility of Indigenous languages in Australia, and the measures being taken to preserve them, they also identify *...a tension between the need to safeguard intangible cultural heritage through collecting, recording and archiving, and ... ensuring their transmission to future generations*. However, language is only one part of a spectrum of Indigenous communication practices in the Ngaanyatjarra lands, including sand-drawing, painting, respect registers and respect rituals. The paper details the rich oral traditions of the region and explains the Indigenous concept of *tjukurrpa* (the Dreaming) in which ancestral beings created the natural environment and imbued it with spiritual values. These values are protected by story and ritual.

Their project aims to safeguard Western Desert verbal arts through documentation, recording, archiving and repatriating the *Memories of past practices* [which] *continue to live on in everyday life: in ceremonies; in the practice of traditional arts; in media and in digital archives*. Despite the impact of the majority Anglo-culture, Ngaanyatjarra cultural traditions survive and are now being transmitted in new narrative forms such as artworks in acrylic paints, contemporary songs and sounds, new media and digital technologies. The project has repatriated sand stories to the community using a very 21st century device, the iPad, on which films and drawings by ten young women *have injected new life into this traditional narrative form*. This paper is a superb exposition of safeguarding without fossilising.

This recognition that *people are the vessels for the songs that emanate from the landscape* nevertheless leads the authors to caution against *linguistic essentialism*, a warning which finds resonance in **Preserving *Pansori***. *Pansori* is an archetypal multi-modal Korean form of performance, narrating aspects of the country's history/heritage through dramatic stories in song, text, and action. When it was designated an Important Intangible Asset by the South Korean government in 1964, the style of performance became standardised and all performances were expected to strictly adhere to that

archetype. The author describes how this formal transmission process fossilised the art form, and critiques how this prohibited individual creativity. She confronts a continuing dilemma in the field of ICH safeguarding – the tension between the historical and the contemporary - preserving *pansori* in its original form (*weonhyeong*), as opposed to developing *pansori* into a form of musical theatre (*changgeuk*) to popularise the genre.

The author outlines the historical development of this debate and describes leading protagonists and their arguments; she then analyses the new Act on the Safeguarding and Promotion of Intangible Heritage Properties (2016). This act advocates a clear shift in focus, *changing the principle of preserving and promoting intangible cultural heritage properties to attempting to move towards the combination of the traditional and the contemporary*, thus allowing more creative freedom. In making an analogy with western music, where *only long gone masters are considered part of the canon of Western art music*, the author addresses the problems of a perceived hierarchy of practitioners (*boyuja*) and of the primacy of Seoul over the regions. The jury is still out on the effects that will be wrought by this legal change.

Language, and community engagement with performative traditions, is the foundation of yet another article. The suppression of the different dialects of Shona by Christian missionaries and linguists was undertaken to simplify colonial administration in Southern Africa. The authors of **Living Site, Living Values** assert the Matendera community's determination to celebrate its heritage on its own terms through the co-curation of an annual festival at the archaeological site *...by bringing people into direct contact with their heritage.... it is also about understanding and practising shared authority in heritage conservation and presentation*. In rejecting western traditions of innate significance determined through expert judgement, the authors argue that the community has deliberately decolonised the museum and site of such essentialising narratives. Matendera is thus transformed through community values into a living site as *...a transdisciplinary, transcultural space for critical engagement and dialogue* [showing] *how people make these things their own.*

Asian performance traditions and the language of gesture and movement lie at the heart of **Cross-cultural understanding of Chinese traditional puppetry** which represents an original approach to helping audiences from other cultural backgrounds comprehend traditional arts. As the world increasingly experiences foreign heritage through tourism or travel, and as governments seek to use their nation's heritage in order to enhance their soft power, there is an increasing need for audiences to understand the intangible heritage of others. The authors examine traditional Chinese puppet plays, but one can point to many other cases in which intangible heritage needs explanation and interpretation. Their aim in digitising the ICH focuses on the effective interaction of puppeteer and audience and how this can be achieved; their perspective is innovative in that they present detailed information about the cultural barriers that affect

foreigners' understanding of Chinese puppetry, its language and folk heritage, and seek to solve this by digitising not just the performance of the element, but the various hand gestures which 'speak' to the emotions, traditions and values concerned. They conclude that while digitisation helps, it can never be the whole answer.

The authors of **Dovetailing** reach similar conclusions in another case study on protecting traditional craftsmanship through digitisation, and find themselves similarly engrossed in the subtlety of hand movements as they set out to create a prototype digital instruction resource. Their work begins by establishing the dialogue between ICH and technology, specifically within the domain of traditional craftsmanship. Through an overview and categorisation of all the methods of safeguarding ICH previously published in the *IJIH*, they establish a matrix of current methodologies used in safeguarding traditional crafts, examining and summarising the benefits and limitations of each method. The paper demonstrates the process of digitising the method of making dovetails, including capture, representation and dissemination, and seeks to elucidate and enshrine the key values at the core of this traditional form. Based on close cooperation with a Danish master joiner, the authors enable practitioners to *reflect on their own ICH, to make sure that the data* [disseminated] *is respectfully representing the insiders' views and skills*. As they explain, *traditional joiners were taught through a master-apprentice relationship. The master … did not just teach joinery techniques, but also functioned as a life mentor. The apprentices respected him, and he respected and expressed pride in his apprentices, which in turn taught them to be proud of their work*. Without this pride in craftsmanship, the authors emphasise, there is a risk that traditional techniques needed for conservation of both the form and the manner of its making will be lost.

Similar traditions of master craftsmanship create *szopki* in Cracow. This is the theme of **Christmas Cribs**, in which the author celebrates UNESCO's 2018 inscription of *szopki* on the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. One of Kraków's most popular Christmas traditions, a *szopka* is an idiosyncratic cross between a nativity scene, a gingerbread house, and a dolls' house; these unique structures originally functioned as portable theatres for traditional puppet nativity plays. Today they resemble colourful castles or cathedrals rather than cribs. In an important re-imagining of national identity, the first official Christmas Crib Competition in 1937 re-popularised the craft of making these Christmas cribs, creating ingenious, richly decorated and brightly illuminated extravaganzas inspired by Krakow's architectural marvels.

The meaning of historic/cultural landscapes resides in both their aesthetic qualities and the memories and experiences they embody. The historic landscape is a complex of interwoven expressions of ideas, ideals, ideologies and aspirations, of shifting communities and evolving identities. Three articles in this volume examine landscapes in Europe and Asia, with national and regional legislation and policies playing an important role alongside community engagement or estrangement.

In **Beyond the intangible-tangible binary in rural heritage** the author explores how legislation influences the cultural construct of authenticity in contemporary Spanish heritage. Within the legal framework, values associated with tangible heritage, and principles of integrity and authenticity, are superimposed on intangible cultural expressions. The author asserts that 'static' cultural heritage is affected by continuous manifestations that not only evolve over time, but also depend on different actors and contexts. He thus poses some important questions regarding how fixed criteria are used to understand and classify dynamic cultural expressions: should we now talk of dynamic authenticity? How can we develop a holistic approach to understanding cultural heritage?

A case study in Wanju, South Korea - **(Co-)curating rural traditions and their material culture** - may provide some of the answers in the context of another rural landscape, this time in post-colonial modern Korea. The author stresses the importance of fieldwork in appreciating locally-used or produced domestic artefacts and farming tools repurposed for specific needs. She asserts the need to understand the values of 'cultural materials' (a term she uses to signify both tangible and intangible expressions) as a necessary pre-requisite for preparing and applying safeguarding systems and understanding the dynamics between objects, socio-cultural practices and memories. In this, the input of artefacts' owners is key; *the value of the hidden intangible cultural heritages* [can only] *be derived directly from the residents themselves as they 'curate' their own stories. S*he also asks a critical question: *... because these cultural resources are relatively modern, are we neglecting their safeguarding because they are not old enough?*

Similar concerns underlie **Safeguarding Memory as ICH** which takes an innovative approach in dealing with 'urban ICH'. In responding to UNESCO's emphasis on promoting *education for the protection of natural spaces and places of memory*, the authors consider patterns of public housing in Hong Kong and its impact on the lives of the inhabitants. Through examining the historical development of Hong Kong's social housing estates, a major feature of the territory, the article acknowledges people's ability to derive meaning and identity through their association with (and within) such estates, and with the everyday. The authors propose the adoption of the term 'popular cultural heritage' (synonymous with popular culture) and make a compelling argument for its application to a previously unidentified form of ICH, the lifestyles and culture shared by housing estate inhabitants. This heritage is a potent social agent and is centrally important to social memory, embodying tacit narratives of moral guidance and local participation in shaping the growth of a community's historical civic identity.

In **A History of Separate Initiatives** the author provides a substantial overview of more than a century of institutional efforts in the United States to research, document, safeguard and promote intangible cultural experiences. Despite decades of dedicated initiatives, it is the author's concern that the US, having withdrawn from UNESCO and having never become signatory to its 2003 *Convention*, has excluded itself from the international discourse on safeguarding ICH. He shows the US has a lot to offer in terms of best

practice and scholarly interest in the topic, and wishes to place on record the significant history of such initiatives, both public and private, and the agencies of government at state and national levels providing resources for these endeavours.

The geographical range of the author's survey places equal focus on mainland USA, Alaska and Hawai'i, and on US territories in the Caribbean (Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands), and Pacific territories such as US Samoa, Guam, the Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Such a broad appreciation of the cultural diversity that is encompassed by the term 'United States' is critical at a time when the US administration is actively withdrawing from engagement outside its own borders. The author makes the point that *These expressions collectively form a "kind" of national picture, but they are significantly different in their totality from the kinds of intangible heritage that might be recognised in other countries*. In other words, the sheer size and diversity of the US militates against the identification of *expressions of American culture as a whole*.

Gastronomic heritage elements at UNESCO focuses on the complexity of interpreting concept(s) of food heritage. The author firstly reminds us of Bendix's statement that *Cultural Heritage does not exist, it is made*, and further extrapolates that *It is only post-World War II, from the late 1960s..., that the concept of 'a common heritage of mankind' emerged, shifting the private nature of heritage to the public sphere and attracting international attention*. The author's examination of the issues surrounding the inclusion of culinary traditions as a 'common and collective' category of heritage brings into focus the coloniality of heritage thinking, governance, and practice which continues to inform the functioning of normative instruments. This echoes a major paradigm shift in the evolution of the UNESCO doctrine on cultural heritage, its Eurocentric underpinnings, the concerns with the authorised heritage discourse, and its [gradual] decolonisation. Of the 508 elements of Intangible Cultural Heritage currently inscribed on UNESCO's *Representative List*, less than 4% represent gastronomic heritage. The author highlights the *difficulty, nay the impossibility, of setting the parameters of the category*.

The spirit of UNESCO's 2003 *Convention* requires that communities should be seen as having an open character, not necessarily linked to specific territories. However, the notion of heritage as officially sanctioned practice is bound up with the community/communities' re/defining of practices and disrupting national narratives, which is something of a paradox. Both of this year's book reviews address these questions though from very different standpoints. In **The role of Communities, Groups and Individuals** both the theoretical framework for the implementation of the *Convention*, as well as the various methodologies employed to ensure participatory engagement are examined up close. However, the reader is still left to seek answers to the critical questions raised: *is it enough to demonstrate the consent or involvement of a few representatives of the community, or is evidence of a more widespread community participation*

required? Over what period of time or what proportion of the process is involvement necessary? How can involvement be demonstrated and proven to be legitimate and effective in achieving the aims of safeguarding heritage under the Convention?

The author of another book reviewed herein might have provided some of the answers. In **The African Roots of Marijuana** *African knowledge is fundamental to the now-dominant global practices of cannabis use … Words and phrases, paraphernalia and techniques, plants and knowledge variably survived the Middle Passage … and* [the] *cultural centrality of cannabis use amongst Africans persisted*. Marijuana's widespread medical, spiritual and recreational applications thus *represent*[s] *a thousand years of African intangible heritage and cultural continuity*. The author insists we reconsider and reconfigure colonial narratives which have served to demonise and marginalise these longstanding cultural practices. He has been diligent in documenting the practices he describes: the conservation of traditional spaces, the communication of cultural knowledge, the continuity of social practices, and the ways in which the deconstruction of colonially-constructed myths resonate with the collective historical consciousness and sense of community.

While the majority of these articles do reference long and even ancient traditions of communal cultural practice, all of the authors are invariably concerned with the contestations inherent in contemporary interpretations of both the ICH and the communities concerned. What may be germane to the profound and insightful debates in this issue is that while the notion that a heritage site cannot be divorced from the traditional practices associated with it has gained currency in the 21st century, it is the increasing credence that Intangible Heritage still cannot hold the authority of 'authenticity' without its encompassing context that has perhaps taken most time to accept. Publishing papers about the need for transdisciplinary approaches to cultural heritage thus becomes not merely important, but vital and necessary. As Griffiths - quoted elsewhere - demonstrates *the discourse of authenticity may overwrite and overdetermine the full range of representations* through which identities might be represented, *hence disavow*[ing] *the possibilities for the hybridised subjects of the colonising process to legitimate themselves* (1994, p.72). The evidence emerging in this volume is that *Intangible heritage can help in promoting tolerance, overcoming stereotypes, and in supplanting meanings which, instead of serving memory, might otherwise be reaffirming counter-memory.*

Alissandra Cummins
Editor-in-Chief

VIEWPOINTS

Living site, living values: the Matendera festival as practice in community conservation and presentation

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Living site, living values: the Matendera festival as practice in community conservation and presentation

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ABSTRACT

The Matendera festival is a ceremony conducted annually to celebrate the intangible heritage of the Shona people of Buhera in eastern Zimbabwe, popularly known as the Vahera, through their native dances, traditional music and cuisine, and a marathon. The ceremony is hosted annually at Matendera, a spectacular dry-stone-walled Iron Age site whose builders are historically connected to the Vahera. Through co-ordinating the efforts of the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ), the Buhera Rural District Council (BRDC) and other secondary stakeholders, the Vahera community gathers at Matendera to showcase their traditional foods, dances and games as part of their efforts to celebrate and experience Hera history and culture in relation to the tangible aspects of Matendera, a former abode of their ancestors. In this paper, we show how we used archaeological ethnography as a methodology for engaging the communities in conversations about the intangible meanings and importance of this festival. We illustrate how the circulation of knowledge in a festival is different from that in a traditional museum, by presenting aspects of intangible heritage that manifest in the form of traditional dances, foods, songs and social games. Ultimately, the fact that the history and archaeology of Matendera is largely enshrined within its monumental architecture enables the use of archaeological ethnography as a tool for understanding the contemporary social context of the site. Thus, we argue that Matendera cannot be divorced from the intangible practices that are showcased there during the festival.

Keywords

Vahera, archaeological ethnography, Shona, Matendera, conservation, heritage interpretation and presentation, museums, festivals, staged authenticity, Buhera, NMMZ, Zimbabwe

Introduction

Matendera is situated within Buhera District, a semi-arid landscape which forms the middle veld of the Zimbabwe Plateau. This rural district is largely populated by indigenous Shona communities whose livelihood is largely based on subsistence agriculture and livestock rearing (Lindahl and Matenga: 1995). In present day Zimbabwe, the term Shona is generally used to refer to the indigenous Bantu communities that speak a similar language (Beach: 1980; Chimhundu: 1992; Chirikure *et al.*: 2017). However, the Shona language itself is not homogenous because it has different dialects which include Karanga, Kalanga, Kore-kore, Manyika, Zezuru, Ndau, Jindwi and Hwesa. Thus, the name only came into effect in the 19th century as a colonial effort by early missionaries and linguists to unify and subjugate local languages under a single label, Shona, to facilitate the administration of colonies and the colonised (see Doke: 1931). In Buhera, the contemporary Shona communities speak mainly the Karanga and Manyika dialects, and their ancestry is largely associated with a cluster of ancient dry-stone-walled palaces, popularly known to the Shona community as *madzimbahwe* or *madzimbabwe* (houses of stone), and to Africanists as the 'Zimbabwe culture (CE 1000-1900)' (Figure 1), (Caton-Thompson: 1931; Garlake: 1970; Beach: 1980; Lindahl and Matenga: 1995; Huffman: 1996, 2007; Pikirayi: 2001; Chirikure *et al.*: 2012). Matendera is the largest known *dzimbahwe* (singular) within the Buhera cluster (Caton-Thompson: 1931; Lindahl and Matenga: 1995). Its architecture is believed to be the most impressive within the region (Huffman: 1996): it consists of rough dry-stone-walled free-standing enclosures with dentelle and herringbone decoration (Caton-Thompson: 1931). According to Huffman (1996: pp.160-164), as at Great Zimbabwe, the largest known *dzimbabwe* in sub-Saharan Africa, the spatial organisation at Matendera was organised in a layout that accommodated both elites and commoners. Nevertheless, because of royal privilege, elite residences were constructed within the walled areas, whilst the commoners lived outside the walls. Huffman's description aptly gives a bird's eye view of the architectural make-up of the site and its probable use, although the elite/commoner division has been deeply contested as a hegemonic archaeological discourse in the last two decades (i.e. Beach *et al.*: 1997; Chirikure *et al.*: 2018) [Plate 1].

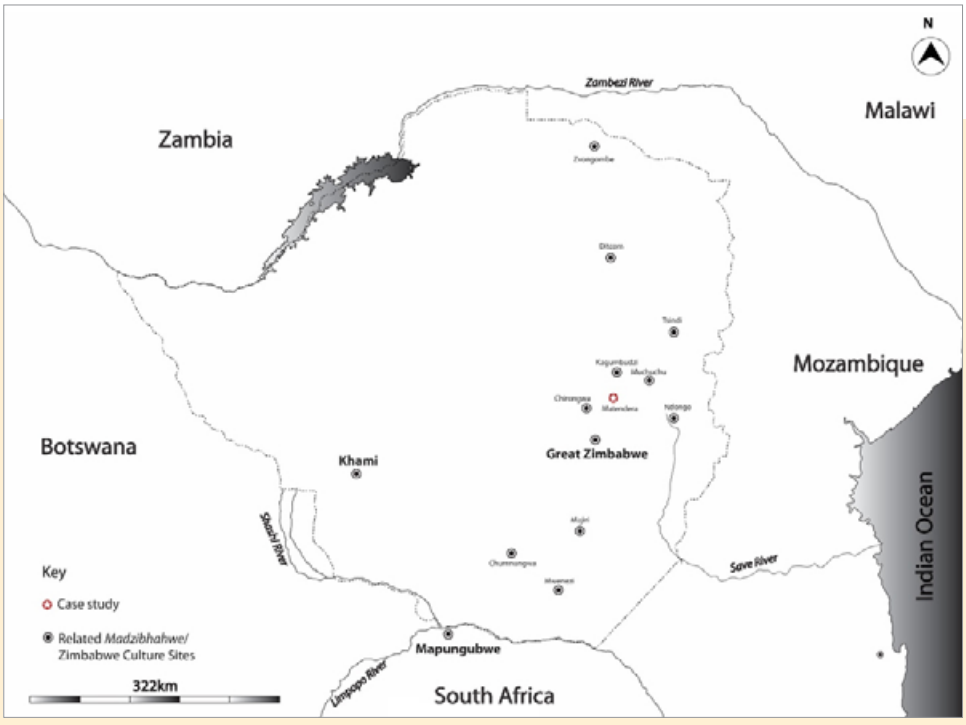


Figure 1
Location of Matendera in relation to other *madzimbahwe*.
Map: Robert T. Nyamushosho, 2019.



Plate 1
Free standing dry-stone-walling at Matendera, and the crown of the *kopje* from which the granite used to build the monument was sourced.
Photo: Njabulo Chipangura, November, 2018.

An annual festival is held by the community, working together with the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ), the Buhera Rural District Council (BRDC) and other stakeholders, to celebrate Matendera as community heritage. Thus, it is an inclusive discourse underpinned by multiple voices, multiple intersections and a nexus of cultural and stakeholder communities. In this paper, the word 'community' will be used to define individuals, families and groups living in a particular place, with common goals and interests, including the conservation and presentation of their own heritage, comprising both tangible and intangible components. A community brings with it a sense of 'belonging' to those who are part of it, and through such associations individuals conceptualise identity (Watson: 2007). However, communities are not discrete because people can belong to more than one at any given time (Jameson and Baugher: 2007; Witcomb: 2007).

The NMMZ is a government institution which is responsible for the conservation and management of national heritage sites, including Matendera and related sites such as Great Zimbabwe and Khami. Likewise, the BRDC contributes to this event since it is the local authority for the area where the Matendera site is located, whereas the other stakeholders are drawn from nearby schools, village heads, and various NGOs. In light of this background, we engaged various communities who attended the annual festivals (2010–2014) in conversations about the intangible meanings and importance of the Matendera festival, using an archaeological/ethnographical model that consisted of standard interactive discussions, conversations and participant observations. Archaeological ethnography has been described by Hollowell and Mortensen (2009, p.7), as *the implications of archaeologised places, pasts, and ideas for others, and how people make these things their own*. In essence, we argue that the festival is about relational and procedural intangible social activities that work towards a state of equilibrium by bringing people into direct contact with their heritage. At the same time, it is also about understanding and practising shared authority in heritage conservation and presentation. Meanwhile, archaeological ethnography has also been defined by Hamilakis, Anagnostopoulos and Ifantidis (2009, p.284) as *...a transdisciplinary, transcultural space for critical engagement and dialogue which enables an understanding of local unofficial contemporary discourses and practices to do with archaeological sites*. Thus, using data drawn from interviews and participant observations, we argue that Matendera as an archaeological site cannot be divorced from the intangible socio-cultural forms that are still being practiced there such as traditional dances,

music, poetry and the preparation and consumption of traditional cuisines during the festival. Consequently, we reveal the reality that the Matendera community does not privilege the grand or the material in their day-to-day use of the site as may be implied by archaeologists and historians, but rather brings a range of intangible associations with diachronic values (Smith, 2006).

Decolonising the hegemonic discourse

According to the information gathered from interviewees drawn from the heritage community during our research, the name Matendera is derived from the Shona word *tenderera* which denotes the circular shape of the monument. However, apart from the name that the community easily identifies itself with, the hegemonic discourse about the site encompasses all the grand narratives presented and derived from expert knowledge (i.e. Caton-Thompson: 1931; Huffman: 1996; Pikirayi: 2001) as is exhibited in guided tours and the ethics of technical conservation. As such, this discourse is embedded in aspects of monumentality and aesthetics at the expense of intangible socio-cultural processes, as well as the ideas that led to the construction of the site (Smith: 2014). Basically, the discourse is underwritten by archaeological evidence which has been interpreted to show that the site was constructed between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. According to conventional wisdom, the archaeological site of Matendera was built on a low domed *kopje* of smooth granite as a royal palace (Caton-Thompson: 1931; Huffman: 1996). The stones that were used are believed to have been extracted from the *kopje* on which the stone enclosure was erected (Thompson: 1971). There is one major entrance at Matendera, and the other three entrances are blocked. There is no obvious explanation for the blocked entrances, but the construction pattern seems to have been designed to allow for the later blocking of those entrances.

Conventional wisdom also posits that Matendera constitutes part of what is called the 'Buhera cluster' of zimbabwe sites (Hall: 1987; Huffman: 1996; Pikirayi: 2001). The other sites in this cluster are: Chiona, Kagumbudzi and Muchuchu National monuments. Within the popularised narrative, it is argued that the same people who built Great Zimbabwe were involved in the construction of Matendera (Huffman: 1996). Similarity in the construction techniques and the dressing of the walls with decorations such as herringbone and dentelle provides the basis for this argument. Extrapolation of this hegemonic discourse is also seen in a 'one size fits all approach' in which restorations are carried out at the site guided by specific scientific principles that are deployed in the service of authenticity and a respect for the historicity of all Zimbabwe cultural monuments in southern Africa (see Chirikure *et al.*: 2015). One such restoration exercise was undertaken in September 2014 in preparation for the festival and the World Tourism Day commemorations.

However, we present the argument that the idea of carrying out a festival is an attempt by the heritage community to decolonise the popular archaeological narratives by offering their own alternative story of the past through song, dance, poetry and traditional cuisine. In a way, this fits into what Meskell (2009, p.3) describes as 'cosmopolitan archaeologies' in which experts no longer have the licence to tell people their past, or to adjudicate on the correct way of protecting or using heritage. Thus, most communities in post-colonial nations are challenging centralised state-led heritage management initiatives and unifying narratives that exclude their own needs and versions of the past (Harrison and Hughes: 2010). The Matendera festival started off as a community project, and can be regarded as a response to authorised official narratives. This festival confers an alternative dimension to conventional archaeology and heritage management by empowering the local community. According to Atalay (2012, p.5), *community based participatory research provides a method for a community and an archaeologist to work together to pursue a research design that benefits them as equal partners*. Using this method, there is continuous engagement in which archaeologists and community members collaboratively define the questions, methods and outcomes of a given project (Colwell: 2016, p.116).

Sharing power with indigenous communities in heritage conservation and presentation is a new methodology that should be used to pluralise, democratise and decolonise relations (Schmidt: 2009; Onciul: 2015). To 'decolonise' heritage practice simply means a proper representation of people spoken about rather than listened to. Community engagement has become a popular decolonialising strategy that is being used at many heritage sites in Africa. On the whole, decolonised methodologies can be applied

to heritage practice by embracing the so-called 'unofficial narratives' of non-experts and promoting an understanding of how to listen and pay attention to subaltern voices (Bugarin: 2009; Harrison: 2009; Meskell: 2007; Ndlovu: 2009; Segobye: 2009; Schmidt: 2009). Today, across the global networks of heritage sites, museums, and galleries, the importance of communities to the interpretation and preservation of heritage is increasingly being recognised (Watson: 2007).

An inclusive community-driven heritage festival

A festival is not a static museum display because it is dynamic, innovative and participative (Flint: 2006). Whereas in museums, the focus is on displaying material objects, the ambience and dynamism of festivals makes them more participatory, oriented towards action and performance (Bauman and Sawin: 1991) [Plate 2]. As such, the Matendera festival is a celebration of the multiple forms of intangible heritage of the Vahera expressed through their traditional dances such as *mhande*, traditional music and the preparation of traditional dishes (Chipangura: 2014). The festival strives to open the space for the community to participate in the conservation and presentation of their intangible cultural heritage. In so many ways, a festival of this nature devolves power from authorised institutions to the local population, with emphasis placed on community ownership of heritage resources. In this festival, power and authority are concentrated in the hands of the community in which the agency of the participants themselves is recognised. Therefore, with the inception of this festival, the Matendera community was given an opportunity for self-representation through a working partnership with NMMZ and BRDC. Collaborative activities of this sort are not only beneficial to the community, but to NMMZ, because they mitigate conflicts about heritage. Thus, decolonising archaeological practice requires greater attention to such collaborative and community-defined research, education and heritage projects (Pyburn: 2003; Smith and Jackson: 2008; Zimmerman: 2005).

Elsewhere, conflicts about the conservation of heritage have been underscored by what Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996) have termed as 'dissonant heritage'. Dissonant heritage entails a lack of agreement on the use of heritage sites between communities and the authorities responsible for them. For example, at Domboshava rock art site, located 27km north of Harare, the exclusion of the community from management schemes resulted in unprecedented levels of vandalism. This site was declared a national monument in 1936 based on the aesthetic significance of the magnificent



Plate 2
Traditional performances during the Matendera festival.
Photo: Njabulo Chipangura, November, 2018.

rock paintings. However, the site had for many years been used by the locals to communicate with their ancestors during rain-making ceremonies (Pwiti and Mvenge: 1996). After independence, NMMZ failed to recognise the intangible values associated with the site and continued with colonial heritage management practices at the expense of the local community (Chirikure and Pwiti: 2008). The community vandalised the site in retaliation to this exclusion, burning down a curio shop and splashing oil paint on the rock paintings (Taruvinga and Ndoro: 2003). According to Chirikure and Pwiti (2008, p.470), *these events precipitated a policy change by the NMMZ which began an active programme of community archaeology, including local values, traditions and belief systems*.

However, instead of creating a dichotomy between communities and authorities, the Matendera festival can be regarded as a typical example of a shared authority platform. The festival offers alternative narratives of the past through song, dance, poetry and the preparation and consumption of traditional dishes [Plate 3]. Representing their ways of life in an open festival setting also gives the community an opportunity to conserve and transmit their intangible cultural heritage to future generations. Heritage conservation is a multifaceted concept which involves looking after both tangible and intangible aspects of a cultural landscape by highlighting the attachments which individuals and groups of people have to them (Chipangura, Chiripanhura and Nyamagodo: 2018). Smith (2006) posits that heritage is a ...*cultural practice involving the construction and regulation of a range of values and understandings*. Such values and understandings are relative to different groups of people, and fundamentally determine the ways in which heritage is conserved and managed.

During the festival, the communities take full control of representing their intangible cultural practices. Witz (2003) argues that the euphoria associated with a festival usually generates alternative modes of interpretation which are different from official authorised discourses. Dance, and the rhythms of the past through belting out traditional music, are imparted or transmitted to future generations only if they are constantly recited and performed - hence the festival provides a platform for such continuity. This festival has a social dimension in which parts of the community are brought into contact with each other in various activities. Lavenda (1992, p.81), also argues that *because many festival events are undemanding, it is easy for a wide range of people to attend and enjoy them and come away with the feeling that they are part of an organic, harmonious community*. As a result, it increases the chances for people to develop mutual empathy and understandings



Plate 3
Preparation of traditional foods.
Photo: Njabulo Chipangura, November, 2018.

which reduce conflicts about heritage. In general, the Matendera festival also contributes towards the conservation and sustainable management of cultural resources through the protection of local heritage, and a revitalisation of indigenous culture, arts and crafts.

The inaugural Matendera festival was held in October 2010 as a community initiative, with localised celebrations taking place at the site led by the village heads. Anchored in wholesome and inclusive community participation, it managed to improve the preservation and transmission of intangible cultural and historical traditions. Furthermore, it allowed for engagement and active community participation which is markedly different from the conservation tropes of the authorised heritage discourse. Compared to the hegemonic discourses driven by 'expert' knowledge, festivals tell stories that ignore universalising themes in that they often speak to the cultural experiences of marginalised groups (Karp and Kratz: 1991). Therefore festivals, by their very nature, leave room for the community to ascribe multiple meanings to their heritage, taken from their own diverse points of understanding. Festivals also place an emphasis on the idea of oneness and collaboration, rather than distinction, as members of a particular community tend to share a world view during the celebrations (Witz: 2003).

During this festival, Vahera people commemorate their cultural diversity in relation to the tangible aspects of Matendera monument. Thus, unlike the authorised heritage discourse which is preoccupied by materiality, innate significance and expert judgement - this festival does not dichotomise tangible and intangible heritage, but rather looks at both of them as mutually constitutive (Smith: 2006). Intangible heritage as a concept invokes a sense of inclusion and the recognition of living heritage and carries with it the meanings ascribed to material sites by non-professionals. According to UNESCO, *intangible cultural heritage does not only represent inherited traditions from the past but also contemporary rural and urban practices in which diverse cultural groups take part* (Lixinski: 2018, p.76). Thus the Matendera festival can be regarded as a contemporary form of ICH typified by socio-cultural practices that are still being undertaken, in the form of traditional dances, music, poetry, the preparation of traditional foods and social games such as *nhodo* (a game where children fork out objects from a small hole and return these objects one at a time) *pada* (similar to hopscotch) and *tsoro* (a game similar to draughts) (Chipangura: 2018; Liveson: 2014).

Traditional ritual songs and dances

Intangible heritage can be regarded as a group of cultural traditions and practices that are transmitted from one generation to another with a view to giving communities a sense of continuity (Vadi: 2018; Lixinski: 2018). Since intangible heritage is dynamic, we have to conserve the cultural significance of the practices and their impact on the community, rather than protecting a given form of cultural expression or practice *per se* (Vadi: 2018, p.401). A festival is a public event which is usually accepted by the community in which it is carried out (Lavenda: 1991). At the same time, we suggest that it is a form of living intangible cultural heritage that destabilises the philosophical underpinnings of the authorised heritage discourse. Therefore, in the case of Matendera, there are certain traditional dances and rituals that are uniquely associated with the Vahera people which are performed and demonstrated during the festival. For example, *mhande* is an indigenous song/dance which is performed during the annual festival and is accompanied by the sound of a unique drum beat. According to the Headman, Zvavahera, the *mhande* repertoire consists of distinctive songs and rhythms used for communicating with the *majukwa* (rain spirits). He explained that the rain spirits in turn communicate with God (*Mwari*), the provider of rain on behalf of the people. During the festival, the *mhande* display involves singing, drum playing, clapping, dancing and ululation. The importance of this traditional dance is derived from the Vahera's belief that religion is a medium through which the complex problems of this earth, especially our understanding of life after death or life beyond the grave, can be addressed (see Bourdillon: 1976). Their social structure is based on religious beliefs and the understanding that *Nyadenga* or *Musikavanhu* (God), the creator and spiritual being, is responsible for everyone's destiny [Plate 4].

Since traditional Shona religion is monotheistic and revolves around *Musikavanhu*, he cannot be accessed directly by an ordinary man, but rather through intermediaries known as ancestors or *vadzimu/ midzimu* (plural) (singular: *mudzimu*), who can be family, clan or *mhondoro*. Thus, the Vahera believe that when a person dies, his/her spirit wanders about



Plate 4
Traditional dances performed by school children from nearby schools.
Photo: Njabulo Chipangura, November, 2018.

until it is given permission by the ancestors to come back and protect its children. Ceremonies are held which give the wandering spirits permission to come back. Only a fully-grown person who has children can become an effective spirit medium once they die. These ancestral spirits help and guide their families in their day-to-day lives. The spirits of the dead are believed to convey messages from the living to God, and as such are central to the religion and belief of the Vahera. Such well-structured religious beliefs strongly refute colonial misconceptions and ideas about the animistic nature of African cultural beliefs, as well as their theories about ancestor worship. Thus, by displaying this traditional rite during the festival, Vahera people are trying to preserve their indigenous knowledge systems and practices, as well as transmitting them for future consumption by younger generations.

Against this backdrop, we used archaeological ethnography as a methodology to shed light on questions concerning the material culture and rituals of the Vahera people, and how they were enacted during the festival. Here, we posit that unlike conventional archaeological concepts of linear and sequential structuralist perspectives, Vahera people view the past and the present as coexisting entities. This is because their cultural objects are able to re-enact multiple temporalities that coexist and may be reactivated through human sensuous and sensory practices (Hamilakis and Anagnostopoulos: 2009). Thus we also observed that traditional drums used during the festival are similar to those found in museum exhibitions. Vahera traditional drums *(ngoma/mutumba)* are cylindrical in shape, open, and narrower at the bottom than the top. The *ngoma* is made from hardwood and has its top covered by animal skin secured on both sides with wooden pegs (Ellert: 1984).

Chikandira is another type of *ngoma* used by the Vahera during the festival. It is semi-circular with a skin stretched over the opening and also secured by wooden pegs (Ellert: 1984). During the conversation with Headman Zvavahera, he alluded to the fact that apart from the *mukwerera* (rain-asking) festivities, some of the *ngoma* were used during funerals. The other instruments used during the festival included *mbira* (thumb pianos), *marimba* (xylophones), *magavhu* (leg rattles), *hosho* (hand rattles) and *mutoriro* (flutes) which gave rhythm to the songs as people danced to the drum beat. By and large, the *mhande* dance display during the festival is viewed as a way in which the Vahera community tries to bridge the gap between static objects displayed in museums and similar objects that they still use in their traditional ceremonies.

The growth of the festival through embracing other activities

Apart from the *mhande* dance described above, the Matendera festival is also celebrated with ball games, a marathon, and singing and cooking competitions. Usually three months prior to the festival, which is held in September each year, an organising committee comprising village heads, school headmasters, the district administrator, representatives of local NGOs, NMMZ and BRDC convenes fortnightly. The coming together of different stakeholders in the organisation of this festival facilitates multi-sectoral and interdisciplinary dialogue about the safeguarding of tangible and intangible heritage (Galla: 2016). In addition, standing sub-committees are formed in which different stakeholders are assigned tasks. Site clearing and guided tours on the day of the festival is assigned to NMMZ, whereas BRDC is mandated with transport services and road maintenance.

Meanwhile, village and school heads coordinate various social events within their communities. These preparations are carried out at the nearest local primary and secondary schools. Village heads, working with their respective communities, also arrange for traditional foods to be prepared during the festival. Some of the commonly cooked foods include goat meat, okra, stiff sorghum and rapoko porridge, black jack, dried cow bean leaves and pumpkin leaves with peanut butter, amongst a host of other traditional dishes [Plate 5]. A traditional brew is also prepared, mostly by village elders – the process of fermenting the sorghum which is an essential ingredient of this brew takes up to seven days. Imbibing the traditional beer is a popular activity during the festival, with drinking strictly reserved for persons over the age of 18. NGOs that operate in Buhera, such as CARE Zimbabwe, OXFAM and the Red Cross assist in providing prize money and other gifts that are given to the winning teams in the ball games and the marathon.

Each of the six villages that surround the Matendera site assembles a soccer team to compete in the knock-out stages of the Matendera Trophy. Similarly, the Matendera 10km open marathon is another activity which is popular amongst villagers during the festival. The most important thing to note is that although these two sporting activities are marked by some form of competition, people join in for fun, and everything is marked by a celebratory mood of unity. Therefore, the festival itself promotes social interaction by bringing together people in one setting as they also share their life stories. Some might have lost contact over time and the festival acts as a platform for reconnecting. Thus, according to Lavenda (1991), festivals provide a focal point for scheduling reunions and family get-togethers.



Plate 5
Participants showing traditional dishes they have prepared for the cooking competition.
Photo: Njabulo Chipangura, November, 2018.

Being in a rural setting, the Matendera festival also helps to reveal any sporting talents that villagers possess, and in some cases, budding stars are identified during both the soccer match and the marathon. Other big attractions during the festival are the women's singing and cooking competitions. Like the soccer tournament, each village assembles a team to participate in both sets of competitions. The cooking competition is based on a selected traditional dish, and the judges are drawn from elderly members of the community. For the singing competition, teams are given a traditional song one month before the festival for them to practise. The theme song is selected by village heads working together with the organising committee.

In 2014, this festival experienced unprecedented growth when the Matendera site hosted the national celebrations for World Tourism Day on the theme 'Tourism and Community Development'. The national festival was attended by top government officials, including the Minister of Tourism and Hospitality, who was the guest of honour. An interactive discussion was also opened in which the Matendera community shared their historical connections with the site with the various stakeholders in attendance. In this regard, Tanen (1991, p.368), argues that a festival brings together many elements and concentrates them in given communities to tell something about their past, present and future. However, although a festival is an ideal platform for promoting local intangible culture, there has been growing criticism that in some festivals the carnival atmosphere is exaggerated, and thus the occasion ends up losing its aura of being genuine and historic (Witz: 2003; Karp and Kratz: 1991). In such cases, the festival can inadvertently signal a 'staged authenticity' made up of choreographed performances for consumption by the audience. Festivals of this nature tend to exaggerate and magnify events to achieve historical authenticity (Witz: 2003; Karp and Kratz: 1991; Flint: 2006; Chipangura: 2015). This somehow fits into what MacCannell, (1973), describes as 'staged authenticity' which entails a careful preparation of activities within cultural sites which do not at all reflect the historical narratives of such places. Furthermore, in some cases the intangible heritage, in the form of cultural performances, is vulnerable to manipulation through recreations which do not necessarily tally with the historical aspects of the site. The 1988 Dias festival in South Africa was one such example of 'staged authenticity'. This festival sought to commemorate and celebrate the arrival of the Portuguese sailor, Bartolomeu Dias, at the Cape in 1488. However, the festival was not authentic in any way: it was rather an eventless history, staged by inserting racialised and ethnicised groups into an international world view (Witz: 2003).

De-centring the archaeological practice using the festival and the exhibition

Archaeological ethnography is an intellectual discipline that involves taking a topic, together with a set of field situations, and excavating its diverse meanings in the present (Meskell: 2005, p.82). Archaeological ethnography was used as the methodology in carrying out this research during the Matendera festival. In using this methodology, we agree with Zager and Pluckhahn (2013, p.48), who argue that *archaeologists have increasingly turned to ethnography as a tool for understanding the contemporary social context of material culture, archaeological practice, and de-colonising archaeology*. As a result, during the conversations and engagements with the community, it emerged that by carrying out this annual festival, the community gains a true sense of connection with their archaeological site. The other collaborative aspect that was brought out during the festival was the installation of an exhibition in the 'culture hut' at the site. In creating this exhibition, consultations were carried out with the community through group discussions on how they wanted the archaeological history of the site to be represented. During the designing of the exhibition, emphasis was placed on co-authorship which replaced the anonymous institutional voice with multiple voices telling the community's version of the past (Tilden: 1957; Veverka: 2003; Haplin: 2007; *Ename Charter*: 2008). The planning, presentation and interpretive methods used in this exhibition thus enabled the community to become actively involved in the representation of their own culture. In this way, community members and museum staff came together to develop the themes, temporal parameters and content of the exhibition. In this context, Yerkovich (2016, p.243) argues that community members must be allowed to mount their own exhibitions, determining what would be on display and how it would be presented. The main aim of installing this exhibition was to uphold Vahera traditional cultural practices which were in danger of extinction due to globalisation.

According to Hooper-Greenhill (2007, p.82), knowledge can no longer be considered to be unified and monolithic, but rather is fragmented and multi-vocal, and in which a cacophony of voices may be heard. This assertion aptly resonates with the Matendera festival and the setting up of the exhibition. The exhibition was opened during the inaugural festival in 2010 with pictorial displays chronicling the archaeological history of the site. Archaeological objects that were excavated from the site (see Caton-Thompson: 1931), including a collection of glass beads which had been kept at the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences in Harare, were exhibited, much to the delight of the community members in attendance. Thus, knowledge production from this exhibition emerged as a shared responsibility between NMMZ and the community members whose narratives were incorporated into the main storyline. Seemingly agreeing with this perspective, Simpson (2001, p.51) argues that *exhibitions organised in consultation with the community represented can provide a means of counteracting many of the problematic aspects of exhibitions which have drawn criticism in the past*.

Prior to this collaborative exhibition at Matendera, the main narrative had been based on conventional academic scholarship as presented through the lens of NMMZ tour guides and curators. Consequently, the transmission of knowledge at Matendera was overridden by hegemonic archaeological narratives such as those from Caton-Thompson (1931) and Huffman (1996). However, the new developments made sure that during the festival and the making of the exhibition there was no prioritisation of the so-called 'expert's' views, because emphasis was placed on non-hegemonic knowledge (Haber, 2016; Lillios, 2011). As a result, the festival complemented by the exhibition, managed to tell the subaltern story of the heritage community. During the festival and the exhibition, community members became the primary agents in determining the content presented. Archaeological ethnography thus came into focus as a concept and as a hybrid fieldwork method that investigated the multiple ways of creating knowledge at Matendera site. This, as we have illustrated, was achieved by working creatively with contemporary communities to decipher the micro-politics of archaeological practice (Meskell: 2009). In many ways, archaeological ethnography became a liberal platform for historical and cultural representation in which the community actively participated and showcased their varied cultural activities. One of the interviewees, a respected village head, said this during the inaugural festival:

> *Matendera is our heritage, the site belongs to us because it was constructed by our ancestors. This festival is a welcome development in this village because it allows us to tell our stories about this site, using music, dance, poetry, and thereby we can be recognised as the rightful custodians of the site. Even in the past our forefathers used to carry out these activities at the site so I don't see the reason why we should be limited to use the site on festivals only.* (Headman Zvavahera, August 16th 2010, Matendera).

Reflections

From this account given by Headman Zvavahera, it can thus be argued that numerous perspectives and values can be brought together to enhance a shared understanding of the past (Colwell: 2016, Davis: 2007; Ververka: 2003; *Ename Charter*: 2008). In a way, therefore, archaeological ethnography de-centralises archaeological interests by focusing on building relationships from local narratives that do not always have to revolve around the official story. These narratives present contemporary local stories on an equal footing with established archaeological narratives (Stroulia and Sutton: 2009). Archaeological ethnography can be regarded as an assemblage of approaches which are informed by ethnographic engagements at heritage sites (Samuels: 2011; Harrison: 2016; Hamilakis and Anagnostopoulos: 2009; Zager and Pluckhahn: 2013). During our research, it was deployed at Matendera as a holistic form of anthropology which was improvisational, context-dependent and as a decolonised methodology that embraced the so-called unofficial narratives from non-experts (Meskell: 2007; Castaneda: 2008; Colwell: 2016; Haber: 2016; Hamilakis: 2016). Headman Zvavahera's narrative clearly shows that community perceptions do not necessarily need to be authenticated by archaeological knowledge; rather, they are based on intangible oral narratives that have been passed down from generation to generation. Drawing again from the conversation with Headman Zvavahera, he opined that: *This is a living site with living values that survive outside the stone walls that you see here and we must use it every day.* (Headman Zvavahera, August 16th 2010,

Matendera), it can be argued that community members are active knowledge agents possessing their own epistemic understandings and readings of hegemonic discourses.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have used the Matendera festival as a form of intangible cultural heritage practice in order to illustrate how communities can be engaged to produce insightful narratives around sites which were previously thought to be the exclusive domains of heritage experts. This festival is an annual event conducted at Matendera - an archaeological site located in Eastern Zimbabwe. Activities discussed in this paper that constitute intangible expressions by the community and are anchored in the festival, include traditional dances, music, poetry, social games, a marathon and the preparation of traditional dishes. By partaking in these activities at the site, we discovered that the community was endowed with a sense of belonging and shared entitlement in the production of heritage knowledge – previously kept away from them by the hegemonic discourse. Therefore, the festival, together with the exhibition, allowed them to speak and write their own narratives drawn from their local understanding of the site, and underwritten by intangible practices which have been passed from generation to generation. To get to this point, we used archaeological ethnography as both a concept and a method in which we projected the festival as a liberal space in which the heritage community freely participated. In a way, archaeological ethnography was used in this discussion as a space for thinking, engagement, dialogue, collaboration and intervention, rather than as a scholarly practice at the interface of archaeology and anthropology (Hamilakis and Anagnostopoulos: 2009; Hamilakis: 2011, 2016).

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Wangkarra: communication and the verbal arts of Australia's Western Desert

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we situate the verbal arts of the Ngaanyatjarra people of the Western Desert of Australia within the discourse surrounding the UNESCO concept of Intangible Cultural Heritage. We describe the rich heritage of oral traditions that exist in the Ngaanyatjarra region, how they emerged, how they are being sustained and the forces of change that reveal their fragile state today. We give an account of the Western Desert Verbal Arts Project, a documentation project that has, since 2010, collected, recorded and archived a spectrum of practices including oral narratives, sand storytelling, alternate sign language and special speech styles. These practices are embedded in a speech community where the everyday indigenous spoken language is also considered endangered. We consider ways to not only safeguard these rarefied and extremely fragile verbal arts traditions, but also to bring them to the fore as an integral aspect of the living heritage of the Ngaanyatjarra people.

Keywords

Endangered language, language, living heritage, verbal arts, transmission, respect registers, sand stories, avoidance and respect relationships, Indigenous Australia, Western Desert, Ngaanyatjarra people

Introduction

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) comprises practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills recognised by communities as part of their cultural heritage (UNESCO: 2003). This definition of ICH includes language as a vehicle for oral traditions and cultural expressions (Bialostocka: 2017, pp. 18-19). Transmitted from generation to generation, these practices and expressions are constantly renegotiated and reinvented by people in response to the social and natural

environment in which they live, and to the history of their communities. As has been further argued, *language itself represents people's heritage; it displays all the parameters to be considered ICH – it is transmitted from generation to generation; constantly recreated; speech can be treated as linguistic practice and expressions; language bestows identity upon people in the same way that social practices, rituals or indigenous knowledge do* (Smeets: 2004, cited in Bialostocka: 2017, p. 19).

Writing this paper at the beginning of 2019, which the United Nations has declared the International Year of Indigenous Languages, we reflect on what ICH means in an endangered language context where it is the intangible heritage aspects of communication, cultural expression and social interaction that are rapidly disappearing. As the celebrated linguist, Ken Hale, noted (1992), the loss of local languages and of the cultural systems which they express has meant irretrievable loss of the world's diverse intellectual wealth. In this paper we discuss this issue by focusing on one case study: the verbal arts traditions of the Ngaanyatjarra people of Australia's Western Desert, who reside in a region locally known as the Ngaanyatjarra Lands. We trace our attempts to safeguard the verbal arts of the Western Desert through documentation, recording, archiving and repatriation (Plate 1). Although safeguarding these verbal arts as intangible cultural heritage could arguably be perceived as an end in itself, key to the vitality of these traditions is their transmission to future generations. We conclude the paper by shifting the focus to the language of youth and consider how the verbal arts can be kept strong through everyday language practices.

Our research addresses the question of what happens in societies that have undergone profound and recent sociocultural transformation, where structures that made sense in the not-so-distant past are challenged by contemporary modes of communication and social interaction. We draw attention to the experiences of a people whose communicative styles and practices have been altered by modernity. Increasingly, as elders pass away, there are fewer and fewer adults who retain the memory of how these fragile oral traditions were practised. With their passing, some of the connection to the poetic forms of the Western Desert will be severed.

Our study also contributes to the debate about what may seem to be competing imperatives: the documentation agenda versus the language revitalisation one, and argues that these practices are, as Grant (2010, p. 54) puts it, *two sides of the same coin*. Seen as an iterative process grounded in long-term relationships and ethical engagements, the tangible objects of language documentation have the potential



Plate 1
The WDVA team documenting sand storytelling in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands.
Photo: Inge Kral, 2012.

to inform and inspire, to find their place in the arts and education, in new media and musical forms, and even, as we will show later, in their original contexts of use. It also raises issues about the processes involved in transforming what are essentially dynamic and ephemeral forms of language—speech, sign, song, drawing—into tangible forms, by the creation of documentary records. Such 'fossilisations' of linguistic practices are, by their nature, not able to reflect the many innovative and adaptive dimensions of verbal arts traditions (see Grant: 2010, p. 51). We argue, however, for the value of such documentations as part of a multi-faceted strategy to invest in the heritage value of one the world's unique, small, endangered languages.

Verbal arts documentation in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands

Since 2010 we, the Western Desert Verbal Arts project team[1], have been recording and documenting verbal arts and special speech styles in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands. We began ongoing documentation of the spoken 'respect register'—*yirrkapiri wangka*—in 2010. In research from 2012-2018, we filmed the *mirlpa* 'sand storytelling' practices of old and young women and explored their adaptation of this drawing practice to iPads (Ellis, Green and Kral: in press.). Audiovisual documentation of children's songs and games was undertaken with older care-givers and their children (Ellis, Green and Kral: 2017). We also recorded sign language practices (Ellis *et al.*: forthcoming). In tandem with documentation, we have returned collections to the community formally and informally on USB memory sticks and in film festivals (Ellis, Green and Kral: in press.). Additionally, we have deposited the audio-visual recordings and associated metadata in relevant language and community archives, in a quest to safeguard them for future generations of speakers and researchers.[2]

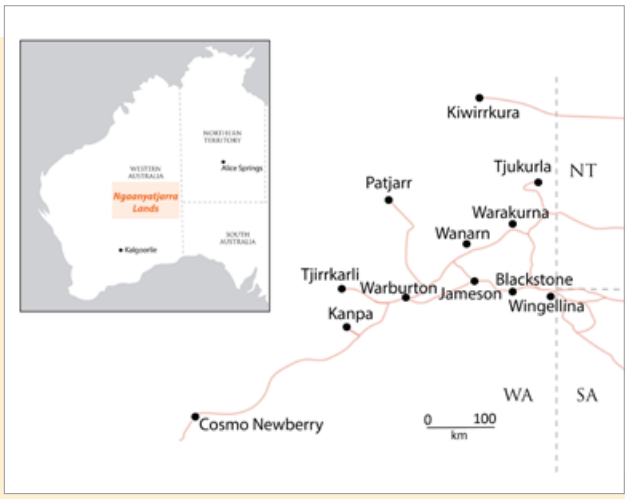


Figure 1
Location of Ngaanyatjarra communities.
Map: Jennifer Green, 2018.

The Ngaanyatjarra Lands fall within the Western Desert region of central Australia and comprise approximately 3% of mainland Australia, fanning out into Western Australia from the tri-state border with South Australia and the Northern Territory (Figure 1).

Approximately 2000 people now live in the eleven Ngaanyatjarra Lands communities. The population includes descendants of the last nomadic groups of the Western Desert (referred to hereafter as 'the Ngaanyatjarra'). As a group, the Ngaanyatjarra have never left their country, nor has their country been annexed or occupied by outsiders, and they now form a relatively homogenous group. Remoteness has protected them, residing as they do in the harsh desert of central Australia, a thousand kilometres away from the closest townships of Alice Springs to the east, and Kalgoorlie to the west.

The mutually intelligible Western Desert dialects Ngaanyatjarra, Ngaatjatjarra and Pitjantjatjara are the main languages spoken by those who reside in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands. Of Australia's remaining Indigenous languages it is estimated that less than twenty are sufficiently robust to be passed on to the next generation (Angelo *et al.*: 2019). Of these, only a few will retain their full expressive richness. The dialects spoken in the Western Desert will be transmitted to the next generation: however their oral traditions, the verbal arts of their culture, are under immediate threat. These traditions of Western Desert people are central to cultural practice and social interaction and embrace special, respectful ways of speaking, as well as sign language and the use of graphic symbols to accompany sand story narratives. These multimodal speech arts are a valued part of their traditions. Nevertheless they are highly endangered, and opportunities for children to acquire the full expressive potentials of these oral and visual traditions are decreasing dramatically.

The verbal arts of the Western Desert

Communication and social interaction in Ngaanyatjarra communities embrace a rich spectrum of verbal art forms, speech styles and respect registers. Everyday communication (*wangkarra*) includes storytelling (*tjuma*), sand storytelling (*mirlpa*), dance/song (*turlku*) and sign language (*mara yurriku*). Special speech styles and respect registers are utilised in secular and ceremonial contexts. Figure 2, developed by Ellis, schematises the interconnectedness of these different aspects of Ngaanyatjarra communication.

Ngaanyatjarra people say that in the *tjukurrpa*—the Dreaming or Creation time—Ancestral Beings appeared out of nowhere. They then created waterholes and other features of the environment and these sites became significant places imbued with spirituality and sacredness. In the Creation time, everything was brought into existence by the Beings: *parna*—the land, *kapi*—the water, *yukiri*—the flora, *kuka*—the fauna, *yilkari*—the cosmos, and *yarnangu*—the people. The actions of the Ancestral Beings who created the environment are embodied in the performance of ceremonies that re-enact the Ancestral Beings' original acts. Traces of the actions of the Ancestral Beings remain etched on the landscape and abstracted into designs. These designs, inscribed on sacred boards and painted on the bodies of participants during rituals, serve as mnemonic devices for recalling the *tjukurrpa*. Such actions of the Ancestral or Dreaming Beings are also rendered in *tjuma* (oral narratives) and *turlku* (songs, dances and stories).

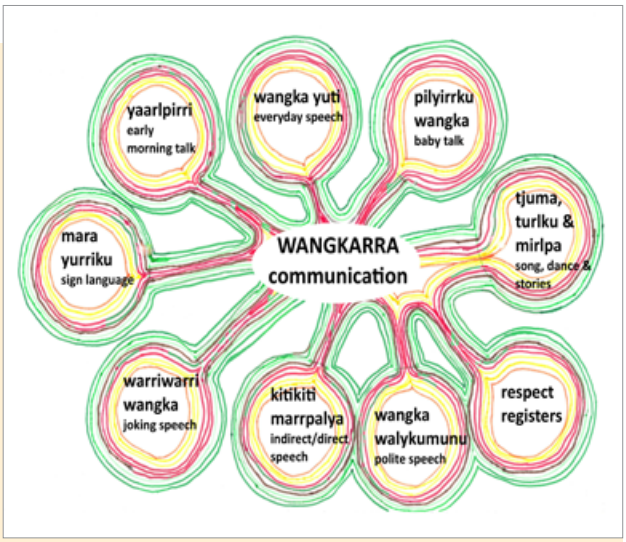


Figure 2
The network of communication practices found in Ngaanyatjarra communities. Artwork: Elizabeth Ellis, 2016.

The Ancestral Beings also spoke in certain ways, and the way that Ngaanyatjarra people speak now is influenced by the way that the sacred Ancestral Beings spoke to each other in the Creation time. Their legacy remains in narratives from the *tjukurrpa* and in the special speech styles and registers used by people to this day. As Ngaanyatjarra people say, *you can go back into the tjukurrpa and see this is the place, this is the song, this is the story. Oh we do this now because it was in the tjukurrpa they say, it's our traditional law, it's our culture. This why we do what we do now and this is why we speak like we speak now.* Importantly, this means that much communication is embedded in the realm of the sacred and secret. This sets rigid rules for when *tjaa yuti* (literally 'clear speech') is allowed and when alternative forms of speech must be used. *Tjaa yuti* is the form of language that can be used in the everyday and is understood by everyone. Everyday communication also embraces the verbal arts: *tjuma* (story), *turlku* (dance/song), *tjinytja/mirlpa* (sand drawings), and *mara yurriku* (sign language). Contemporary cultural practices and language practices all derive from these understandings. Language establishes the frame for the proper order of things—the order of life, behaviour and interaction in ritual life and in the everyday (Kral and Ellis: forthcoming).

Let us now turn to the rich spectrum of Western Desert verbal arts.

Tjuma - narrative

There are many kinds of narrative in Ngaanyatjarra society. Without a doubt, the most important narratives are the *tjukurrpa* stories that link directly to songs and to narratives about the creation of the land. Many of the *tjukurrpa* stories are linked to the travels of the Ancestral Beings and the particular sites where events took place. The sequences of songs that are linked to these sites are sometimes referred to as 'songlines'. All the major songlines are the source of many of the Western Desert ceremonies (*turlku* or songs, dances and stories linked to sites along the songlines). However, only individuals who have family connections and *tjukurrpa* links to a certain 'country' (i.e. traditional land ownership) have the authority to tell the story for that country.

Within Western Desert society, any discussion of the *tjukurrpa* narratives must take account of who owns the story or parts of the story along the songline, as well as the gradations along a continuum from secret/sacred to public. The travels of the Ancestral Beings who created the songlines can be quite extensive, sometimes up to thousands of kilometres. One major songline running through the Ngaanyatjarra region is the *Kungkarrangkalpa Tjukurrpa* or Seven Sisters Dreaming (Brooks and Jorgenson: 2015; James: 2015; Neale: 2017). Then there are the stories that are told as children's stories (*tjilkuku tjuma*). Many of these are told as bedtime stories set in the *tjukurrpa* (Creation time) while others have no link to the Creation stories at all. Another type of *tjilkuku tjuma* is *mirlpa* or sand storytelling.

Mirlpatjunku: sand storytelling and other ground-based activities

Across the Western and Central deserts of Australia, storytelling, especially sand storytelling, integrates graphic designs drawn on the ground with speech, song, sign and gesture (Eickelkamp: 2011; Green: 2014; Munn: 1973; Watson: 2003; Wilkins: 1997). Ngaanyatjarra narrators typically employ conventionalised graphic forms as well as leaves and sticks to represent story characters (Plates 2 and 3). The storyteller uses a *mirlpa* (*mirlpinti/tjinytja*) 'stick', a fresh twig that is shaped and used to make marks on the ground, as well as to erase the surface of the ground once each story sequence has ended. Sand storytelling developed in a particular cultural and ecological niche where inscribable surfaces were readily available for private soliloquies, polyadic accounts (traditional stories or recounts with many parts and narrators), or for collaborative, co-constructed actions. They constitute a key feature of traditional desert environments, and manipulation and experimentation with the 'ground' and its varied textures—creek sand, fine soft red dirt—with the hands and the use of sticks or wires is encouraged from early childhood onwards. In this way, desert children are socialised into multilingual, multimodal praxes of interaction from an early age.

There is a dynamic interplay between semi-permanent marks made on the sand with the hand, the stick (or now with so-called 'storywires'), and the spoken word. In this primarily female practice, little girls learn to narrate by drawing upon a range of communicative resources deploying multiple modalities in the act of storytelling. Alongside verbal forms, these may include sign, drawing, mimetic sound symbolism, mimetic action represented by the movement of parts of the body and the engagement of 'props' such as leaves and sticks (Green: 2014; Green: 2016). Today young girls are still constantly seen sitting in groups telling stories in the sand using a storywire (Plate 4).

Ground-based games have also developed where inscribable surfaces are readily available. The *mama mama ngunytju ngunytju* game is played in the Ngaanyatjarra region. In this game speech, gesture and graphic designs are negotiated in dyadic and



Plate 2
Graphic elements in a sand story, representing people ('U' shapes), a fire, artefacts, and an enclosing shelter. Drawing by Elizabeth Marrkilyi Ellis.
Photo: Jennifer Green, 2018.



Plate 3
Leaves and other small objects are used to represent characters in sand stories.
Photo: Jennifer Green, 2012.

polyadic interactions between caregivers and a number of children, as linguistic and embodied practices are reinforced in peer-to-peer play. It is a systematically organised language routine in which players employ oral 'question and answer' routines linked to visual graphic schema drawn on the sand and contextualised in a framework of social and spatial knowledge.

The *mama ngunytju* game is an overt language socialisation activity that reinforces the connectedness of kin to their traditional country within a bounded socio-spatial field. Through engagement with the game, young girls practise and acquire manual and verbal skills and demonstrate their knowledge of social relationships within the known range and expanding habitus of their world. Children take from the game a heightened understanding of kinship relationships and spatial orientation within the desert landscape. Ngaanyatjarra children acquire these core cultural concepts as tacit knowledge required for myriad practices in the course of their lives. In this practice, we see the use of a mutually comprehensible set of symbols or icons associated with the sand storytelling tradition combined with new symbols associated with contemporary living (Ellis, Green and Kral: 2017).

Mara yurriku - sign language

In the Western Desert, Indigenous sign languages are used alongside speech, gesture and other semiotic systems such as sand drawing. Combined with these other semiotic systems, it becomes a powerful resource that holds a particular place in the overall schemata of *wangkarra* (communication) (Ellis *et al.*: forthcoming). These sign languages have been termed *alternate* sign languages, as they are not generally the main method of communication, but rather they may be employed with or without speech, or used instead of speech in particular cultural circumstances (Kendon: 1988). The Ngaanyatjarra phrase *mara yurriku*, meaning 'moving the hands', is used to describe communication by manual signing, and this is an important aspect of the communicative ecology of Ngaanyatjarra communities. Ellis recalls her father being a particularly good signer, who would mix sign with speech while storytelling. Sign was used for communication across distance and to ensure silence while hunting, she notes. *One other reason*, Ellis says, *is when the older people don't want the younger people to hear conversations about secret sacred issues*. Sign might also replace speech during ceremonies, and be used for private and discreet talk between lovers. In the repertoire of lexical signs there are signs drawn from many semantic domains: kinship, flora and fauna, time, topography and the environment, and the traditional and modern artefacts of everyday life.



Plate 4
Katrina Giles and Joella Butler using a storywire.
Photo: Jennifer Green, 2013.

Special speech styles

The concept of respect is core in Ngaanyatjarra society, and is evident in the many respect relationships and in a rich array of speech styles and respect registers. *Anitji* is a respect register used openly by male and female kin in ceremonial (and secular) contexts. People use this register because in the *tjukurrpa* the Ancestral Beings spoke *anitji* during the man-making ceremony. *Anitji* is also known as *tjaa nyantulypa, tjaa paku* or *wawanypa* in various Western Desert dialects. It is an auxiliary language comprising separate lexical items, but identical grammatical forms to everyday speech, except for certain pronouns, demonstratives and interrogatives. Primarily, it is used by those who are the *yirrkapiri* (the grandfather, grandmother, aunt, uncle, mother and father) of a boy going through the man-making ceremony. Without a doubt, this respect register is severely endangered, even though the ritual practices associated with the passage into manhood remain strong to this day. These days, when families can no longer use this special respect register—they whisper or use hand signs when communicating with one another.

Other respect relationships are the so-called 'avoidance' relationships. Among the many avoidance relationships in Western Desert society, the strongest are the relationships between a woman and her son-in-law, and a man and his son-in-law. These two strict avoidance relationships also come into being during the manhood ceremony. In these respect relationships there must be no eye contact and no physical contact, and a respectful distance must be maintained. People can only speak with each other and give things to each other via a third party. They can refer to each other by indirect means but must not say each other's names. In contexts requiring respectful or distant social interaction between certain relations, the use of indirect speech styles—*tjitirrpa* or *kiti-kiti watjalku*—is also required (Kral and Ellis: forthcoming).

Another speech style originating from the *tjukurrpa* is *yaarlpirri*. *Yaarlpirri* or 'early morning talk' is a form of public oratory or rhetoric that is a more formal version of ordinary everyday discourse, used extensively in the past to discuss issues, air grievances, disseminate information or organise the day's hunting and gathering (Goddard: 1992). *Yaarlpirri* is a speech routine employing indirect mediational strategies to maintain social harmony and resolve conflict.

To this day it is understood that to be a competent speaker in this speech community entails having proficiency in cultural as well as linguistic practices in different domains of use. This requires understanding the social conventions of language use encompassing verbal and non-verbal communication modes, as well as mastery of the verbal arts and the special speech styles used in everyday and ceremonial contexts.

The impact of change

Western Desert people practised these speech arts for thousands of years before their encounter with Anglo-Australian settler society altered the everyday social, cultural and linguistic practices of desert people. The remoteness of Ngaanyatjarra people meant that they were protected from the early ravaging effects of colonisation on Indigenous people in the settled parts of south-east and coastal Australia. The United Aborigines Mission established itself at Warburton Ranges in the early 1930s, and provided relatively benign protection until the 1970s. Until the 1950s most Ngaanyatjarra people were still roaming the large desert expanse between Warburton Ranges Mission and Ernabella Mission in South Australia some 600 kilometres to the east. The presence of the mission at Warburton Ranges in many ways prolonged the maintenance of the nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyle, in part due to its remoteness. The last of the nomadic peoples from around the Gibson Desert and Rawlinson Ranges were brought into the mission during the 1960s.

The 1960s and 1970s saw numerous Ngaanyatjarra people travelling out into towns in the Eastern Goldfields, near Kalgoorlie: adults for employment on pastoral stations and adolescents for secondary schooling. After the mission was relinquished to the government in 1973, families moved back to their traditional country and set up small outstations that became the permanent communities we see today. By the 1980s, families began to move from residing in semi-permanent bough shelter constructions to living in houses in settled communities. Today, extended family groups tend to live together in Western-style houses. Most families have motor vehicles and are highly mobile, driving hundreds of kilometres to visit family, attend funerals, sporting events, participate in ceremonial activities or seek out services such as banks, hospitals and shopping malls in urban centres like Alice Springs and Kalgoorlie. In recent years there has also been a rapid uptake of digital technologies. The internet is widely used, there is mobile phone connectivity and most teenagers and adults have mobile phones.

Such changes have, of course, impacted on communication and social interaction. For example, *yaarlpirri*, the early morning speech style, is no longer heard or used, partly as a consequence of the shift away from living in open camps to dwelling in houses. Similarly, contemporary community life has brought those in avoidance relationships into closer proximity. Older people comment on how young people do not show respect. In other words, they are interacting directly with their in-laws (sitting near each other, talking with them and eating together) rather than using indirect modes (Kral and Ellis: forthcoming).

These changes notwithstanding, the multimodal speech arts (encompassing narrative competence, oratorical skills and other symbolic, visual and gestural modes of representation and communication) remain a

valued, if endangered, part of the traditions of Western Desert people. In the past, command of broad-ranging traditional cultural practices and knowledge systems came through familiarity with the world experienced through embodied knowledge and habitual practices. Although the Ngaanyatjarra have experienced profound change, it is nonetheless evident that the actions of the Ancestral Beings are still present in the landscape, and their trace memories shape the performance and rhythms of everyday life in the present.

Young people in the Western Desert are living in this rapidly shifting language ecology. For them, the newly-introduced institutional pressures of schooling and employment have further impacted their capacity to engage in cultural practices that previously enabled the acquisition of context-specific language forms and specialist knowledge. This has meant that younger people are not acquiring the songs, dances and special speech styles associated with ceremonial activity as they would have in the past. In addition, social media has intensified the influence of English language and Western cultural practices. Despite these altered sociocultural circumstances, the traditional structures of social organisation remain intact (Brooks: 2011). Moreover, the verbal arts are still practised and young people are transforming them to suit the contemporary context (Kral and Ellis: 2019).

Living language

Memories of past practices continue to live on in everyday life: in ceremonies; in the practice of traditional arts; in media and in digital archives. Moreover, the intangible aspects of the *tjukurrpa* are evident in a tangible form in myriad new expressive forms, first and foremost in the genesis of new acrylic artworks seen across the desert communities (Acker and Carty: 2012; Myers: 2002). In these works icons and symbols display an array of meanings as illustrated in Plates 5 and 6 where Elizabeth Ellis (Author 3) and her mother, Esther Giles, paint their traditional country. Sometimes the meanings and messages in paintings are readily decoded and at other times the deeper meaning is visible only to those with a higher level of cultural knowledge.

In the contemporary songs of young Ngaanyatjarra musicians we also see a performative process of creation and renewal, and an indication of the enduring importance of the verbal arts in the lifeworlds of young



Plate 5
Purrungu by Elizabeth Marrkilyi Ellis, 2016.
This painting is of the country around Purrungu which was created by the Kutungu Woman in the *Tjukurrpa*.
Image courtesy of Tjarlirli Arts.



Plate 6
Tjarlirli by Esther Giles, 2016.
This painting is of the waterholes and sandhills of Esther Giles' traditional country around Tjarlirli.
Image courtesy of Tjarlirli Arts.

people. Here, direct and indirect references to the *tjukurrpa* abound, translating intangible concepts into tangible objects in the form of CDs and music videos. Young musicians are using digital technologies to lay down new narrative forms (Plate 7). In a manner reminiscent of the way in which *turlku* or ceremonial song is embedded in place, and people are the vessels for the songs that emanate from the landscape, the music produced by the young musicians is also embedded in place. Their songs evoke movement, and a yearning for 'country'. In one song '*Ngurra Karilywaraku*',[3] Trenton Giles, a young musician from Warburton (Plate 8), sings about Karilywara (Patjarr), the traditional country of his grandmother:

Yangupala kutjarralurni ngayunya watjarnu,
Two young fellas came and said to me,
Yarrala marlaku ngurrakutu
Let's go back home
Ngurra nyarratja ngarala
To the place over there
Ngurra Karilywaraku
Our home Patjarr

By shifting the focus to the language of youth we attempt to dispel any notion that we are tied to a form of linguistic essentialism focused only on fixed 'authentic' social and cultural practices and bounded cultural identities. Rather, we seek to recognise the hybridity of new language practices, whether oral, written or mediated by technology. In the language documentation literature, most research has focused on older generations. Consequently we know little about the manner in which Indigenous young people are taking up the oral traditions of their culture, or about how the communication systems, speech styles, verbal arts, performance genres and inter-related knowledge systems are being acquired or transmitted. Further research is needed in this domain.

Safeguarding language for the future

Internationally, the discourse of Indigenous language endangerment and shift has changed to a focus on language vitality, sustainability and resilience (Grenoble: 2015). As Grenoble and Olsen note (2014, p.7), drawing on Joshua Fishman (1991), a vital language is one used by *all* generations in *all* domains. The ratification of the UNESCO *Convention for the*



Plate 7
Delrick Holland, Wilurarra Creative Studio, 2010.
Image courtesy of Wilurarra Creative.



Plate 8
Trenton Giles, Wilurarra Creative Studio, 2015.
Image courtesy of Wilurarra Creative.

Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage came into force in April 2006, providing a policy framework for safeguarding language as living heritage.[4] Bialostocka (2017, p.19) wrote *living heritage is primarily contained in the linguistic interactions of the people to whom it belongs*, here highlighting a tension between the need to safeguard intangible cultural heritage through collecting, recording and archiving, and the requirement to see the endangered languages maintained as *living* heritage, ensuring their transmission to future generations (see Grant: 2010).

Importantly, these perspectives situate language as living heritage; where language is alive, it is dynamic, and it is the means by which human beings communicate and interact with each other in a vast array of social contexts. But also language *is not a neutral medium for communication but rather a set of socially embedded practices*... [and] *social interactions live linguistically charged lives*. (Ahearn: 2017 [2012], p.3). Nowhere is this more apparent than in oral performance in context and the *anchoring of verbal art in the social and cultural worlds of its users, and the complex multidimensional web of interrelationships that link performed texts to culturally defined systems of meaning and interpretation and to the socially organised systems of social relations* (Bauman: 2004, p. 32).

Conclusion

To say that the Ngaanyatjarra language is endangered is indeed true. However, our focus in this paper has been on the nuanced speech arts of Ngaanyatjarra oral traditions that embrace speech styles, ceremonial forms, song, dance, narrative, respect registers, sign language and storytelling modes coupled with the associated cultural practices. This verbal arts tradition is most fragile. Safeguarding the verbal arts is an altogether more complex agenda than safeguarding the everyday language of an endangered language speech community. Highlighted here is the importance of storytelling, especially the traditional narratives from the *tjukurrpa,* in the lives of children. This also signals the importance of ceremony in the cultural life of Western Desert people, and its significance in the enculturation of the young and the maintenance of endangered verbal art forms. Ceremony and ritual constitute a rich environment for the acquisition of respect registers and traditional modes of social interaction. Revitalising and maintaining oral and cultural traditions to ensure that language forms are passed on to successive generations entails a local commitment to maintaining the narrative traditions and performing ceremonies, to ensure that music and dance traditions are also not lost (see Grant: 2014; Treloyn *et al.*: 2013). It also entails a shift in attitudes by policymakers and speakers themselves, as scholars have argued that attitudes to language are of key importance in assessing the chances of an endangered language surviving (Austin and Sallabank: 2013).

Through our project of recording, documenting and archiving the verbal arts of the Western Desert, aspects of this intangible heritage will be safeguarded for the future. However keeping these traditions alive as living language is an altogether more difficult quest. There are, nonetheless, glimmers of hope as we see the verbal arts traditions gain new life and revived prestige as an outcome of our documentation project.

The film recordings we made between 2013 and 2018 with ten young women who transferred the traditional sand storytelling practice to iPads have injected new life into this traditional narrative form. The films burst with colour, energy and originality, and we see traditional iconography merging with contemporary symbols as the young storytellers recount stories of trips out bush collecting traditional foods with humorous memories of flat tyres and seeing scary animals. Other stories reveal the contemporary pastimes of young people-playing football, softball and going to the disco (see Plate 9).

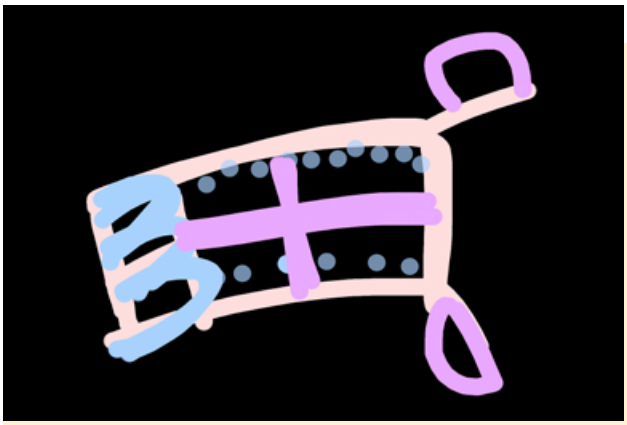


Plate 9
Joella Butler, 2013. 'Tjalaku – Going for honey ants in the Toyota'.
Image courtesy of the Western Desert Verbal Arts Project.

The films have been shown in community film festivals, on Indigenous Community Television, and transferred into book form with QR codes that allow readers to see the films online.

The research on the spoken respect register has also been returned to the Ngaanyatjarra community. At the end of 2018 we went back to the community with a list of some 300 words and their equivalent meanings in everyday Ngaanyatjarra (and Pitjantjatjara), representing the most extensive list of examples from this special respect register (see also Goddard: 1992). Around thirty older people had been interviewed, providing more than six hours of recordings, including example sentences and descriptions of the context of use. These interviewees are representative of the last people to have learned this auxiliary language, and of the very few able to still speak it in the '*yirrkapiri* camp' during the manhood-making ceremony. The interviews were transcribed and translated in ELAN and entered into the FLEX dictionary-making programme. We left this precious document with an older woman who was eager to spearhead a revitalisation of this special speech style. Some weeks later we heard that the list had been taken into the *yirrkapiri* camp and it had piqued the interest of some of the young people, catalysing a burst of enthusiasm for learning this verbal art form among the young. Such examples of the use of research materials provide a window into the many ways that this intangible heritage can be kept alive, reminding us that safeguarding must have multiple dimensions. Firstly, items must be stored in sustainable archives for future generations, but these traditions must also be maintained as living practices among the younger generation as the future of these unique oral traditions and cultural practices resides 'in their hands' (Hinton: 2014, xi).

In conclusion, we need to consider the connection between language endangerment and language socialisation and the role of the family and community in the acquisition and transmission of cultural processes and practices, including language, over successive generations, and the dynamic hybridity of new language practices as people and their practices change over successive generations. By paying attention to these multi-faceted, multi-dimensional aspects that pertain to the multi-modal speech arts, we may have some chance of safeguarding the Western Desert Verbal Arts for the future.

Acknowledgments

We acknowledge and thank the Ngaanyatjarra Council (Aboriginal Corporation), and all the many members of the Ngaanyatjarra community who participated, for supporting this research. Research by Elizabeth Marrkilyi Ellis has been supported by ELDP (Endangered Languages Documentation Programme) (SG0187) and an ARC Discovery Indigenous Award (IN150100018). Jennifer Green was supported by ARC (Australian Research Council) Fellowships (DP110102767 and DE160100873) and an ARC Linkage project (LP160100743) and Inge Kral by an ARC DECRA Award (DE120100720). We also acknowledge the immense support given by CoEDL (the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language. CE140100041).

ENDNOTES

1 A team of people have worked on the Western Desert Verbal Arts Project. The primary fieldwork researchers are Elizabeth Marrkiliyi Ellis, Jennifer Green and Inge Kral. We have been assisted by Jane Simpson, Alexandra Grant, Natalie O'Toole and Linda Rive with the speech register transcription, translation and analysis; and Lauren Reed with sign language annotation.

2 Digital recordings from the Western Desert Verbal Arts Project have so far been archived at The Endangered Language Archive ELAR at SOAS, University of London https://elar.soas.ac.uk/, and at the Pacific and Regional Archive for Digital Sources in Endangered Cultures PARADISEC http://www.paradisec.org.au/, as well as at the *Tjumalampatju* - Our Stories archive at Ngaanyatjarra Council https://tj.keepingculture.com/welcome.

3 *'Ngurra Karilywaraku'*, writer Trenton Giles. Song 17 on *Turlku 4*, CD produced by Ngaanyatjarra Media, 2010.

4 Australia has not ratified the *Convention*, although one state, Victoria, has recently introduced legislation to protect Aboriginal intangible cultural heritage, including language (*Aboriginal Heritage Amendment Act*, 2016).

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Aligning tradition and creativity: preserving *pansori* in South Korea

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Aligning tradition and creativity: preserving *pansori* in South Korea

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ABSTRACT

In 2016, the South Korean government implemented the Act on the Safeguarding and Promotion of Intangible Cultural Properties (*Muhyeong munhwajae bojeon mit jinheung e gwanhan beomnyul*), thus entering a new stage in the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. Through tracing the development of the preservation of *pansori*, a sung storytelling art form which was amongst the first to be designated as intangible cultural heritage in Korea in 1964, I discuss how patterns of preservation strategies have emerged, as well as how these are being targeted by the new legislation. Although it is still too early to observe the lasting effects of the new legislation, an analysis of the critiques of the previous system, as well as the hopes pinned on the future, will indicate potential future trends.

Keywords

pansori, *wanchang*, South Korea, ICP legislation, Heungboga, Bak Rokju, Bak Songhui, *weonhyeong* (original form), *jeonhyeong* (exemplary form)

Introduction

With the implementation of the 2016 *Act on the Safeguarding and Promotion of Intangible Cultural Properties* (*Muhyeong munhwajae bojeon mit jinheung e gwanhan beomnyul*), South Korea[1] stands at the cusp of a new moment in its long history of the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. While the legislation that was put into place in 1962 has been unquestionably successful in helping numerous art forms survive that might otherwise have perished, over time issues have arisen with the previous system, which the new 2016 legislation hopes to address. Through the lens of *pansori*, a sung storytelling art form that was amongst the first genres to be designated as Intangible Cultural Property (ICP), I trace how trends both within the preservation system and the wider context within which *pansori* was being performed, have formed habits of preservation which even new legislation may find hard to change.

In particular, conceptions of what 'traditional' means, as well as what is considered acceptable 'creativity', highlight the fundamental issues which the renewed focus of the 2016 Act aims to address.

Pansori is particularly suited for an analysis of these broader trends as its long history under the preservation system provides ample evidence to show how its preservation has developed. The genre is generally perceived as traditionally consisting of a single performer (the *sorikkun*) telling a story using a mixture of song (*sori*), narration (*aniri*) and gesture (*ballim*), accompanied simply by a single drummer (*gosu*) playing a barrel-shaped drum (*soribuk*) while providing shouts of encouragement (*chuimsae*); the watching audience also shouts encouragement. Its importance as a traditional genre is highlighted by the priority given to its designation (as National Intangible Cultural Property No. 5, out of 131 current designations), as well as the recognition offered by UNESCO, which registered it as a *Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity* in 2003. As will become apparent in this article, debates around the nature of tradition and creativity, as well as how these should be preserved and promoted, have shaped the history of *pansori* preservation, and the 2016 Act can be perceived as the next step in this development.

The history of *pansori* preservation

The history of *pansori* preservation dates back well before the first law for preserving intangible cultural heritage. Intellectually, the activities of the culturalist movement (*munhwa chueui*) during the Japanese colonial period (1910–1945), spearheaded by figures such as I Gwangsu, Choe Namseon, I Neunghwa and Son Jintae, paved the way for a valuing of traditional culture, with their early examinations of folklore, particularly of shamanism and the Dangun myth. Yang Jongsung[2] (2003, pp.20–29) highlights Song Seokha and Im Seokjae as especially important. Song was one of the founding members of the Korean Folklore Society (*Minsok hakhoe*), which actively informed the development of ICP legislation, while Im was one of the designers of the legislation which became the ICP system, as well as being a judge and committee member of the National Folk Arts Contest (*Jeon'guk minsok yesul kyeongyeon daehoe*), a competition which became the first stepping stone for many performance artists seeking national designation. Artistically, the Joseon Vocal Music Research Society (*Joseon seongak yeon'guhoe*) was a collection of the greatest *pansori* performers of the colonial period, who came together in an attempt to combat the waning popularity of *pansori* in the face of the changing tastes of an audience drawn to modern entertainment, as well as repression from colonial cultural policy. While the Joseon Vocal Music Research Society's attitude towards preserving *pansori* tended towards making it relevant to contemporary audiences, even at the cost of adapting performance styles, there were others who feared that this adaptation might lead to the loss of traditional performance culture as a whole. Already during the colonial period, then, there were movements to attempt to preserve traditional arts before they changed completely or were lost forever.

After Korean independence in 1945, a key individual in this movement was Ye Yonghae, who through articles for the *Han'guk ilbo* (*Korea Times*) between 1959 and 1963 – gathered into a book, *In'gan munhwajae* (*Living Human Treasure*), in 1963 – described the various traditional art forms that were being lost. Ye was motivated in this task by his perception of why traditional arts forms were not being valued:

> *I wanted Human Cultural Properties* [Living Human Treasures] *recognised because they knew the old things that had been passed down to us but were considered part of a base culture, a culture to be despised. Koreans thought it shameful that the lowest strata of society had the best knowledge of our music, drama and crafts. But they also felt shameful because they didn't personally know the arts and crafts. We needed to raise the status of these low caste people and I thought this could be done if the government honoured them. Giving them recognition would function as part of a rehabilitation process. It would be like the last breath for those about to die, like an injection of life.* (Interview with Ye Yonghae, cited in Howard: 2006, pp.4-5)

The influence that Ye's work had on the ICP system can clearly be seen in the fact that although individuals designated to preserve certain art forms are officially called *boyuja* (holder), the term *in'gan munhwajae* (living human treasure), made popular by Ye on the basis of an equivalent Japanese term, is still much more commonly used. 'Living human treasure' itself

demonstrates the raised status that traditional artists and performers began to have thanks to Ye's work and the ICP system. Howard (2006, p.5) highlights how Ye's work focused greatly on lineage, a focus which became extremely important in ICP legislation as well.

Ye's influence, as well as the continuing efforts of the Korean Folklore Society, helped establish the inclusion of folk culture in the legislation (Howard: 2006, p.6), as Law 961, the Cultural Property Preservation Law (*Munhwajae bohobeop*), was promulgated in 1962, dedicated to protecting traditional culture in four categories: Tangible Cultural Properties (*Yuhyeong munhwajae*: buildings, artworks, documents etc.), Intangible Cultural Properties (*Muhyeong munhwajae*: music, dance, drama, rituals, martial arts, crafts and food), Folk Cultural Properties (*Minsok jaryo*: 'public morals and customs') and Monuments (*Kinyeommul*: including archaeological and natural relics).[3] As has often been highlighted, particularly by Howard (2006; 2012a), this legislation was based on Japanese legislation already in existence: the 1950 *Bunkazai hogohō*, the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties, which was in turn shaped by previous legislation in the form of the 1871 *Plan for the Preservation of Ancient Artefacts* (*Koki kyūbutsu hozonkata*). However, the Korean legislation differs from the Japanese version particularly in its attitude to folk culture, not only focusing on 'high culture' but also raising the profile of folk culture as well.[4]

Howard (2006, p.6) argues that this demonstrates a nationalistic aim to strengthen Korean identity, particularly in opposition to Japan and China which had historically exerted significant cultural influence on Korea. While this is certainly the case, I would add that it is hard to imagine efforts to preserve cultural heritage without a nationalistic purpose behind them. Obviously, minorities within a nation may choose to preserve their music for their own sake, but I would argue that these efforts will often be co-opted by the nation when arguing for the preservation of culture on the national or international level. This can be seen from examples around the globe, for example in China (Rees: 2012), Georgia (Tsitsishvili: 2009), Greece/Turkey (Aykan: 2015), Thailand (Vail: 2014), or Uzbekistan (Adams: 2013).

The Korean legislation came during a time when much debate was going on about how best to preserve traditional genres, whether to fix a genre in its current (or 'original') state or to popularise it so that it continued to be relevant for contemporary life. Jeong Sujin (2008, p.210) gives the example of *pansori* to demonstrate how *gugak* (traditional Korean music) was popularised. After the colonial period there were two ways in which *pansori* adapted itself to contemporary society: the first was the more active use of *gyemyeonjo* (one of the modes of *pansori*, often associated with sad scenes and female characters) to match the desire in the audience for sadder, more dramatic melodies; this strategy was exemplified by singers Jeong Jeongryeol, I Hwajungseon and Im Pangul. The second strategy, she says, was the change from traditional *pansori* to *changgeuk* (a form of *pansori*-derived musical theatre which is more suitable for the stage), from *listening music to seen music*; this strategy was exemplified by Gang Yonghwan, Jeong Jeongryeol and Gim Yeonsu.

However, the debate around popularisation was not limited to *pansori* alone, but was widely discussed throughout the *gugak* scene. Hence, Jeong quotes I Hyegu stating: *I believe that* [the stagnation of *gugak*] *is due to the fact that there was no changjak* [creation of new pieces] *activity which expressed the emotions of contemporary life. Repetition brings stalemate and changjak is development: since this is a commonly heard phrase, we should pay attention to the example of the past and take care again* (I Hyegu: 1959, p.51 cited in Jeong Sujin: 2008, p.211). The fact that I Hyegu was active with the Kyeongseong (present-day Seoul) Central Broadcasting Station (*Kyeongseong Jung'ang Bangsongguk*, in Japanese *Keijō chūō hōsōkyoku*) in the 1930s might have coloured his perspective to favour more innovative approaches that would appeal to wider audiences.

On the opposite side of the debate stood Jang Sahun, a member of the Cultural Properties Committee at the time, and I's second-in-command at the new Department of Traditional Music at Seoul National University. He lamented the fact that *gugak* artists were gradually moving away from tradition, stating that: *without having deeply researched what the traditional techniques are, they indiscriminately flow along their own line and rely on unacceptable techniques to sort things out* (Jang Sahun: 1966, pp.159–60 cited in Jeong Sujin: 2008, p.214). Jang's history as a former student and member of the I Royal Family Court Music Bureau (*I Wangjik Aakbu*) may have contributed to his more

conservative approach. Taking the middle ground was the concert master of the *Kungnip gugagweon* (nowadays known in English as the National *Gugak* Centre) at the time, Seong Gyeongrin. He argued that: *Whether it be for the contemporisation of gugak, or for the creation of a new national music, our first, most basic task should be the correct transmission of our musical heritage* (Seong Gyeongrin: 1960, p.73 cited in Jeong Sujin: 2008, p.213). Seong was also a former student and member of the I Royal Family Court Music Bureau, and his history of teaching *gugak* at various academic institutions demonstrates his focus on education.

These different standpoints are still debated, but what is important about the debates of the 1950s and 1960s is that they were attempting to justify how traditional genres should be treated in the present and future. While each of these standpoints has stimulated different forms of activity (for example, Killick: 2010, pp.124–49 provides a detailed account of the experimentation that went into making *changgeuk* continue to have both traditional and popular relevance), it was Jang Sahun's point of view that won in the ICP policy, and a firm focus on preserving the *weonhyeong* (archetype or original form) became the guiding principle of the preservation system for many decades.

Moving into the 1970s, the focus on *weonhyeong* became more entrenched in the case of *pansori*, with an increased emphasis on *badi* (lineage) rather than *deoneum* (an individual *sorikkun*'s style as exemplified in their rendition of certain parts of the story). In 1964, it was only certain *pansori* singers' *deoneum* of *Chunhyangga* that were designated for preservation, but moving into the 1970s the focus became much more concentrated on an entire story sung in the style of a particular *pansori* school, and at this time Bak Dongjin's *wanchang* (full rendition of a *pansori* piece) performances captured the spirit of the times (Kim Kee Hyung [Gim, Gihyeong] : 2006, p.89). Killick : 2010, p.126 highlights how in the 1960s *pansori* suffered from a lack of patronage due to its perceived inability to compete with the popularity of *changgeuk*, and this might help explain the popularity and support that the idea of the *wanchang* enjoyed in *pansori* circles.

In light of the shift in the preservation agenda, from 1973 the founding members of the Society of *Pansori* Research (*Pansori Hakhoe*) – Jeong Byeonguk, Gang Hanyeong, I Bohyeong and Go Hyeon'guk – worked to promote this extended style of performance, using this as a means to combat the loss of popularity *pansori* had seen due to the rise of *changgeuk* (Howard: 2008, p.170). With the support of *Deep-Rooted Tree* (*Ppuri kipeun namu*), an arts journal and associated company led by Han Changgi, and the *Han'guk Ilbo* (*Korea Times*), where Ye Yonghae was working, this performance style rapidly grew in popularity. However, as Howard describes it, the performances fell prey to their own success:

> *As singers recognised their new status, they demanded higher fees, not least since they were now generously rewarded for performing short pansori segments on television or at festivals in major venues, so felt they should apply some form of multiplier to arrive at an appropriate fee for a wanchang performance. The Pansori Hakhwe* [sic]*, though, used sponsorship to cover what they were unable to raise at the box office, and found it difficult to increase their funding. Several singers refused to perform when offered what they considered inadequate payments, and criticism began to be levelled at the Pansori Hakhoe itself. The performance events, though, had now showcased the entire pansori repertoire as practised within the major lineages that were now documented, and so the decision was taken to suspend the series. The legacy survived, though, for many wanchang recordings had been or were soon made.* (2008, p.170)

Perhaps the most well respected *wanchang* recordings were made by *Deep-Rooted Tree*, in collaboration with *Korea Britannica*. Following the success of their *wanchang* performance series, which concluded in 1978 after a hundred concerts, in 1982 *Korea Britannica* released a series of the five core *pansori* stories over twenty-three LP records, under the title *Ppuri kipeun namu pansori daseot madang* (*Deep-Rooted Tree Five Pansori Episodes*), with *Chunhyangga* sung by Jo Sanghyeon, *Simcheongga* sung by Han Aesun, *Heungboga* and *Sugungga* sung by Bak Bongsul, and finally *Jeokbyeokka* sung by Jeong Gweonjin. These included extensive booklets with explanations of the repertoire, as well as a full transcription of the text with explanation of the more archaic language.

In 1989, *Korea Britannica* began to release a second series of albums, with *Chunhyangga* sung by

Choe Seunghui, *Simcheongga* sung by Jo Sanghyeon, *Sugungga* sung by Jeong Gwangsu, *Jeokbyeokka* sung by Song Sunseop, and finally *Heungboga* sung by O Jeongsuk. In a change from the previous recordings, in the second series well-known *pansori* aficionados (*gwimyeongchang*) were invited to provide *chuimsae* (shouts of encouragement) which were included in the recording as an integral part of a *pansori* performance. Another change from the first series was the title, now *Ppuri kipeun namu pansori daseot batang* (*Deep-Rooted Tree Five Pansori Episodes*). This change of title is revealing: while both *madang* and *batang* translate similarly into English, and are words used to describe the core repertoire of *pansori*, the latter indicates a perceptual shift to a more fixed foundation for the *pansori* genre. This is emphasised in the liner notes, which are quick to point out and praise the fact that the *sorikkun* had shown little to no variation between different recordings. We can see here the power of the 'original form' paradigm taking effect, with the institutionalisation of *pansori* having a marked influence on the aesthetics of the genre.

The focus on lineage, with the *wanchang* as a rite of passage to demonstrate one's mastery of a certain style, has been maintained until the present day. However, with new legislation (the Act on the Safeguarding and Promotion of Intangible Cultural Properties, *Muhyeong munhwajae bojeon mit jinheung e gwanhan beomnyul*) enacted on 28 March 2016, while it is too early to establish concrete effects, it will be interesting to see whether and how the system will change in the future. Choe Hyejin (2016, p.419) cites the Cultural Heritage Administration's justifications for this change in legislation, which focuses on the enactment of the UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* in 2003[5] and the fierce regional competition to claim intangible cultural heritage as one's own, for example when China proclaimed the Korean folk song *Arirang*, also sung by their ethnic Korean minority (*Chaoxianzu/Joseonjeok*), as their own cultural heritage in 2011.

These two events seem to have highlighted the need for new legislation, as within the old system:

> *The narrowing scope of intangible cultural property as well as the principle of maintaining the weonhyeong* (original form) *of intangible cultural properties was causing an impediment to creative succession and development; the challenge of popular demand for traditional crafts was endangering the transmission of arts and crafts;* [and] *the changing societal environment's negative impact on the sustainability of transmission through apprenticeship* (Cultural Heritage Administration, quoted in Choe Hyejin: 2016, p.419, my translation).

These were all considered issues which required rectifying. The 2016 legislation advocates a clear shift in focus, changing *the principle of preserving and promoting intangible cultural properties to attempting to move towards the combination of the traditional and the contemporary* (Cultural Heritage Administration, quoted in Choe Hyejin: 2016, p.419, my translation).

Strategies to be employed to make this happen include introducing a transmission system through university education; the bringing together of traditional crafts with knowledge of contemporary design, management systems and intellectual property rights; and the support of international exchange through overseas exhibitions and performances.

With regards to this more international and promotional outlook, Choe (2016, p.420) highlights two institutions that are to be set up under the new legislation: the Korean Intangible Cultural Property Promotion Centre (*Han'guk muhyeong munhwajae jinheung sent'eo*) in the Korean Cultural Heritage Foundation, to support enterprises and activities related to the promotion of ICP more efficiently (Act on the Safeguarding and Promotion of Intangible Cultural Properties, line 46); and the UNESCO Asia Pacific Intangible Cultural Heritage International Information Networking Centre, to support activities protecting the Asia Pacific region's intangible cultural heritage (Act, line 47). This institutional support highlights Korea's aim to become a regional leader in the preservation and promotion of ICP.

Of particular interest in the new legislation is the shift from the focus on *weonhyeong* (원형, 原形, original form) to *jeonhyeong* (전형, 典型, exemplary form), which reflects the more open, less rigid guidelines of the 2003 UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. Other new additions to the official vocabulary are the terms 'honorary holder'

(*myeongye boyuja*), referring to *boyuja* over the age of 80, and 'living human treasure' (*in'gan munhwajae*) – a term which, as already noted, has been in common use since the late 1950s but has only now been taken into the official vocabulary. It is also to be noted that the term 'Important Intangible Cultural Property' is to be replaced with the term 'National Intangible Cultural Property' (2016, p.420); one would presume that this could be a strategy to combat the perceived lower status of regional and city intangible cultural properties. As Choe points out, there is to be a further drive to find and designate further regional and city Intangible Cultural Properties as well (2016, pp.422–3).

However, Choe also highlights certain tasks that still require further focus and development if *pansori* is to develop well under the new legislation: she argues particularly that there is a need for leadership from master singers who can show the representative form of Korean *pansori*. She states that there are outstanding master *pansori* singers who have not been designated within the system, and that particularly in the provinces, these master singers (and master drummers) should actively be sought out, supported and designated as either national, regional or city intangible cultural properties (2016, pp.418). In reality, this is by no means a new argument, as the recordings for the *Deep-Rooted Tree* series described above were already claiming the same aim in the 1980s. Choe also emphasises that although the transmission of good *pansori* lineages is important, the role and responsibility of *sorikkun* should lie with hard work and *deugeum* (the creation of one's true *pansori* voice), as *sorikkun* who work on this will naturally be the ones selected as holders of intangible cultural properties (2016, p.436). These tasks begin to highlight some of the areas that the ICP system, while successful in many areas, has not always been able to address. The following section will examine in further detail some of the criticisms of the ICP system as it has operated so far.

Criticisms of the ICP system

While the ICP is without doubt to be credited for the survival of many genres that would not have otherwise been transmitted until today, no system can be perfect, and there are several critiques to examine. The first comes from Jeong Sujin, who in her 2008 book *Muhyeong munhwajae eui tansaeng* (*The Birth of Intangible Cultural Properties*) addresses two concerns with regard to the current structure of the system. The first is that the system's methods of administration and management are based on the preservation of archetypes and treat intangible heritage as tangible heritage – an issue which is a contradiction in terms and conflicts with the understanding of culture as being *the process of change itself* (from Rapport and Overing: 2000, p.96 cited in Jeong Sujin: 2008, p.14). The second is that the artists within the system lose their artistic agency by participating in it, and are treated only as legal objects for the management of the system:

> *On the one hand, intangible cultural properties are the 'national culture's archetype (weonhyeong)' which protect Korea's distinct national characteristics, and under the premise that they are cultural assets which must be protected at the national level, the producers are not artists possessing artistic creative skills but rather named as 'holders (boyuja)' who must dumbly transmit the intangible cultural properties. They are distinguished from other producers in the artistic world due to their being given the honour of being 'boyuja' (or in'gan munhwajae, living human treasure), along with financial support. Furthermore, the fact that the acknowledgement of being a 'boyuja' is decided in a way that has nothing (or very little) to do with the relationship between art and performance producers, that simply relies on external logic, this is another aspect in which this system also differs greatly from other artistic fields.* (Jeong Sujin: 2008, p.228, my translation)

Jeong goes on to explain that the system works because in a society where art is looked down upon, artists will adapt to it in order to gain the honour of being a *boyuja* rather than 'just' an artist. It is possible to see why artists would buy into the system, but the problem remains that in so doing, the potential for artistic development is severely curtailed.

Seo Yu Seok criticises the broadness of the ICP system, questioning how Music and Dance for the Rite to Royal Ancestors (*Jongmyo jeryeak*), and now the pan-Korean folksong *Arirang*, can be preserved using the same legislation as *pansori* (2016, p.136). He describes how the concept of *weonhyeong* led to the establishment of a need to copy one's teacher exactly, with the emergence of complete repertory performances helping to prove one's faithfulness to the line, and how

this focus on lineage led to the disappearance of the concept of *deoneum* (a term indicating new scenes or styles created by master singers to prove their mastery) thus removing the possibility for artistic development. There is an interesting parallel here with Christopher Small's (1998, p.88) discussion of how only long-gone masters are considered part of the canon of Western classical music. Seo criticises how the designation of certain lineages as intangible heritage meant others were gradually sidelined and forgotten (2016, pp.145–8), a matter that is also criticised by Yoo Youngdai [Yu Yeongdae] (2013) and Choe Hyejin (2016). However, Seo argues that, with the new 2016 law changing the focus to *jeonhyeong* as the exemplary form, there is now room for more creativity and variety to be reintroduced into the genre, although this will depend on how the new legislation is implemented (2016, p.153).

With regards to *weonhyeong*, Yang (2003, p.81) and Howard (2012b, pp.133–8) compare the problem with the concept of an archetype, in that once it is designated it cannot be changed, even if later research discovers that the genre was originally performed a different way. Howard (2006, pp.28–38) also offers a criticism, underlining the arbitrariness of designating something as an archetype when it has often undergone significant change in order to be considered suitable for ICP designation. He offers the example of *Ganggangsullae*, National Intangible Cultural Property No. 8, a form of play combining dance and song, originally done by women. *Ganggangsullae* was restructured, at least partially, by the late Bak Byeongcheon, who came from a shaman family on Jindo Island, and was also involved in restructuring several other genres for designation:

> *Ganggangsullae used to be performed by women to the light of the full moon and could go on for a very long time. I reorganised it totally differently to create a formal genre lasting thirty minutes. In the old days, the women had started, stopped, played, joked, sung and so on. They sang what they felt like singing. If I included everything as it had been, then I could not make Ganggangsullae beautiful for the 1972 National Folk Arts Contest. … In reality, then, Ganggangsullae as it is now performed is my composition. Someday perhaps, people will research the old performance style and reinstate it. But, what we now perform is a professional work, taking elements from the tradition to show its beauty.* (Interview with Bak Byeongcheon in Howard: 2006a, p.107)

The National Folk Arts Contest was at the time considered a ticket to designation within the ICP system. Indeed, Yang (2003, p.38) states that the judges at the contest were predominantly made up of members of the Cultural Properties Committee (*Muhyeong Munhwajae Wiweonhoe*). The practice is heavily criticised by Jeong Sujin, who describes how the demands of judges exacerbated moves towards making traditional arts suitable for stage performance. She cites the comments of judges in the 1963 contest: *The weonhyeong should be preserved as it is, while there should also be change (diversity), teamwork, timing, putting the text in order etc. There should be an elevation as an art form* (I Duhyeon in *Chosŏn Ilbo* 11/10/1963, cited in Jeong: 2008, p.219).

Finally, criticisms of the effect the ICP system has had on genres in regions outside of Seoul have also been raised. I Myeongjin (2015, pp.131–140) addresses the effect on cultural properties designated at the provincial and city levels. Firstly, he notes there has been a decrease of transmission in the provinces as master singers designated as *boyuja* move to Seoul for their activities (this is also addressed in Um Haekyung: 2013, p.53): education, competitions and performances are concentrated in Seoul, and this is also where audiences are based, essentially meaning that performers can make a better income there than in other regions. Secondly, I Myeongjin states that there has been a decrease in the supporters of transmission, as young aspiring *sorikkun* move to the cities to learn from national-level *boyuja* who have already moved there. Thirdly, there is a perceived difference in rank between national and regional *boyuja*, whereby those at the provincial and city levels are considered to be of lesser quality. This leads to fewer people being willing to learn and to their lineages no longer being passed on, resulting in a loss of variety in the genre as a whole (this argument is also made by Yoo Youngdai: 2013, p.375). Finally, I Myeongjin argues that the provincial and city *boyuja* receive insufficient administrative support; their stipends are lower than those of their national counterparts leaving them unable to hold concerts as they have insufficient funds to rent performance spaces; they also do not receive free healthcare (which the national-level *boyuja* do). Again, like Seo above, I

Myeongjin emphasises that the problems were caused by the previous legislation, and that with new legislation coming into force there is the potential that at least some of these problems can begin to be addressed (2015, p.144). It will take time to discover how successful the new legislation will be.

Blaming regional inequality in the ICP system purely on legislation is probably too extreme; after all, it is not surprising that economic and cultural activities tend to gravitate towards metropolitan centres. These issues of the difference in support given to national (concentrated in Seoul) and regional ICP must also be understood within the context of a long history of regionalism in Korea, with Jeolla province in particular (where *pansori* is said to have originated) often perceived to have borne the brunt of regional disparity (Kim Wang-Bae: 2003, p.14 and pp.17–18). In the 2000s, and in fact beginning under the Roh Tae Woo administration more than a decade earlier, there was an increased movement towards the decentralisation of governmental authority. However, Bae Yooil (2016, p.81) argues that the Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun Hye administrations have to a certain extent retrenched on the issue of decentralisation. The change in legislation described by I may thus indicate a return to decentralisation with regard to the preservation of ICP; again, time will tell whether this is the case.

Preservation of *pansori*: the case of *Heungboga*

Having looked at the ICP system in general terms, I will now look in more detail at the preservation of *pansori* in particular. When *pansori* was first designated as an intangible cultural property in 1964, it was only for the story *Chunhyangga*, with different *sorikkun* designated for different episodes (*deoneum*) of the whole. Other designations followed for other stories, until in 1976, the *pansori* designation was unified under Important Intangible Cultural Property No. 5, with different holders designated for each of the five pieces preserved: *Jeokbyeokka*, *Chunhyangga*, *Heungboga*, *Simcheongga* and *Sugungga*. In this section, I focus on *Heungboga*, as this is the story I focused on during the course of my fieldwork (September 2014–2015) in the *Dongpyeonje* (the Eastern school of *pansori*, known for its direct and forceful singing) version, from Min Hyeseong, a student of the late *boyuja* Bak Songhŭi and *isuja* (literally 'graduate', the most junior of ranks in the hierarchy of teachers in the ICP system) in her own right (see Plates 1 and 2).



Plate 1
Tracing the line of transmission: in the present, my teacher Min Hyeseong, *isuja* of National Intangible Cultural Property No. 5 Heungboga.
Photo: Min Hyeseong.



Plate 2
The next link in the chain of transmission: Bak Songhui, *boyuja* of National Intangible Cultural Property No. 5 Heungboga (2002–2017).
Photo: Min Hyeseong.

The preservation of *Heungboga* as a specific repertory which began in 1971 with a report written by Jeong Hwayeong and Hong Yunsik for the Office of Cultural Properties, which made the case for *Heungboga* to be designated. There are several things to note in this report: first of all, it stated that *Heungboga* was one of the three great *pansori* pieces, alongside *Simcheongga* and *Chunhyangga*, and praised *Heungboga* above the other two for its balance of tragedy and comedy (1971, p.11). This is interesting since, historically speaking, *Jeokbyeokka* and *Sugungga* were usually considered 'higher' pieces, as they required more knowledge of Chinese classics, which made them more popular with elite patrons. In contrast, Jeong and Hong explicitly distance *Heungboga* from Chinese influence, instead making links to Mongolian stories containing similar themes[6] (1971, p.7), and praising *Heungboga* for the local flavour of its location and characters. This is further supported by their description of *pansori*'s origins in shamanism which they describe as being a purely Korean religion (1971, p.28). We can see the origins of this argument in the writings of Choe Namseon and Yi Neunghwa back during the colonial period which were discussed at the start of this paper. Bearing in mind the explicitly nationalistic aim of the ICP system, it is hardly surprising that the reports attempted to portray the story as untouched by external influence.

The report goes on to provide the text of several *sorikkun's* versions of *Heungboga*, before listing several candidates for designation: Bak Rokju (see Plate 3), Bak Dongjin, Jang Yeongchan, Gang Dogeun, Gong Daeil and Hong Cheongtaek. Brief biographical data was provided for each candidate, for example Bak Rokju in Table 1. Although multiple candidates were named as potential holders, it was only Bak Rokju who was designated holder in 1971. What might explain this? Bak Dongjin, also a candidate for *Heungboga*, was already designated as the *boyuja* of *Jeokbyeokka*, but what about the others? Bak Rokju had previously been designated for her version of an episode (*Gisaeng jeomgo*/ 'March of the Courtesans') in *Chunhyangga* in 1964, and was hence already recognised institutionally as a master singer. But as the system changed from a focus on *deoneum* (individual creation of a scene or song) to a focus on *badi* (lineage), it was not possible for all the master singers to remain holders of *Chunhyangga*, hence, most likely, there was a desire for those who were already designated to be given precedence in becoming holders of other stories. Of the six *sorikkun* originally designated as holders of *Chunhyangga*, Gim Sohui, Gim Yeonsu and Gim Yeoran remained holders of *Chunhyangga*, Jeong Gwangsu and Bak Choweol became holders of *Sugungga* and Bak Rokju became the holder of *Heungboga*. Bak Rokju had been one of the most prolific recording artists of the colonial period (according to Jeong Yeongjin: 2004, p.98 and p.118), as well as being a founding member of the Joseon Vocal Music Research Society. She had participated in some of the most famous *changgeuk* performances of the early twentieth century, and her impressive résumé (see Table 1) is given in the report much more fully than those of her competitors.

Bak Rokju passed away in 1979, and although Gang Dogeun was designated a holder for *Heungboga* in 1988 (a post he held until his death in 1996), a successor to Bak Rokju's line was not designated until 2002 when Bak Songhui and Han Nongseon became joint holders.[7] Han



Plate 3
The originator of the lineage - poster for a concert commemorating the birth of Bak Rokju, the first *boyuja* of National Intangible Cultural Property No. 5 Heungboga (1971–1979).
Photo: Min Hyeseong, 30 May, 2015.

Table 1
Information on Bak Rokju from Jeong and Hong (1971, 153, author's translation).

Name	Bak Rokju
Birth date	25th January 1906 (66 years of age at the time of the report)
Studio Address	Seoul, Jongno district, Doneui-dong 21-14
Home Address	Seoul, Jongno district, Nakweon-dong 158
Learning	• Study of Chinese characters • Studied *pansori* under Bak Gihong, Song Man'gap, Jeong Jeongryeol, Gim Changhwan, Gim Jeongmun and Yu Seongjun
Records	• Recorded *pansori* at Columbia, Victor, Okeh, Taepyeongyang Records • Performances of *gukkeuk* (*changgeuk*), member of the Gugak Hyeophoe, teacher of vocal music at the Gugak Yesul Hakkyo, designated as *boyuja* (holder) of ICP No. 5 *pansori*
Prizes received	• 1964: lifetime achievement award *gugak* award (Minister of Public Information) • 1968: cultural heritage lifetime achievement award • 1968: *gugak* grand prize (Minister of Culture and Public Information)
Family	Herself

passed away within only a few months of designation, leaving Bak Songhui as the sole holder. Bak, who celebrated her 90th birthday in 2016, was active as both a performer and teacher until her passing in February 2017. Towards the end, her age was beginning to limit her activities as she jokingly told me in a meeting on 19 December 2014; *pansori* is an art form that ripens with life experience, so aged 90 she felt she was slowly beginning to understand how to sing it properly, but now she was too weak to put her realisations into practice.

According to the new ICP legislation, holders over the age of 80 become honorary holders (*myeongye boyuja*), as they may well be physically unable to carry out their duties (Choe Hyejin: 2016, p.411). In 2013, a call went out for applications to the position of *boyuja* for a variety of different genres, including *Heungboga*. In the call, the following were listed as potential *boyuja* candidates:

(1) *Jeonsu jogyo* (assistant teacher) of the Important ICP
(2) *Isuja* (graduate, the most junior level of the teaching hierarchy) of the Important ICP
(3) *Boyuja* of a city/province level ICP
(4) *Jŏnsu jogyo* of a city/province level ICP
(5) *Isuja* of a city/province level ICP
(6) Any transmitter of the genre (*ilban jeonseungja*)[8]

Auditions were held in which thirteen individuals took part, but no final decision was made, hence a new round of auditions was scheduled for three years later;[9] there has been no declaration of a new *boyuja* as I write this (October 2018).

Clearly, the process of designation can be fraught, as members of the Cultural Properties Committee with different interests may support different candidates. As each *pansori* story has multiple versions, first of all justifying which version to preserve can cause significant debate (as we saw in the critique of Seo Yu Seok (2016) above, and as is also discussed in Yoo Youngdai (2013)). Having decided on a particular version by a particular master, each master will have multiple students who may each have multiple students, so the potential pool of candidates for one lineage may be quite large, hence choosing one over the others can be difficult. Also, the candidates themselves will often promote themselves for the candidacy: Yoo Youngdai (2013, p.379) cites the well-known example of Jo Tongdal and Nam Haeseong who competed for the position of holder of *Sugungga* after Bak Choweol passed away. This helps explain why the space between the death of one holder and the designation of the next may often span several years, if not decades. In the late Bak Songhui's case, as there is no officially designated descendant of her line it is likely that the designation of a new holder will take some time.

Table 2
Areas to be examined when testing potential *pansori boyuja* (Choe Hyejin: 2016, p.431, author's translation)

Area	Classification	Areas to be examined	Measurement standard	Distribution of points
Sori (song)	Degree to which expression is based on tradition	Traditionality of singing style	Degree to which traditionality of singing style is retained	50
	Degree of artistic perfection and skill level	Degree of accuracy of lyrics, rhythm (*jangdan*)	Whether lyrics and *jangdan* are accurate or not	15
		Level of command of singing style	Level of command of singing style	25
		Power of expression of song (*chang*), narration (*aniri*) and gesture (*ballim*)	Degree of power of expression of song (*chang*), narration (*aniri*) and gesture (*ballim*)	10
Gobeop (drumming)	Degree to which expression is based on tradition	Traditionality of drumming style	Level to which drumming style is/is not traditional	50
	Degree of artistic perfection and skill level	Degree of accuracy of *Jangdan*	Whether *Jangdan* are accurate or not	25
		Compatibility with *sori*	Whether *chuimsae* (shouts of encouragement) are appropriate to the *sori*	25

What, then, are the standards by which a holder is designated? Choe Hyejin (2016, pp.428–31) addresses these, listing the skills required of a *pansori boyuja* (see Table 2). Choe makes the point that being able to judge these skills requires extreme specialist knowledge from those on the judging committee (2016, p.432). But, as we have seen above, the members of the Cultural Properties Committee come from a variety of backgrounds. When new potential holders audition, even though experts from the genre itself are invited to join the judging panel, the final decision rests with the committee, and this raises the question to what extent decisions are taken through a judgement of the performer's skill. Much of the decision-making process in the committee is opaque and it is hard to know exactly how decisions are made.

What is rather revealing, however, is the vocabulary employed in the standards listed above, and what they reveal about perceptions of tradition within the ICP system, at least prior to 2016. The most important category for song or drumming is the degree to which it is based on tradition, judged by the 'traditionality' of the singing or drumming style. The term 'traditionality' (*jeontongseong*, 전통성, 傳統性) is constructed from the word for tradition (*jeontong*) and the qualifier *seong*, which here implies a state of being. The term *seong* does however have associated meanings of nature, or natural essence: *seongpum* (성품, 性品) refers to a person's nature or disposition, *seongjil* (성질, 性質) refers to something's essence or intrinsic quality, *seongbyeol* (성별, 性別) refers to one's gender or sex. In this sense, we can understand that the tradition that is being judged in potential holders' performance is perceived as something that is intrinsic to the genre, a part of its natural essence that is to be uncovered by the performer. This perception of tradition clearly ties in well with the perception of the *weonhyeong*, the archetypal original form that is supposed to be preserved under the pre-2016 ICP legislation.

This perception of tradition as something essential and intrinsic, while clearly problematic as seen in the criticisms of the *weonhyeong* principle above, also ties in further to who can lay claim to this tradition. By categorising the genres within the ICP system as being essentially traditional by nature, this denies the possibility of this kind of traditionality existing elsewhere. In his discussion of 'authentic' Aboriginal Australian identity, Griffiths shows how a discourse of authenticity *may overwrite and overdetermine the full range of representations* (1994, p.72) through which identities might be represented, hence *disavow*[ing] *the possibilities for the hybridised subjects of the colonising*

process to legitimate themselves or to speak in ways which menace the authority of the dominant culture (1994, p.76). In laying claim to this essentialised form of tradition, the pre-2016 ICP system sets up an 'authentic,' authoritative version of tradition, thus blocking the possibility of alternative or hybrid definitions of tradition being employed. Genres that lay claim to an alternative perspective of tradition often struggle with being perceived as 'inauthentic', while their very existence is a challenge to the dominant rhetoric of traditionality as defined by the ICP system. The categories for judging a potential holder therefore create a situation in which a stake is claimed for defining what tradition in *pansori* is, and how *sorikkun* are to engage with their art.

Although the future of *Heungboga*'s designation is still unclear, the Bak Rokju line[10] remains one of the most popular lineages (Yoo Youngdai: 2013, p.366) and so seems to be in no immediate risk of disappearing. However, there are criticisms of the way *Heungboga* has been transmitted. One that is commonly heard is that the version transmitted by the late Bak Songhui is not the true *weonhyeong*, as the last section, where Nolbo opens the gourds, had been dropped from the repertoire in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and was only re-created and re-inserted by Bak Rokju in the latter half of the twentieth century (see, e.g., Choe Hyejin: 2016, p.412). Choe Donghyeon (2013, pp.246–7) argues otherwise, stating that it is simply because the narrative structure of *Heungboga* was only stabilised recently, so differences in the way the story was told in the past were simply due to the narrative not yet having reached a stable state.

Another criticism is made by Lee Gyu Ho [I Gyuho] (2006, pp.210–12), who argues that the style of *Heungboga* preserved today can no longer be called *Dongpyeonje* (Eastern School) as it is greatly different from the commanding tone and hammering endings of the *Dongpyeonje* sung by Song Man'gap, one of the oldest recorded singers of the style. Lee provides several explanations: firstly, *sorikkun* in the past developed their own interpretation rather than following their teachers exactly, which led to variations in style between student and teacher. Secondly, the influence of the *Seopyeonje* (Western School, known for its delicate ornamentation and expressive emotions, founded by Bak Yujeon) style was very popular in the colonial period, and can be felt even in Song Man'gap's later recordings, so this may have affected later *sorikkun*'s styles.[11] However, Lee argues that while Bak Rokju's recordings already demonstrate some softening, they still contain the essence of *Dongpyeonje* which was lost as the piece was passed on to the next generations - Bak Songhui and her student Chae Sujeong (2006, pp.210–2).

In contrast, Seo Yu Seok (2016, p.149) questions why it is a problem that the style of current students is more similar to Bak Songhui than to Bak Rokju. For him, the original form of Bak Rokju's *Heungboga* is retained in the text of the story, with musical variation coming from each artist's personal development. If people want to learn Bak Rokju's style exactly, he argues, then rather than learning from Bak Songhui they should learn from recordings of Bak Rokju. These two standpoints demonstrate different approaches to how *pansori* should be preserved: Lee Gyu Ho, writing in 2006, argues for a retention of the *weonhyeong* (original form), with too much deviation on the side of the next generation of holders being seen as harmful to that which is preserved. It should be noted that Lee (2006, p.212) seems rather ambivalent on what the *weonhyeong* actually entails, as he criticises later generations for losing the essence of *Dongpyeonje*, while at the same time taking issue with the system for encouraging *sajinsori* ('photographic sound'), that is, the blind imitation of the teacher without creating one's own voice. In contrast, Seo, writing in 2016 on the cusp of the new legislation, is an avid proponent of moving away from the concept of *weonhyeong* to the new guiding principle of *jeonhyeong* (exemplary form), considering that this can enable and encourage more artistic variation. It is clear, then, that discussions on *weonhyeong* as opposed to *jeonhyeong* are a site of contestation, setting the tone for definitions of *pansori* tradition that may have far-reaching effects on the development of the genre.

Conclusion

This article has traced the history of *pansori* preservation, highlighting how the *weonhyeong* principle, and its associated exclusive perception of what constitutes tradition, have become deeply entrenched within *pansori* as it was preserved prior to 2016. This has not been without its problems, which the new post-2016 legislation aims to redress. However, considering that *pansori* preservation has been skewed towards preserving the *weonhyeong* over several decades, it

seems unlikely that this will change suddenly with the introduction of new legislation. So far at least, there seems to be little to no visible difference in how *pansori* has been treated pre- and post-2016. Although the 2016 legislation claims to be *attempting to move towards the combination of the traditional and the contemporary*, any experimentation or deviation from 'traditional' or *weonhyeong pansori* remains compartmentalised away from the auspices of the Cultural Heritage Administration.

New designations of ICP indicate that, for new designations at least, the shift in focus is being taken into account: National Intangible Cultural Property No. 129, the folk song *Arirang*, for example, includes many popular versions which would not have been considered 'traditional' under the previous legislation. There is hope, then, for a gradual broadening of focus away from the *weonhyeong* principle, to allow for the safeguarding of traditional culture in a way that remains dynamic and relevant to contemporary life. For genres that have long been preserved under the old system, however, it seems like long-term engagement at all levels of the preservation hierarchy will be necessary before any significant change in attitude can be observed.

Acknowledgement

This research was conducted with the support of the Korea Foundation Fellowship for Graduate Studies in Europe.

ENDNOTES

1 The Republic of Korea, henceforth Korea.
2 Names in Korean are romanised according to Revised Romanisation rules unless the authors themselves have provided alternative spellings for their names.
3 This summary is from Howard (2006, p.6).
4 It should be noted that the Japanese system has since become much more accommodating to folk genres as well – for a more detailed discussion on this, see Arisawa (2012).
5 Available online at: http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17716&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION= 201.html. Accessed 29/01/17.
6 The term 'theme' here is used in terms of Parry and Lord's theory of epic storytelling, referring to *groups of ideas regularly used in telling a tale* (Lord: 1960, p.68).
7 By choosing the Bak Rokju line of *Heungboga* for designation, this subsequently has meant that only *sorikkun* who can trace their lineage back to Bak Rokju – either by having learned from her directly, or by having learned from one of her students – are eligible to become *boyuja*.
8 This last category was qualified further, pertaining to individuals who had not been officially recognised by *boyuja* at national, regional or city levels but had one of the following qualities:
(1) Was trained in the genre at a certified traditional culture university
(2) Has won prizes at competitions or exhibitions related to the genre
(3) Has experience of teaching in an education programme related to the practice of the genre
(4) Has received a licence to repair (tangible) cultural properties (this refers more to the crafts category of intangible cultural heritage rather than the performance category).
9 This information came to me from an individual who is intimately involved with this application process, hence I have chosen not to identify the person.
10 The Bak Rokju line is meant here in the wider sense of people who have learned *Heungboga* from Bak Rokju, or one of her students, or one of her students' students, etc. This is not necessarily limited to the Bak Rokju line designated as ICP and transmitted by Bak Songhui, as other *sorikkun* not within the ICP hierarchy might still sing in this style. It is the fact that this style is sung even by those not part of the ICP hierarchy that attests to this style's popularity.
11 Similar arguments regarding *Boseongsori* (a comparatively new school of *pansori* singing centred around Boseong, founded by Bak Yujeon and developed by Jeong Eungmin, also called *Gangsanje*) *Simcheongga* are made by Yeonok Jang (2013, pp.223–6).

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Intangible heritage in the United States: a history of separate initiatives

William Chapman



Intangible heritage in the United States: a history of separate initiatives

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the history of the United States' forays into the recognition and protection of elements of intangible heritage. It traces the beginnings of US initiatives to programmes of the Library of Congress in the late 1920s through several Smithsonian Institution Programmes from the 1930s on, notably the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, begun in 1967 and more recently, the NEA National Heritage Fellowship Programmes. It further examines the work of the National Park Service and Tribal Preservation Programmes, as well as the more recent Pacific Island Programmes. A final section examines regional and citywide efforts to identify and conserve aspects of intangible heritage. Although the US has officially withdrawn from participation in the work of UNESCO it is consoling to recognise the important strides the US has made in the effort to promote and protect traditional modes of cultural expression and the diversity of US approaches, which is in fact in line with the objectives of the organisation's international *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.*

Keywords

UNESCO, Library of Congress, Smithsonian Institution, Folklife, Global Sound Collection, blues, jazz, National Heritage Fellowship, National Park Service, tribal preservation, Interior Department, Pacific Islands

Introduction

A charter member of the UN, the US is also host to its General Assembly and is one of five permanent members of the Security Council (as well as providing about 28% of the UN's annual budget). Breaking with the UN over points of policy and management, the US has periodically held back its agreed-upon share of the organisation's annual dues. In 1983, it separately halted its support for UNESCO; although in 2003, President George W. Bush restored funding for a time. Following UNESCO's decision to admit Palestine as a member in 2011 (under

the Obama administration), the US again held back its contribution following the automatic application of 20+-year old legislation created in different times and circumstances. (Rubin: 2013; UNESCO.US: 2017). This position was reaffirmed in October 2017, when Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, announced that the US was both ending its participation and furthermore would not be paying an unpaid balance of $600 million in contributions legally due prior to the admission of Palestine (Rosenberg and Morello: 2017).

The UNESCO General Conference adopted the international *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* in October 2003—the same year the US began its eight-year re-engagement with UNESCO (UNESCO: 2003; Kurin: 2004). By 2016, 171 member states had ratified the convention. The US was apparently moving toward ratification, but the momentum ended when it withdrew once again from the international organisation. It is now extremely unlikely that it will reverse course given the country's present political circumstances (Curtis: 2017).

The US's withdrawal from UNESCO at the time of the implementation of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* was unfortunate. The US has developed strong governmental and institutional support for the preservation of many aspects of cultural heritage and has much to share with other countries. These efforts have been of longstanding character and have resulted in substantial US contributions to cultural preservation, spread over several governmental agencies and non-profit organisations. Many heritage advocates deeply regret the US decision to step away from both participation and leadership at an international level. Many, too, hope the country will at some point re-join the international community to promote the protection and conservation of tangible and—more recently, following passage of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* - intangible cultural assets as well.

In the meantime, it is worth pausing to consider how the US has approached intangible heritage in the past and the ways that these efforts have found expression and support in US policies in both the governmental and nongovernmental sectors. The preservation of intangible heritage has clearly had strong support in the US. Moreover, US approaches have demonstrated increasing sophistication in both conceptualising intangible heritage and formulating ways to promote recognition and continuity—methods and ideals that still might contribute to an international understanding of intangible heritage.

The Library of Congress

The US's cultural preservation efforts date back as early as the 1920s, with the creation of the Archive of American Folk-Song in the Library of Congress's Music Division in 1928. Instigated by folk music enthusiast, Robert Winslow Gordon (1888-1961), with the encouragement of Herbert Putnam (1861-1955), then Librarian of Congress, the archive struggled until the 1930s, when John A. Lomax (1867-1948) came to the library and created the first paid position in folklore—a job that went to his son, the noted folk music collector, Alan Lomax (1915-2002). Later Benjamin Botkin (1901-1975) joined the staff, expanding the scope of the collection to include an ever-increasing number of recordings, in addition to sheet music (Groce: 2016) (Plate 1).

In the post-World War II era, the Library of Congress's 'Folk Archive' (as it came to be known over the years) continued to expand, under the leadership of Duncan Emrich (1908-1977) and of his successor, Rae Korson (1901-1991). Korson, the wife of noted folklorist, George Korson, expanded the library's reference section and increased the number of recordings converted



Plate 1
Virginia string band, Ballard Branch Bogtrotters Band (1934-1942), Galax, Virginia, 1937. The types of folk traditions recorded through early federal recording efforts.
Source: Wikimedia Commons.

to 33-rpm albums, which were then becoming the industry standard. The late 1950s and 1960s marked a blossoming of popular interest, fuelled by nascent folk festivals, individual performances, and a sudden increase in the number of commercial recordings. This new interest coincided with the birth of a new subculture of folk enthusiasts, coalescing with movements for nuclear disarmament, social justice, and racial equality (Hardin: 2004).

In 1976, reflective of the enthusiasm surrounding the US Bicentennial, the United States Congress passed the American Folklife Preservation Act (Public Law 94-201), which created the American Folklife Center (AFC) at the Library of Congress *to preserve and present American Folklife* through programmes of research, scholarship, education, performances, exhibits, and publications (Groce: 2016). In 1978, the Library of Congress took the important step of transferring what was then known as the 'Folk Archive' from the Music Division to the new centre (Hardin: 2001; Cutting-Baker and Farley: 1994).

The AFC's first director was Alan Jabbour (1942-2017), a noted musician, folklorist, and scholar. An American of Syrian descent, Jabbour had studied music in his home state of Florida before receiving his PhD in English literature from Duke University in 1968. His early interest was folk music of the Upper South, including North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia, and he turned his training as a classical violinist to the recording and performance of traditional songs. Serving as an assistant professor in English and folklore at UCLA, he became head of the Archive of Folk Culture, transferring his title to the new centre with its creation. Jabbour immediately introduced two significant initiatives in documentation: one focused on Chicago and a second on South-Central Georgia. Similar efforts followed in northern Maine, in Lowell, Massachusetts, in the New Jersey Pine Barrens, at New River Gorge in West Virginia, and at Paradise Valley in Nevada, among others (Jabbour: 2005).

In 1979, the American Folklife Center launched the Federal Cylinder Project, an ambitious effort to record over ten thousand wax cylinder recordings of ethnographic materials on to tape (American Folklife Center: 2013). This project coincided with a widening of the centre's purview to place equal emphasis on history, material culture, celebrations, and other customs; it also began to collect materials on culture of the post-World War II period (American Folklife Center: 2011). In 1981, in reflection of its greater breadth, the earlier Archive of Folk Song became part of the the 'Archive of Folk Culture', now more commonly called the 'American Folklife Center's archive', to distinguish it from the other work of the centre (Groce: 2016).

Technically, the work of the American Folklife Center falls under what can be considered 'documentary heritage', though the work of the centre certainly has ramifications for the promotion of intangible heritage. Since its beginnings in the 1920s, recordings and other materials collected by the centre have served living artists in their quest for older performances and musical forms. In this way, it transcribes neat divisions between documentation (and memory) and the perpetuation of living traditions.

The Smithsonian Institution

By the early 1980s, the Smithsonian Institution had joined with the Archive of Folk Culture in the promotion of folklore and popular culture. In early January 1967, Jim Morris (James R. Morris: 2016), the Smithsonian's Director of Museum Services, suggested the creation of an outdoor festival to celebrate folk traditions from throughout the US. Morris hired Ralph Rinzler (1934-1994), a figure previously associated with the Newport Folklife Festival, to head up the initiative, and in July 1967, the first annual Festival of American Folklife was held on the National Mall (Spitz: 2016). With a budget of $4,900, the first festival included eighty-four participants—among them, Jones and the Sea Islanders, blues-artist John Jackson, storyteller Janie Hunter, cowboy singer Glenn Ohrlin, Libba Cotton, Dejan's Olympia Brass Band, and the King Island Eskimo Dancers (Morris: 2016). The Festival drew over 430,000 visitors and received a great deal of media attention and support from members of Congress (Smithsonian: 1967). Secretary S. Dillon Ripley (1913-2001) was enthusiastic and gave his continued endorsement to the project (Kurin: 1991).

In addition to the Festival, Jim Morris also organised a symposium on folklife. This featured veteran music collector Alan Lomax (1915-2002), recording engineer Moses Asch (1905-1986), African folklorist Roger

Abrahams (b.1933), German-American folklorist Don Yoder (1921-2015), Utah-based scholar Austin Fife (1909-1986), ethno-musicologist D.K. (Donald Knight) Wilgus (1918-1989), and pioneering folklorist Richard Dorson (1916-1981), among others (Spitz: 2016). Collectively, the participants suggested a comprehensive programme of folklife, to be housed at the Smithsonian. At first, part of the Smithsonian's Division of Performing Arts, a separate Office of Folklife Programs emerged in 1980 (Smithsonian Institution Archives: 2017).

In 1987, the Office of Folklife Programs acquired the Moses and Frances Asch Collection, consisting of the original recordings, business records, correspondence, and photographic materials of Folkways Records, a label founded by Moses Asch (1905-1986) in 1948 (Smithsonian Folkways: 2007). With 2,168 titles, the Asch collection was truly one of the world's greatest single repositories of folk music. This collection formed the core of what later became known as the 'Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections', named after the first director of the Folklife Festival and longtime head of the Office of Folklife Programs (Smithsonian Institution: 2017). The collection eventually included additional recordings from the Paredon, Cook, Dyer-Bennet, Fast Folk, and Monitor record labels, which now form the play list of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings. Notably strong in Euro-American, African American, Caribbean, and Native American musical performance and traditions, the Smithsonian's collection now extends to a truly global assemblage of ethnic performance traditions, spoken word recordings, sounds of nature and science, occupational folklore, and family folklore (Smithsonian Institution: 2017a).

Presently, the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage is one of nine Smithsonian research centres. The centre, in turn, is divided into four separate administrative units and activity portals (Smithsonian Newsdesk: 2013). The headquarters is located on the National Mall, near the Smithsonian's other museums and research centres. The Folkways Recordings Collection is one of the most popular aspects of the centre and one of the four areas of activity (Smithsonian Folkways: 2017a). Part of the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archive and Collections since 1987, recordings produced by the label from 1948 are available online through the Smithsonian, or through retail outlets.

The second major activity is that of the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collection and includes the research branch of the centre. This is designed for use by scholars and is available by appointment. The reading room for the collection is located just off the National Mall on Maryland Avenue, SW. Much of the collection, however, is stored off site and is made available for *bona fide* researchers upon request. The collection includes binders of photographs, slides; contact sheets from the Folklife Festival; and the separate Diane Davies and Robert C. Malone photograph collections; along with finding aids. There are also printed monographs on ethno-musicology, anthropology, and records of music businesses (Smithsonian: 2017b).

The Archives also include a separate study collection of audio and visual materials. These include over 17,000 commercial disc recordings, 4,000 acetate discs, 450,000 audiotapes, more than 2,000 CDs, 2,000 videotapes, and 5,000,000 linear feet of motion picture film (Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections: 2016).

A third focus of interest is the Smithsonian Global Sound collection. Launched in 2005, Global Sound allows researchers and music lovers to search for recordings of world musical traditions, drawing from the Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, the Archive and Research Centre of the American Institute for Indian Studies (ARCE) in New Delhi, and the International Library of African Music (ILAM) in Grahamstown, South Africa. Since 2009, these recordings have been linked directly to the Smithsonian Folkways website (Smithsonian Folkways: 2009).

In addition to the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage and the Folklore Archives, the Smithsonian also maintains the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center and the Smithsonian Latino Center, both of which strive to highlight the cultural contributions of significant minorities in American life. The Asian Pacific Center hosts programmes from across a wide range of cultural productions. A recent exhibit is *Salaam (I Come in Peace), an exhibition on Muslim Life in America.* The centre also underwrites *Culture Labs*, a series of 'pop-up experiences' that explore cultural issues with noted creative thinkers and artists (Smithsonian Asia Pacific Center: 2017).

The Latino Center has an equally active series of programmes and exhibitions. Recent exhibitions include *Caribbean Indigenous Legacies, Our America: The Latino Presence in American Art,* and *One Life: Dolores Huerta*, focusing on the life of the Latino activist and labour organiser. Public programmes have included poetry readings, artist talks, and panel discussions on a wide range of cultural issues involving the country's Hispanic population and its relations to other parts of the Americas (Smithsonian Latino Center: 2017).

The Smithsonian Folklife Festival

A principal activity of the Smithsonian remains the Folklife Festival (since 1998 retitled the 'Smithsonian Folklife Festival' to reflect its international span). Now in its fiftieth year, the festival has historically employed a thematic approach to programming, though allowing for considerable diversity as well. In 1967, the performances included American fife and drum groups, brass bands, string bands, New Orleans jazz, and Cajun music, together with displays of basketry by Native Americans, as well as work by a variety of American potters, silversmiths, spinners, and weavers. The year 1968 focused on Texas, with additional performances and demonstrations of bluegrass music, butter churning, sheep shearing, and soap and candy making. The next year Pennsylvania was the focus, with additional activities; then, Arkansas, followed by Ohio and afterwards, Maryland. By the 1970s, the themes focused on regional folkloric output: the Northern Plains (and California), followed by the Northeast and Great Lakes. In 1978, the theme was the Native American community, with a strong focus on New Mexico and the Southwest (Smithsonian Folklife Festival: 2017) (Plate 2).



Plate 2
The Smithsonian Folklife Festival, 2002.
Source: Wikimedia Commons.

In more recent years, the festival has become increasingly international in scope. In 2002, the theme was *The Silk Road*. Haiti was the key focus in 2004; the Mekong River in 2008, and Bhutan in 2009. This trend continued in subsequent festivals. The year 2010 focused on Asia-Pacific connections. The next year was Colombia. Women's role in the transmission of cultural heritage was an overriding theme in 2012, a year that also focused on African American musical performance. Hungary followed in 2013, China in 2014, Peru in 2015, and the Basque heritage in 2016. Typically, the festival features more than a single theme. The 2003 programme on Appalachia also included a section on Scotland and another on Mali. The 2008 festival featuring Bhutan also gave space to Texas and the North American Space Administration (NASA). China joined with Kenya; and Basque Culture also included a programme on *Sounds of California*. Each of the festivals features music and dance performances, crafts and cooking displays, storytelling, and opportunities for visitor participation and engagement (Smithsonian Folklife Festival: 2016).

From a high of 4,400,000 visitors in 1976, the festival has continued to attract large crowds. Over forty years, as many as 38 million people have attended the festival, visiting the mall over its two-week period each summer (Duong: 2008). The festival occupies a tent city spread over the mall between the Castle and the Museum of Natural History. The hours are between 11:00am and 5:00pm with special events and performances taking place in the evenings. Typical events include demonstrations of crafts and cooking, storytelling sessions, illustrations for cultural products, and musical performances. The 2016 festival had 120 tents, some with multiple and others with single displays. The two main divisions devoted to Basque culture covered two squares and *Sounds of California*, covered one of the four block-size areas set aside for the festival (Smithsonian Folklife Festival: 2016). Special provision is made for visitors with disabilities, including American Sign Language interpreters and Braille versions of schedules and other information (Smithsonian Folklife Festival: 2017).

While popular, and in many ways successful, the summer Smithsonian Folklife Festival has not been

without its critics. Many writers have questioned the idea of 'cultural diversity' as represented through the festivals. Vietnamese American Studies scholar, Anh Hong Duong, questioned the overall ambition of the festival, wondering whether in fact the festival could fully capture a sense of American diversity. She also questioned whether the festival adequately bridged the interests of scholars and more popular understandings of cultural heritage and cultural expression (Duong: 2008, pp.15-19). American Studies scholar, Heather Diamond, looking specifically at the representation of Hawaiian Culture through the 1989 festival, identified notable 'disjunctions' between the view of Hawaiians about their own cultural heritage and that of festival staff. She also criticised the festival's inherent proclivity to create a separation between what was deemed 'authentic' and 'inauthentic', stealing the initiative, in a sense, from the festival participants themselves (Diamond: 2008, pp.9-10).

The NEA National Heritage Fellowship Program

One of the most innovative efforts to recognise and perpetuate traditional forms of performance and production has been the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEA) National Heritage Fellowship Program (Binkiewicz: 2004). Modelled on the Japanese concept of 'National Living Treasures' the programme sought to address *lacunae* in US efforts to both recognise and sustain traditional performing artists and folk artisans. The programme was initiated in 1982 and recognises outstanding practitioners in what it identifies as *our nation's traditional arts heritage* (National Endowment for the Arts: 2017; Shiele: 2017) (Plate 3).

The first year's fellows included fifteen noted performers and artists from across the country. Dewey Balfa was a Cajun fiddler from Bayou Grand Louis, Louisiana. He had gained his knowledge from his father, a fourth-generation musician, performing professionally during the 1940s and 1950s before being invited to the Newport Folk Festival in 1964. Bessie Jones, another first-year honoree, was a noted Sea Island singer, maintaining traditions of song and performance dating back to Africa and the early days of slavery. Tommy Jarrell was a fiddler from Surry County, North Carolina, whose career as a Blue Ridge Mountain musician began in the early 1900s.



Plate 3
Sheila Kay Adams, story teller, banjo player and NEA Heritage Fellowship recipient.
Source: Garius Hill, Wikimedia Commons.

Subsequent years of the programme followed the same pattern of selection. The year 1983 featured Sister Mildred Barker, a member of the Shaker community and one of the few surviving members to still perform their traditional songs; Ray Hicks, a storyteller from North Carolina; John Lee Hooker, a famous blues artist; and Rafael Cepeda, a *bomba* and *plena* (African inspired singing, drumming, and dancing) performer, all of whom were among the usual fifteen selected. 1984 featured accordionist, Clifton Chenier; potter, Burlon Craig; dancer, Howard 'Sandman' Sims; and clarinetist, Dave Tarras. 1985 had banjo player, Lily May Ledford; spoon player, Horace 'Spoons' Williams; and cowboy singer, Glenn Ohrlin.

More recent years have continued in the same vein. The 2014 fellows included master basket maker, Henry Arquette, a native Mohawk (Haudenosanee); Kevin Doyle, noted Irish step dancer, and quilter, Carolyn Mazloomi. The following year included ceramicist and teacher, Yary Livan; 'Blues Doctor' Drink Small; and *nihon buyo* dancer, Gertrude Yukie Tsutsumi. And 2016 featured native Alaskan (Tlingit) weaver, Clarissa Rizal; Mardi Gras Indian artisan and musician, Joseph Pierre 'Big Chief Monk' Bordeaux; and birch-bark canoe maker, Theresa Secord (Larson: 2016).

The only noticeable change in the configuration and character of the awards has been a gradual decrease in the number of honourees, from twenty in 1982, to sixteen in the 1990s to twelve in recent years. The programme has always recognised a wide range of honourees, distributed among numerous artistic and performing traditions. The selection process also cuts across age and gender, providing a representative sampling of some of the most dynamic and committed artists and artisans in the country.

As of 2017, over 300 artists had received recognition through the programme. Following up on the fellowship's close connection to the Smithsonian's Office of Folklife Programs, over sixty of the selected fellows also featured on the Folkways label. True to its aims of impartiality, the NEA Fellowship Program depends on nominations from 'ordinary citizens' who relay their choices to a panel for the final selection. All designees travel to Washington, DC to receive their awards and to participate in an annual concert (Smithsonian Folkways: 2017b).

As with many arts-related programmes, the National Heritage Fellowship is now under threat along with other initiatives of the NEA. Despite the success of the programme and its enthusiastic reception across the cultural divides of the US, present budget proposals zero-out the NEA.

The National Park Service

The National Park Service (NPS), founded in 1916, remains a key player in the recognition of traditional cultural practices. In addition to the agency's responsibility for maintaining the country's national park system—spanning 59 National Parks and 417 other units and 21,651 employees (Office of Communications: 2016; Heacox: 2016)—the NPS is also the lead agency for historic preservation and heritage efforts under the watershed National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA). These include the administration of the *National Register of Historic Places*, the nation's list of culturally and historically significant properties, and the management of the Historic Preservation Fund, an entity that underwrites the operations of the State, Territorial, and, after 1992, Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (described below), as well as special programmes, such as *Save America's Treasures* and *Preserve America* (Stipe: 2003).

The *National Register of Historic Places* (NRHP) is the central programme affecting historically and culturally significant places in the US. Designed to recognise, and ideally protect, historic buildings, sites, districts and objects, the *National Register* focused—and continues to focus—on historic places and sites with clear physical properties. Properties range from individual monuments, such as commemorative sculptures, through historic houses, archaeological sites, and larger historic and archaeological districts (National Park Service: 2017a). The NRHP also includes landscapes, both designed and vernacular, as well as battlefields, bridges, lighthouses, historic mines, graveyards, and many other historic properties. As of 2017, there are a total of over 80,000 individual listings, many of which include multiple buildings, sites, and other features (*National Register of Historic Places*: 2017).

In the 1980s, the NPS introduced a new concept known as 'Traditional Cultural Properties' (TCPs) to better deal with places of important cultural significance but lacking the kinds of historic resources or assets normally associated with historic sites. Initiated by anthropologist Patricia Parker and archaeologist Tom King as a result of their fieldwork experience among Pacific Islanders and Native Americans, the TCP concept applied to places such as those *associated with traditional beliefs of a Native American group*; *rural communities, the organisation of which reflects cultural traditions valued by* [their] *long-term residents*; an urban neighbourhood *that is the traditional home of a particular cultural group; a location where Native American religious practitioners have historically gone* and where they perform *ceremonial activities in accordance with traditional cultural rules of practice;* or *a location where a community has traditionally carried out economic, artistic, or other cultural practices important in maintaining its historic identity* (Parker and King: 1990; National Park Service: 2012) (Plate 4).

Although tied specifically to 'place' in accordance with the *National Register's* own emphasis, the TCP idea helped to steer registration efforts in new directions. Most importantly, the TCP approach helped to shift



Plate 4
Donald Chosa Jr. Traditional rice gathering in Minnesota, Mark Sauer, Source: *Mesabi Daily News*.

attention away from objects and toward the people associated with them. It was not a perfect solution, but it did give voice to longstanding concerns that the NR was more involved with saving places than with recognising their ongoing cultural significance.

Although much of the NPS's effort still focuses on the preservation of tangible heritage, there is widespread recognition that intangible heritage plays an important part in the interpretation and understanding even of tangible sites. This is reflected particularly in the increasing expansion of the *National Register* to include more sites of 'cultural' rather than strictly 'historical' value. These include the designation of numerous 'Chinatowns', as well as other ethnic neighbourhoods and conclaves within the US.

Recent good examples include View Park Historic District in Los Angeles, an area distinguished by a range of building types dating from the early twentieth century but distinguished especially by its association with African American residents beginning in the 1960s (listed in 2016). Pilsen Historic District in Chicago has a comparable ethnic story. Begun in the late nineteenth century following the 1871 fire, Pilsen (listed in 2015) became associated with Bohemian settlement up until the mid-twentieth century. Beginning in the 1950s, the neighbourhood became increasingly associated with Mexican immigrants, who by the early twenty-first century comprised 93% of its residents. The significance of the 'later' history and the contributions of Latinos to the fabric and character of the district are centrally cited in the *National Register* documentation in recognition of this clearly 'intangible' aspect of the district's character (Sommers: 2016).

These are but two examples of many districts and individual properties now listed for their association with specific cultures in the country's history. Other recent instances of what folklorist Laurie Kay Sommers recognises as a *more humanistic approach to historic preservation* are the Tarpon Springs Greektown National Register District, a site associated with Greek settlement in Pinellas County, Florida (listed in 2014); the Green River Drift Cattle Trail, an expansive TCP associated with ranching in Wyoming (listed in 2014); and Rice Bay, a recently designated TCP in Michigan's remote Upper Peninsula, recognising an area that once served as the traditional rice-growing grounds for the local band of Chippewa Indians (listed in 2016).

Tribal Preservation Program

In addition to the *National Register*, the NPS is also responsible for the administration of the Tribal Historic Preservation Program. Initiated in 1990, with a Congressional directive to the NPS to *study and report on Tribal preservation funding needs*, an effort to better advance preservation activities among native people—advocated in the report *Keepers of the Treasures—Protecting Historic Properties and Cultural Traditions on Indian Lands* (National Park Service: 1990). Underpinned by an amendment to the National Historic Preservation Act in 1992, this programme involves Tribal Historic Preservation Offices and Tribal Heritage Grants for recognised tribal groupings, with the latter earmarked for all Indian Tribes, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians. Allied to this initiative are funding opportunities for Pacific Islands, again under the aegis of the National Park Service. The championship of initiatives by staff of various state and federal agencies, and their hard work, are bright points in an increasingly dark landscape for heritage preservation.

The Tribal Historic Preservation Office programme is limited to federally recognised Indian tribes with reservations or tribal trust lands. Once approved, a THPO assumes the same duties as State Historic Preservation Offices, including the right to review federal undertakings that might affect historic or cultural properties and the responsibility for maintaining a list of significant sites

and ensuring that additional sites are added to the *National Register*. The Tribal Heritage Grants are earmarked for all Indian Tribes, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, and do not require the oversight of a THPO. These are generally two-year grants, from the Historic Preservation Fund, and may be used for the identification of cultural resources, the preservation of listed properties, comprehensive planning, oral history and documentation efforts, and educational purposes (Hawkins: 2016).

In 1996, the Secretary of the Interior approved twelve tribes as qualified to assume responsibilities of a THPO on tribal lands. By 2012, this number was 140. Although the amount of funding has not kept pace, a large number of Native American entities now receive funding for historic preservation purposes. Annual funding as of 2013 was $7,867,323 for then 142 THPOs, for an average of - as of that year - about $52,000. (The average in 1999, then with fewer tribes in the pool, was about $72,000). In 2016 the total increased to $9,780,208, though it is now distributed among 157 Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers: 2016). The largest programmes have been those of the Zuni and Navajo, with the latter operating on a budget as high as $7 million annually from the Historic Preservation Fund and other sources (Hawkins: 2016).

Since 1990, the Interior Department has awarded more than $17 million in grants under the Tribal Heritage Program, with the usual annual funding in the $500,000-$600,000 range. In 2016, sixteen organisations received a total of $531,187 in grants. Notable awards in 2016—many focused on the preservation and interpretation of intangible heritage—included $14,900 to the Yavapai Apache Nation in Arizona to document a 180-mile historic trail; $36,369 to the Tejon Indian Tribe in California, to create a new GIS system; $5,848 to the Mashantucket Pequot in Connecticut for interpretive signage highlighting the 'Sugar Shack' cultural site; and $39,681 to the Nez Perce Tribe in Idaho for the transcription of 33 recordings focused on Nez Perce storytelling traditions (National Park Service: 2016).

With an average award of $33,199, this programme has taken important steps toward the recognition of heritage in the broadest sense. A few 'bricks and mortar' projects are also included, but even these often have an 'intangible' component, such as applying craft skills, recording processes of traditional construction, soliciting input from elders, and so on. As Valerie Hauser, Director of Native American Affairs, ACHP points out: *There seems to be a better understanding of the responsibility that Federal agencies have to Tribes and Native Hawaiians, but we still have a lot of work to do* (National Park Service: 2016, p.8).

Pacific Island Program

In addition to grants to Tribes, Native Hawaiian and Alaska Natives, the NPS has also played an important role in the development of heritage preservation/conservation programmes in the Pacific Islands. In the Territory of Samoa, the NPS has entered into a partnership relationship with local chiefs to protect valuable cultural and natural areas as part of the 'National Park of Samoa' (National Geographic Travel: 2017). In addition, the NPS has provided individual grants through the Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants programme for conservation work at several public parks and beach areas, some of it involving school groups and elders (National Park Service: 2008). The NPS also funded archaeological research, again, involving local young people, and the collection of stories and information from village elders (National Park Service: 2017b; Wells and Hommon: 2000). There were also projects focused on native botany involving both Samoan and North American participants, conducted under cooperative agreements with the University of Hawai'i and other institutions (Ragone and Lorence: 2006).

The NPS provided funding for similar projects in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), both territorial possessions of the US. These included support for the Territorial Historic Preservation Offices in both places, and individual grants both to the national parks in Guam and the CNMI, and to other agencies involved in both environmental and heritage conservation efforts (National Park Service: 2013). The annual grant to Guam is around $400,000 and that to the CNMI about the same (unfortunately down from 2012). In 2016, Guam received $410,831 and the CNMI $410,831 (Downer: 2017). This money funds a variety of projects, some of them involving the collection of information on traditional practices, languages, and storytelling (Plate 5).



Plate 5
Nansemond tribal members recognised by the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1985.
Source: Wikimedia Commons.

The NPS is also centrally involved in heritage preservation in the former territories of the US, including the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands—known collectively as the Freely Associated States of Micronesia (National Park Service: 2011). These three entities receive collectively approximately the same as Guam and the CNMI (about $400,000), spread among three separate island countries and several states within them. Projects are divided across several areas, including archaeology, underwater resources, collections management, and training. Many of these activities focus on, or at least touch upon, intangible heritage. The state of Kosrae, part of the FSM, for example, compiled an extensive archive of videotaped coming-of-age ceremonies, as well as recordings of traditional songs and stories. Similar programmes have been carried out by other Historic Preservation Offices in the former US territories. The state of Yap completed projects on traditional fish weirs and canoes, both of which included extensive oral history collection, as well as the application of traditional skills (Jeffery: 2010) (Plate 6).

In addition to government sanctioned and/or funded projects there are numerous programmes sponsored by private non-profit organisations, schools, and universities. The Guam Preservation Trust (GPT) has promoted a number of programmes involving oral histories and the preservation of intangible heritage. These include a 'cultural map' of Guam's Spanish heritage, an oral history of the abandoned town of Pågat, and numerous cultural performances (Guam Preservation Trust: 2015). The Micronesia Area Research Center (MARC) at the University of Guam has been similarly active. Among activities in the period between 2009 and 2016 were the completion of a *Traditional Cultural Property Report* for Guam's military lands, publication of works on *Baseball in Palau* and the *Lepers of the Mariana Islands*, as well as projects on Chamorro weaving, house building, and dance (MARC: 2017). Father Francis Hezel, S.J., founder of the Micronesian Seminar in Pohnpei, authored dozens of articles and several books touching upon traditional culture in Micronesia, and also helped develop programmes focusing on traditions of musical performance and storytelling (Micronesia Seminar: 2010).

Much of this work is now continued in island schools throughout US territories and former territories throughout the Pacific. There has also been support from the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV), the Peace Corps, and other international organisations involving traditional practices and heritage. JOCV volunteers, for example, assisted the FSM and Pohnpei State in the inscription of the megalithic ruins of Nan Madol to the *World Heritage List*, a project involving the collection of oral traditions pertaining to the sites. They also initiated video recordings of legends, tales, historical accounts, chants, and songs (Nagaoka: 2016).



Plate 6
Preparing for local ceremony, Kosrae, Federated States of Micronesia.
Source: Danaleeling.

Examples of Intangible Cultural Heritage

The US possesses a wealth of intangible cultural assets as might be expected of a complex, multicultural country. Some of these assets are long recognised. Others have been identified only recently. Throughout the country are folk traditions of musical performance, crafts, dance, storytelling, and other cultural expressions—especially cuisines—that speak to the diversity of American life. Some of these have become recognised as part of a kind of 'official national canon'. Others are only now being recorded and brought to public attention.

Several states, territories, cities, and regions have especially recognised folk heritages. These include Hawai'i, New Mexico (notably Santa Fe and the state's Pueblo Culture), Louisiana (with its Cajun traditions and the culturally complex mix of New Orleans), the mountain states of Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia and North Carolina, and territories such as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. But every state and territory has some form of intangible cultural heritage, typically celebrated through annual or periodic performances, long-standing notice in the media, or scholarly investigation.

Texas has chilli, barbecued beef brisket, tamales, country-western dancing, high-school football, cheerleaders, calf roping (and other ranching skills), singing and yodelling, and rodeos generally. There are also distinct traditions reflective of both indigenous and immigrant communities in Texas: German, Czech, Polish, Mexican, African, and 'Southern Anglo' (Mendoza: 2015). Tiny Vermont has traditions associated with small-town life: town meetings, volunteer fire departments, and parades. The state is also home to rich craft traditions, including furniture and bowl making, pottery manufacture, country dancing and folk music, as well as many practices associated with the state's long agricultural past—apple picking, canning of preserves, vegetables and fruits, maple sugar production, dairy production, cheese-making. Its heritage also reflects its complex immigrant past and earlier history, including traditions of the state's indigenous Abenaki Indians, Italian, Polish, French Canadian, and Finnish immigrants, and the longstanding practices and cultural heritage of the dominant English, Dutch, and Scotch-Irish settlers (*Vermont, Cultural Life*: 2016) (Plate 7).



Plate 7
Barbecued meats, Texas.
Source: Wikimedia Commons.

Similar lists can be complied for other states as well: North Carolina and South Carolina with their combination of lowland and mountain traditions, the Pacific Northwest, with both indigenous and immigrant contributions to maritime and forest industries, agriculture, mining, and other activities. Even the Midwest, with its diverse populations of Amish and Mennonites, German and English settlers, folk music, agricultural contests, and African American musical forms. More recently, all of these places record the significant recent presence of both Latino and Arabic-speaking immigrants, who have made significant contributions to each region's cultural heritage (Ohio Arts Council: 2017). A similar story is true in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Upper and Lower South, and Southwest. Even 'modern' California has rich substrata of Latino, Aboriginal, Anglo, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and other cultural traditions worthy of recognition.

One of the richest *loci* of intangible heritage can be found in Hawai'i. Reinvigorated through a recent renaissance of interest in Native Hawaiian culture, the island state has a lively assemblage of traditional dance troops (*halau*) distributed throughout the state that have done much to both resurrect and enliven traditional dance (*hula*), song (*mele*), and chant (*oli*). The annual performance at Hilo's Merrie Monarch Festival brings *halau* from all over the state (as well as other locals) to compete in a three-day event attended by locals and visitors. *Hula* is also performed at many island schools, as are traditional forms of song, and other performance arts. *Oli* are now incorporated into many public functions, as are Hawaiian blessings (*pule*) for

new undertakings, both of which constitute important revivals of traditional practice (Plate 8).

Other aspects of the Hawaiian renaissance include a new appreciation for traditional surfing techniques, including a revival of long-board surfing and stand-up paddle boarding (*hoe he'e nalu*). The exceedingly dangerous ancient sport of *he'e hōlua* (sledding on lava courses) has also experienced a revival, as have the making of *kapa* (known also as *tapa*) from mulberry bark, bowl manufacture, tattooing (*tātau or kākau*), woodcarving, and quilt making—the latter a practice introduced by Christian missionaries but adapted by the Hawaiians for their own use (McGregor: 2007).

In addition to the continuation and revival of traditional Hawaiian practices, the islands also embrace the traditional culture and folk heritage of numerous other ethnic groups. These include *sumo* wrestling from Japan and Okinawa, Japanese and Okinawan drumming, Chinese dragon dancing, boy and girl day ceremonies from Korea and Japan, temple *bon* dancing (*Oban* dancing originating in a Nenbutsu folk dance), Filipino 'money dances', and the celebration of Chinese and other Asian new years. Food in Hawaii also derives from a variety of ethnic sources, some cuisines still reflective of particular cultures, others fully hybridised within the culture as a whole (McDermott and Andrade: 2011) (Plate 9).

Another vibrant home for traditional culture is the American Southwest, especially the state of New Mexico and its capital Santa Fe. Important centres for both Navajo and Apache culture, New Mexico also has a rich legacy of Spanish culture, dating to early settlement in the sixteenth century. (Some of the area's Spanish settlers retained the practices of Hispanic Judaism, adding another wrinkle to the region's cultural diversity). About half the state's residents are of Hispanic origin, 10% are of native background. This diversity adds to the linguistic and cultural complexity of the state, and is evident in traditions of cuisine, religion, artisanship, and ceremonial practices.

New Mexico's traditional culture has long been a magnet for outside visitors. Artists and writers (notably Georgia O'Keefe and D.H. Lawrence) have been drawn to the landscape, vernacular buildings, and other traditions of the area. Archaeologist, Edgar Lee Hewett (1865-1946), founder of the Museum of New Mexico in 1909, did much to focus attention on the unique cultural heritage of Santa Fe and the Pueblo heritage surrounding the historic Spanish city, through the promotion of continuing traditions of pottery, basket making, and jewellery manufacture and the customs of the region. Today, the Southwestern Association



Plate 8
Hula performance, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park.
Source: National Park Service, US Department of the Interior.



Plate 9
Vermont maple syrup.
Source: Jim Hood, Wikimedia commons.

for Indian Arts helps to perpetuate traditional crafts, overseeing the sales spaces lining the arcade of the Palace of the Governors, and sponsoring special events to highlight the work of native artists (Santa Fe Indian Market: 2016).

Santa Fe has for over sixty years preserved historic buildings and traditions of building within the area. It also promotes local festivals, such as the annual burning of *Zozobra*, a giant marionette effigy symbolising gloom, a tradition dating from as early as 1712. There are also saints' feast days, Holy Week, the Fiesta Entrada (a reenactment of the founding of Santa Fe), as well as numerous more recent activities, nonetheless focused on Santa Fe and New Mexico's traditions, including the area's unique cuisine (Santa Fe Selection: 2016).

Yet another example of traditional cultural heritage is Louisiana and its principal city of New Orleans. Unusual among US states for its French and Spanish heritage, Louisiana retains a strongly multicultural aspect, incorporating elements from French, Spanish, Native American, and African cultures, blended with layers of Anglo settlement and recent Asian (mostly Vietnamese) immigration. New Orleans was a unique *locus* of Haitian immigration following the revolution there, and also was an important site for Sephardic Jews, migrating from the Caribbean in the eighteenth century. Purchased by the US in 1803, Louisiana retains aspects of French and Creole heritage, including rural enclaves of Acadian—also called Cajun—inhabitants. French and Creole are still spoken languages in parts of the state.

This diverse cultural makeup has made a distinct contribution to Louisiana's musical, literary, and cooking traditions, as well as underwriting the still-vibrant festivals, practices, crafts, and ways of expression. Louisiana is the home of a number of distinct religious traditions, including Catholicism, various forms of Protestantism, and different Creole expressions, most famously Voodoo. New Orleans is the birthplace of jazz and also forms of the blues. *Zydeco* is a musical form associated with the French-speaking African Americans of South Louisiana. Acadians have their own musical traditions, collectively called 'Cajun music'. There is also gospel music (Plate 10).

For food, New Orleans and the surrounding areas of Louisiana embrace distinct Creole traditions, based on African, Native American, and Spanish and French roots. *Gumbo, étouffée, jambalaya, muffletta, po'boy,* and red beans and rice are all dishes associated with South Louisiana, as are desserts such as beignets, pralines, and sweet potato pie. Festivals include Mardi Gras (in New Orleans and other places), numerous music festivals, and several annual folk gatherings. There is also a heritage of dancing, parades (including Mardi Gras), funerals, and much more, all combining to make Louisiana and New Orleans a rich area for the celebration of folk arts. As jazz musician, Wynton Marsalis, announced, imitating the New Orleans patois: *Man, they have things down there you wouldn't believe... A city with they own cuisine, they own architecture, they own music...* (Wynton Marsalis: 2010). In short, much that fits the definition of 'intangible heritage'.

Steps toward a National Programme

The US has long demonstrated a high level of resourcefulness vis-à-vis the country's intangible cultural heritage. This has taken many forms: direct governmental support, the initiatives of government institutions such as the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution, and support by numerous types of local entities, from tourism boards through non-profit organisations. Threatened by the present US administration with reduced or eliminated funding, these organisations do much of the hard work of promoting and interpreting the country's rich legacy of non-material heritage.



Plate 10
Hot 8 Brass band at a New Orleans funeral.
Source: Howard Lurzus, Wikimedia Commons.

To return to the initial argument that the US has had a longstanding institutional involvement with intangible heritage, this descriptive overview provides just a sampling of governmental agencies, non-profit organisations, and programmes that have shown some level of commitment to and understanding of intangible heritage. These efforts have ranged from ways of documenting and recording intangible heritage—an effort dating back to the 1930s—through innovative means of funding heritage practices to ways of rethinking and reassessing intangible heritage in a complex and multicultural environment. These are not commitments that can be easily replicated in a single generation. The institutional apparatus in the US, moreover, is one now populated with high levels of experience and knowledge that contribute overall to the value of US practice.

The most tenacious supporters have been state and local arts and humanities organisations. Often funded at least in part by the federal government, these organisations have come closest to supporting the spirit and essence of the UNESCO *Convention*. Typically, the staffs of state organisations have a detailed understanding of trends and approaches toward traditional culture and intangible heritage. Many have been trained in both administration and the more salient aspects of arts management. Frequently they come from fields such as cultural studies and folklore; many too are contributing members to the broader arts and cultural communities.

The same certainly can be said of administrators in national programmes, such as the National Park Service and the Smithsonian Institution. Comprised of professionals with strong backgrounds in cultural heritage and the arts, the staffs of these organisations are closely in touch with developments at all levels of arts interpretation and promotion. This includes international initiatives to which, often, they have had contributing roles.

It is difficult to know what kinds of intangible assets the US might nominate under the *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage* was it, in fact, again in a position to participate. The US is obviously a complex country with multiple heritages. The Smithsonian and National Park Service efforts have tended always to focus on the cultural production of minorities, and by the politically, economically, and culturally marginalised segments of American society: native peoples, rural peoples, and certainly African-Americans. These expressions collectively form a 'kind' of national picture, but they are significantly different in their totality from the kinds of intangible heritage that might be recognised in other countries. *Kabuki* or *Bunraku*, *Sumo* or *Noh* can clearly be called 'national' cultural expressions for Japan, which has an accepted canon of traditional performance arts. Bluegrass music, *hula* performance, and African-American storytelling are all recognised performance arts—generally seen as 'folk culture' and appreciated by many, but they are by no means canonical expressions of American cultural heritage as a whole. The same is true of American cuisine—rich and varied, but by no means 'national' in character.

The American experience certainly adds a sense of complexity to the enterprise of protecting intangible heritage. US practitioners, both those involved with the preservation of traditional arts and performance, and the artists or performers themselves, offer a rich legacy of experience and artistic excellence. US cultural administrators and academicians also bring a significant lens to the cause of cultural protection and promotion. It is a shame that the US's present position prevents greater participation in efforts to recognise and preserve traditional cultural expression through the UNESCO *Convention on Intangible Heritage*. It can only be hoped that this will change in the future.

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Safeguarding memory as intangible heritage: experiences and stories of life on Hong Kong's social housing estates

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ABSTRACT

Public housing is an important facet of social life in Hong Kong. Nearly half the population benefits from living in a publicly subsidised unit. In recent years, strategies have been put in place to preserve the architectural heritage of public housing in Hong Kong. Similarly, other strategies targeted the safeguarding, the valuation, and promotion of life in the public estates in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s as a manifestation of intangible heritage, and symbol of Hong Kong's identity. Memories of public housing contribute to preserving and promoting a form of intangible heritage that is remembered across Hong Kong's various heritage institutions. Over the last decade, many projects have attempted to engage with the ethos of life in public estates through different ambitious exhibitions and site redevelopment projects. After reviewing the different strategies put in place to engage with the intangible heritage of early life in public housing, this paper reviews the technical challenges and the ethical dimensions associated with the preservation and valuation of this type of intangible heritage.

Keywords

Hong Kong, popular intangible cultural heritage (PICH), ethics, public housing, social practices, migration, 'narrativisation', Shek Kip Mei fire.

Introduction

Intangible heritage is an intellectual and professional construct. Safeguarding intangible heritage is an ethical project. There is little doubt that, since its inception more than fifteen years ago, the *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003) has contributed greatly to the intellectual and ethical project of conserving intangible heritage. This *Convention* has been an essential tool for the promotion and awareness of intangible heritage amongst communities and governments around the globe (Aikawa: 2004). Behind

the *Convention* – behind its global call for action – has been, in essence, what can be defined or characterised today as an ethos of responsibility towards intangible heritage (Paquette and Nelson: 2017). In its social and philosophical essence, the *Convention* is a global, professional, and policy instrument embodying values and a certain collective obligation towards the future of certain cultural practices, customs, languages, knowledge, social practices, crafts, and events.

Another layer of ethical preoccupations and a different series of issues and questions came into focus between 2012 and 2015, when a number of experts and stakeholders voiced potential ethical issues and challenges associated with the process of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. While the *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* brought attention to professional and collective obligations to culture and the future of intangible heritage, the ensuing debates that took place a little more than a decade after the formation of the *Convention* raised the importance of community. These debates also raised the importance of recognising representative and inclusive intangible heritage; questioned the place of social practices that could be seen as harmful and whether they should be offered systematic preservation; and raised the issue of the commodification of intangible heritage in line with similar debates about cultural tourism (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett: 1998; McIntosh and Prentice: 1999; Du Cros: 2001; Trinh and Ryan: 2016).

Experts have paid significant attention to the risks of 'folklorisation' and commodification associated with safeguarding intangible heritage. That being said, examining further the implications of the ethical framework and standpoint of intangible heritage also brings to light another set of issues regarding whether intangible heritage is inclusive, representative, and accessible from the perspective of all social classes. For instance, many cultural practices identified and recognised as intangible heritage have been traditionally associated with elites and ruling classes, and their contemporary practice may require a level of knowledge, with a steep learning curve, and a level of independence from economic pressures that only a few can afford. This is not the case for every cultural practice associated with intangible heritage, but a cursory look at the recent designations on the UNESCO *List of Representative Practices* – or, even, their list of heritages at risk – can reveal that what is designated as intangible heritage may be less accessible than it appeared to be at first glance. In making this observation, it is not to suggest that distinctive practices should not be safeguarded because of potential risks of elitism, nor is it to offer a criticism of UNESCO's intangible heritage designation process. Rather, the intent of this paper is to challenge what is believed to be a fundamental and inherent question about intangible heritage safeguarding practices: the role and place of popular intangible heritage. Specifically, this paper argues that popular intangible heritage should also be considered when thinking about intangible heritage and its safeguarding. Class awareness and inclusion should also be kept in mind, not only for designing communication strategies, but also for establishing what intangible heritage is, and preserving that which has a strong resonance with the community.

In order to further address the issue of inclusion and accessibility, this paper discusses the case of intangible heritage in Hong Kong. The Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong (HKSAR) has a distinct history: it is at the crossroads of many civilisations and is a multicultural territory that has welcomed migrants from many parts of the globe. While Hong Kong is associated with global financial markets and economic affluence, social stratification is a key characteristic of the territory, and a significant proportion of the population have come from more humble roots. In this context, public housing has become an essential collective achievement, one with a long history that conveys the cultural experience of life on the early estates and evokes many important memories for Hong Kong citizens.

In the first part of this paper, the situation of heritage in Hong Kong is discussed, and the cultural reality of the special administrative region is explored in detail. In the second part, focus is placed on one particular case – experience and memories of public housing – and how it has become an important component of Hong Kong's museum and archival work. This section will discuss the implication of the 'narrativisation' of intangible heritage in relation to public housing experiences. Moreover, this section will discuss the development of a local culture of exhibiting memories of public housing. Memories of public housing constitute a way to preserve and promote forms of intangible heritage that are distributed across Hong Kong's heritage institutions. Building on this, the third section of this paper will discuss some aspects

of the ethics of the intangible heritage 'process'. In particular, it will discuss the complexity of articulating and communicating 'popular' heritage. By popular heritage, this paper means heritage (tangible or intangible) that is associated with people with humble social roots. Popular heritage (or popular intangible heritage) comes with a certain number of challenges.

Of course, it could be said that most items of intangible heritage are popular by nature, because they are, by definition, community-based. However, this article serves as a reminder that the activities that are often easily defined as intangible heritage – traditional and folkloric practices – are not as class-inclusive as they may first appear. Items inscribed in UNESCO's list, such as organ craftsmanship and music (in Germany since 2017), many crafts in fact, and many forms of religious rituals, are at times associated with those segments of the population which have the capacity to be involved in those intangible heritage practices. Some items of intangible cultural heritage may require resources, time, and skills that are not available to everyone. That being said, these are all important items of intangible heritage that need and deserve to be preserved. The argument here is that we have to acknowledge that some forms of cultural practices may be associated with social status or they may require financial and social resources that may not be readily available to most individuals.

This paper is therefore an invitation to discuss the social inclusivity of intangible heritage. We wish to place popular intangible heritage on a certain practical continuum with the concept of popular culture. The notion of popular intangible cultural heritage (PICH) embodies a number of singular characteristics. First, it is a form of intangible heritage that builds on traditions and ways of life that are in the making. This heritage is embodied in practices and oral histories that are being transmitted, they are part of developing traditions that emerge as cultural responses to industrial and post-industrial societies. Popular intangible heritage may not be ancestral, but it is no less traditional. Second, popular intangible cultural heritage is accessible; it does not require resources or a command of specific codes to engage with it. Third, popular intangible heritage is associated with more humble ways of life, and as such, it requires special efforts for heritage professionals to legitimise it. Heritage professionals must help in building communities' confidence in the value of their experiences and their intangible heritage, and they must also develop strategies for the valuation and preservation of popular intangible cultural heritage in existing or new institutions.

Hong Kong: heritage and cultural governance

While Hong Kong is a rich cultural space, and while the territory's arts and creative industries have been given a significant amount of attention since the 2010s – through, for example, ambitious projects such as West Kowloon cultural district (Kong: 2005; Lui: 2008; Tang: 2016; Ho: 2017) or the renewal of the Hong Kong Art Museum in Tsim Sha Tsui – the long history of public support for culture and heritage is more complex and, interestingly, more modest. Heritage protection in Hong Kong has typically focused on the protection of archaeological sites and the preservation of cultural artefacts. As archives from the Public Records Office tend to demonstrate, in the 1950s administrative procedures were developed incrementally to deal with the discovery of cultural goods in the wake of many ambitious infrastructure development projects. In the absence of any real guidelines, district officers and engineers developed a number of strategies to deal with the objects they found. The development of administrative procedures to preserve material heritage was driven by a certain sensibility for culture, as well as by a realisation of the embarrassment associated with the illicit sale of artefacts in the Macao market. This embarrassment was amplified by the fact that the artefacts were – from a legal perspective – reputed to be Crown property (District Commissioner: 1960 and 1962). The administrative procedures developed by district officers and engineers sowed the seeds of Hong Kong's first heritage policy in the 1970s.

Specifically, two factors led to the formulation of an *Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance* and office in 1976. First, many frontline colonial administrators, like district officers, were keen on having a clear instrument to guide their work when they encountered cultural artefacts. Second, a new generation of politicians came to power and used new institutional and political spaces to make progressive and creative decisions and policies for Hong Kong. In an attempt to appease the relationship between the population and the colonial administration, especially after significant social unrest and demonstrations in the late 1950s and 1960s, a new

governing body – the Urban Council – was created and given a number of policy powers in an attempt to be more responsive to the population's needs. The Urban Council gave momentum to the creation of the heritage act and Hong Kong's heritage policy. It should also be noted that the Urban Council was also the political institution behind the development of Hong Kong's publicly-supported museum system. As Hong Kong's museum scene was relatively under-developed in the early 1970s, and with the aspiration of having Hong Kong recognised as a global cultural leader, the group developed a task force in the 1980s that led to the creation of a Space Museum, a Science Museum, and a new Art and History museum (Urban Council: 1982 and 1986). In other words, the Urban Council was a catalyst for the preservation and the promotion/communication of cultural heritage (Paquette: 2019).

That being said, in Hong Kong, as is the case in many places throughout the world, preservation efforts have typically focused on cultural objects and the built heritage. Again, two important elements can serve to explain why heritage was closely associated with tangible cultural assets. First, despite the fact that local politicians and administrators were the main catalysts for developing a protection instrument, most of the expertise behind the project was informed by a western view of heritage. For years, the administration of the *Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance* made decisions that aligned with western values and aimed to preserve colonial heritage. Interestingly, some colonial-built heritage that did not attract wide public support for preservation, such as the Murray House – a symbol of colonial administration and a reminder of the ruthless Japanese invasion of 1941– was nevertheless protected through great public sector efforts and at great cost (Yung and Chan: 2011). Second, land value and land scarcity in Hong Kong constitute a distinct challenge for historic preservation. In these conditions, built heritage is, understandably, under considerable pressure.

The question of intangible heritage has always been, at least implicitly, an important one. Since the 1950s Hong Kong has been described as fertile ground for cultural experiences, and has been marketed as a rich destination for cultural tourism (Henderson: 2001; Li: 2003). However, a more conscientious and sustainable approach to intangible heritage only began to take shape in the decade following the reunification of the territory with the People's Republic of China. Since then, the Leisure and Cultural Service Department has played a key role in the promotion of intangible heritage in Hong Kong (Cheung: 2011). As the People's Republic of China ratified the *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* – and as the government of the HKSAR also recognised the *Convention* – the Leisure and Cultural Service Department established a special unit in 2006. Efforts to promote and preserve intangible heritage in Hong Kong culminated in 2015 as the department consulted the population and experts to create a list of Hong Kong's intangible heritage. This list now contains 480 items of local intangible heritage, including: Cantonese, Hakka dialect, Fuzhou dialect (languages), many lineages and stories of lineages and ancestry, dances, herbal tea, milk tea, and many more cultural items. The Intangible Cultural Heritage Office was also established in collaboration with the Sam Tung Uk Museum, providing space and organisational support for events and activities aimed at promoting intangible heritage.

Beyond the results associated with the *Convention*, there have been other attempts to take intangible heritage seriously in Hong Kong. In the late 1990s cultural itineraries and heritage trails (Cheung: 1999) linking tangible and intangible heritage were developed and promoted throughout the territory, providing a unique opportunity for collaboration between the Antiquities and Monuments Office, district administrations, and the Leisure and Cultural Service Department. More importantly perhaps, the creation of the Hong Kong Heritage Museum in Sha Tin in 2000 was, without a doubt, an early and strong commitment to the conservation and promotion of intangible cultural heritage in Hong Kong. The museum has a rich programme that builds on traditional crafts and practices, while also providing a significant space in its activities and exhibits for contemporary and popular culture. The Hong Kong Heritage Museum is equally devoted to the art of calligraphy, Hong Kong Cinema, modern design, and the traditional oral histories of the Northern Territories.

This social philosophy is crucial in challenging some of the biases commonly entertained about intangible heritage. Intangible heritage does not have to be folkloric; it can be contemporary, accessible, popular and evolving. Hong Kong's identity is a notion and construct that is difficult to articulate (Veg: 2007). That being said, many

elements of recent history – many popular practices – have created, in Hong Kong, a unique experience for the world and shaped the identity of its local residents (Cheung: 2003; Lu: 2009; Leung and Soyez: 2009; Chen and Szeto: 2015). For instance, the ferry ride between Kowloon and Hong Kong Island by the Star Ferry Line is an oft-cited example of a simple popular item that has shaped a sense of local identity through a very common collective experience (Henderson: 2008; Chai: 2009; Ku: 2012). Intangible heritage is also about collective, highly accessible, and also, sometimes, deep-seated and tacit experiences of the world. The challenge for intangible heritage preservation and promotion is to identify and recognise experiences and narratives the boundaries of which are not entirely well-delineated.

Memories of time and place: public housing as a collective experience

Intangible heritage may relate to collective stories and shared experiences. In this section, the heritage practices surrounding the curation and 'narrativisation' of public housing experiences and histories are discussed. Public or social housing projects are, in most cases, governmental social policies that aim to provide homes for a particular section of the population, at no cost or at costs that are way below market prices. Public housing may not, at first glance, appear to be appropriate material for heritage preservation. However, there is a compelling case to make that some public housing is an essential part of Hong Kong's heritage. In fact, in recent years there have been tremendous efforts to preserve the first estates created by the government - though many voices have expressed concern that these belated efforts to acknowledge the heritage value of these buildings may have come too late (Chu: 2007). While these concerns are mainly focused on built heritage, there are also, arguably, concerns with regards to the intangible heritage encompassing this built heritage. The collective experience of public housing projects constitutes a contemporary, popular, and collective memory.

To better understand the significance of public housing experiences as intangible heritage, it is important to acknowledge two elements: the size of this programme and its impact on society and the social fabric, and the importance of this social characteristic to the story of Hong Kong and local identity.

First, it is rarely acknowledged, but Hong Kong has the most important public housing programme in the world. In 2016, the Hong Kong Housing Authority was the direct provider of publicly subsidised housing to 46% of Hong Kong's population. In its first thirty years of existence,

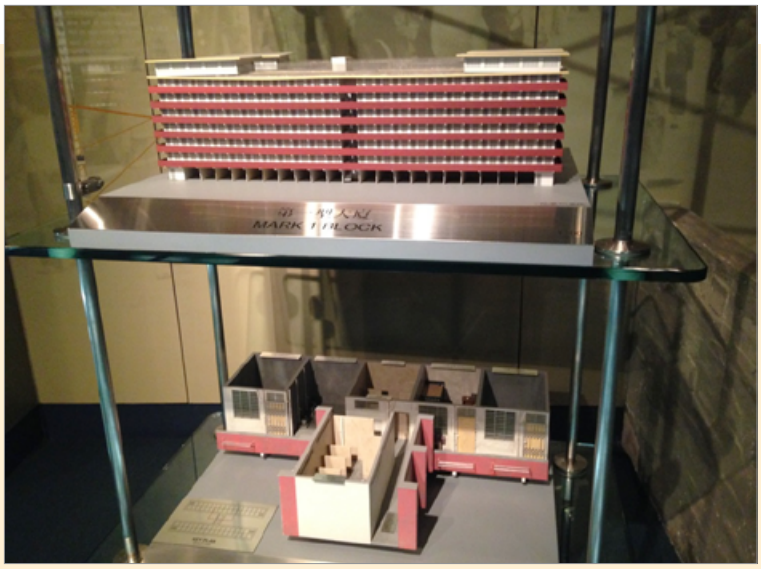


Plate 1
Model of a Mark I building and apartment unit. Hong Kong Housing Authority Exhibition Centre.
Photo: authors, February 2018.



Plate 2
Interior of a unit in the 1950s. Hong Kong Museum of History.
Photo: authors, November 2017.

the public programme created 534,000 housing units for the population (Castells: 1986); today, the programme continues to produce new public housing but can barely meet rising demand. In 2013, a special audit revealed that 228,000 families were eligible and on a waiting list to receive public housing (Audit Commission: 2013, v). The origins of the programme are associated with the Shek Kip Mei fire that occurred on December 24th, 1953 and overnight left 53,000 individuals homeless on Christmas Day. Some authors suggest that this moment acted as a 'mythical catalyst' for the programme (Smart: 1989 and 2006), while others suggest that the roots of the Hong Kong government's efforts in public housing have to do with land clearance and the relocation of populations to areas where land value was lower or had less strategic value for development (Lam: 2015; Lau and Murie: 2017).

Beyond this debate, and beyond the intentions behind this policy, one must recognise that public housing is a distinctive characteristic of life in Hong Kong. The importance public housing plays in Hong Kong society is probably only matched by the importance it plays within Singapore's social fabric. While there are many important public housing programmes across the globe (e.g. in Brazil, on mainland China), public housing programmes in Hong Kong and Singapore target not only the poorest citizens, but they also include projects for individuals who could be considered middle-class. The target of these policies is more comprehensive than those seen in Europe or in the Americas. Not only does the policy affect a large proportion of the population, it has also shaped the landscape and the visual culture of Hong Kong. The different generations of public housing projects and their architecture (Marks I, II, III, Cruciform, H-Block, Double H Block, Trident, Harmony, etc.) (see Plate 1) are all recognisable parts of Hong Kong's landscape, and of the social and cultural fabric in terms of architectural heritage and visual culture.

Second, efforts to preserve the built heritage of these social and cultural spaces was also matched by similar efforts to record the experiences, social practices, and values associated with daily life in the early estates of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Public housing constitutes an item of such public importance that nearly every heritage institution, either permanently or occasionally, has engaged with this cultural phenomenon in the territory. There is a culture of exhibiting public housing as intangible heritage through various exhibitions and institutions. In the Hong Kong Museum of History, the territory's most important museum of history and anthropology, public housing is given a prominent place in the *Hong Kong Story*, one of the museum's permanent exhibitions (see Plate 2). The museum not only acknowledges the historical importance of the programme for Hong Kong's society, it also attempts to recreate the ambience – that is to say the aesthetic and emotions (Golding: 2013; Kidd: 2015) associated with the experience of the modest lives lived on these estates. The museum also tries to convey the bonds and values associated with this new life for



Plate 3
View from the outside of a first-generation unit, 1950s. Hong Kong Housing Authority Exhibition Centre.
Photo: authors, February 2018



Plate 4
A glimpse of the interior of a 1960s unit, Hong Kong Housing Authority Exhibition Centre.
Photo: authors, February 2018.

the residents who inhabited these homes. Similarly, in 2002 the Hong Kong Housing Authority established a museum of its own. The Authority developed an exhibit that portrays the evolution of the architecture of public housing in Hong Kong (Plate 3), and also shows a typical interior (Plate 4) in one of these units – with a somewhat romanticised view of the lifestyle of tenants in public housing, and of the Housing Authority's influence on the daily lives of their residents. The interiors show common objects and social practices. The visitor is invited to imagine and remember social habits in these spaces that now belong to another time. Radios, tea, cupboards, and clothes on hangers, all are reminders of domestic life. Many other institutions pay homage to life on the early estates. Similar exhibits and items are also displayed at the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre and the Hong Kong Heritage Museum.

In sum, exhibiting public housing is clearly a theme and component with which Hong Kong heritage professionals and institutions are accustomed to dealing. While some of these elements point to the value of built heritage, the exhibits also employ effective methods to demonstrate the intangible dimensions of a way of life lived by an important section of the population.

Most certainly, one of the key moments in showing the lifestyle in public housing in exhibitions can be found in the series of public events that were part of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Public Housing Programme in 2004. As part of the commemoration, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Heritage Museum and the Hong Kong Housing Authority, developed the exhibition, *Memories of Home*. This was on show between June 2nd and October 11th 2004 to commemorate not only the Shek Kip Mei fire and tragedy, but to reevaluate Hong Kong's history of public housing. The popularity of this exhibit and its social relevance justified maintaining some of the material through an online archive hosted by the Hong Kong Housing Authority, most of which can still be accessed online. From a narrative perspective, this exhibit showed the importance of one of the essential social facts about the public housing programme: it highlighted how much this programme was part of Hong Kong's migration history. While the Shek Kip Mei fire is seen as the catalyst, and while it is often described as the turning point that gave rise to a resettlement project that ultimately became a wide and comprehensive social policy, the long history of the programme is also intimately tied in with the reality of migration. The unregulated tenements that offered homes to many migrants from mainland China and from Southeast Asia are typically called 'squats'; the public housing programme became a way of offering better living conditions for generations of migrants and Hong Kong residents who had been living in these tenements. The public housing exhibition held at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum was also a reminder of the encounters between individuals seeking a better life in the territory. This exhibit reunited contextual and historical elements relating to current events and policy, and meshed

them with lived experience; the exhibit complemented the history of social policy with the life experience and personal memories of individuals who lived through this important era in Hong Kong's history. Approximately ten years later, the Antiquities and Monuments Office organised another important temporary exhibition, entitled *Growing up in Public Housing*, which was hosted at the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre in Kowloon Park between September 2013 and March 2014. This exhibit showed a number of photographs, objects, and historical panels, and more importantly, it incorporated many personal narratives that helped describe the experience of life on the public estates.

2013 was also the year of another important project aimed at protecting tangible and intangible heritage in Hong Kong. After years of discussion and planning, Mei Ho House, a public estate built in 1954 that had been declared a grade II heritage site, was renovated as part of a public-private partnership project led by the Youth Hostel Association. The building was repurposed as a youth hostel to provide affordable accommodation for travellers, while a portion of the site was made into a museum. Intangible heritage was a key element in designing this museum, not only to preserve the architectural value of the estate, but to recognise [t]*he everyday life and pursuits of the people involved around this unique spatial morphology, which in turn bred a close bond among the households* (Youth Hostel Association: 2019a). The museum's mission is to:

- [preserve] aspects of Hong Kong life and to exhibit the way of life, living environments, culture and ethos of 1950s-70s Hong Kong through the collection and preservation of artefacts, research, education and the exhibition of household objects of early public housing residents.
- [arouse] public awareness of the importance of conserving tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and to interpret the historical, architectural, cultural and social significance of the historic building, Mei Ho House, through exhibitions, guided tours, and various cultural activities (Youth Hostel Association: 2019b).

Mei Ho House has been developed by the Youth Hostel Association as an intellectual hub for activities related to public housing heritage. From an ethical perspective, the Youth Hostel Association is not only committed to the safeguarding of this heritage, but is also committed to integrating the underprivileged groups in the neighbourhood, providing both employment opportunities and opportunities to create and perpetuate local social bonds through this heritage project.

In recent years, other public institutions were compelled to respond to this renewed enthusiasm for public housing history. The Public Records Office created an important campaign to value the governmental public health campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s. Some of the materials from these campaigns are accessible at the archives and on the archives' website; overall, this constitutes one of the Public Records Office's major recent projects for communicating Hong Kong's heritage. In 2009, the Department of Civic Affairs organised an exhibition to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Information Services Department, and presented a retrospective of its communication campaigns. While these communication campaigns may not at first sight appear to be focused on public housing, they are impossible to dissociate from it. Many of the campaigns circulated in the estates and some of them were directly targeted at the behaviour of the residents. The nostalgia around *Miss Ping On,* around *Lap Sap Chung* (litterbug) or *Mr Zebra* has had an undeniable effect; these campaigns convey the collective atmosphere and ideas about values, public health and good public behaviour which were prevalent in the new public housing spaces. An alternative interpretation of these materials can make the viewer critically aware of the government's perception of public housing tenants who were often seen as squatters. Thus, these campaigns bring a critical perspective to the harsher aspects of life on the public housing estates.

Discussion: the ethics of 'popular' intangible heritage

In this paper, public housing has been discussed as a form of intangible heritage. More specifically, it has been established that public housing was a significant societal characteristic of Hong Kong, and has left important traces on the territory's social fabric. Public housing has left its mark both on the landscape and visual culture of Hong Kong. That being said, intensive property development and changes in housing needs, have created pressures leading to many of the early public housing estates being phased out, and the complete disappearance of others

– leaving only the older generation with knowledge and memories of those formative years for Hong Kong. As we have seen, over the last ten years many initiatives have been put in place – mostly through the expertise of professionals and at the institutional level – to create greater awareness. Likewise, important commemorations of social policy have also helped in bringing in resources to sustain heritage preservation and communication activities.

The purpose of this paper was not to advocate for the inclusion of memories of public housing in the official list of intangible heritage, nor was it to promote the organisational values, institutional culture, or administration of housing policy by the Hong Kong Housing Authority. As the existence of a waiting list to access public housing in Hong Kong would suggest, the situation is far from perfect. Rather, the purpose of this paper has been to recognise the importance of memories of public housing as intangible heritage, and to highlight their significance for Hong Kong society and the articulation of its local identity. Because of the vast size of this programme in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, it influenced the daily life and practices of a large proportion of the population.

This section of the article builds from this experience to discuss the complexity of promoting and safeguarding what this paper calls 'popular' intangible heritage. By popular, this article means the category of heritage items and values that are associated with the working class population and culture. The notion of popular, it is argued, is inclusive of a variety of class categories and stratifications, and helps in acknowledging class mobility. Moreover, this notion of 'popular' recognises that while some individuals may not want to celebrate their modest roots, they may still share feelings towards that part of their life-experience, and consequently, feel that this is material worthy of preservation.

One of the first difficulties with the concept of popular intangible heritage relates to what Kaufman (2013) described as an often too-rigid understanding and definition of what constitutes intangible heritage. According to Kaufman, the notion of intangible heritage is elastic; there is a lot of fluidity in what this definition includes. Some communities may have a great interest in opera, while for others, a modest practice or space may evoke more heritage values and memories (pp.22-23). This point is not only important for theoretical purposes but should also be understood at the professional level. When consulting a community about the value of intangible heritage, in an effort to be representative, is this not creating a situation where the participants – as good school pupils – try to find examples of intangible heritage rather than building on their experience and on what defines them and their lived-experience? By raising this question, it is important to point out that what constitutes popular heritage is often seen as illegitimate and difficult to articulate; it may be associated with a certain shame about humble backgrounds, and can also be seen as irrelevant and unworthy of being memorialised. It is unsurprising that the *First Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory of Hong Kong* includes – predominantly – festivals and very highly skilled craft activities, but has very few items that could have a broad appeal or belong to a more popular background. Milk tea, vegetable tea, and other culinary practices are easier mediators of popular customs. The items listed comply with a rigorous definition of intangible heritage. Again, the point is not to advocate for an addition to the 480-item list, but to raise awareness about the difficulty of engaging with popular heritage.

As professionals, there needs to be awareness that the community should not be required to identify with what has been institutionally defined as 'heritage'; otherwise, professionals are simply providing a platform for a quiz-like communication of what fits the definition. Rather, participants should be able to identify what they choose to identify with. Communication is key, and it is even more crucial when dealing with individuals from diverse backgrounds who may not think that their past and their experiences could be worthy of heritage designation. This is even more challenging when the heritage in question is at the crossroads of an embodied experience and a narrative account and recollection of one's experience of the world (Ruggles and Silverman: 2009).

Therefore, the first challenge of popular intangible heritage, and of any popular heritage for that matter, has to do with the difficulty of recognising it as heritage. On the one hand, the notion of intangible heritage is itself full of critical potential; it can help create a space for recognising types of heritage across class barriers. However, on the other hand this notion also comes with some challenges when there is an overly technical

attitude and over-reliance on conventional language. From an ethical perspective, professionals must make efforts to be inclusive, representative and to actively help in identifying popular heritage. While the predominant narratives – reinforced by the language of the *Convention* – suggest that the community should have an important voice in identifying and designating heritage, this should not prevent heritage professionals from acting as mediators and highlighting the importance of some items that are representative, but may not be recognised as such by the community. Recognising what is tacit and rendering it explicit is essential in intangible heritage, and this is where professionals can help in creating a space for discussing types of heritage that are sometimes unrecognised or questionable.

Popular heritage has the disadvantage of not being framed as heritage to begin with; it is not generally seen as timeless and valuable. That does not mean that it cannot attract attention and wide support from the community. In fact, once an item is recognised as heritage, it can generate a sense of pride and create the community bonds that are often expected of intangible heritage. Exhibits on life in public housing, once recognised as legitimate material, have generated a sense of pride and a great reception from audience members who were able to recognise themselves in it. What we can learn from the case of public housing exhibits in Hong Kong is that 'daring to communicate' is essential with popular heritage. This is beneficial for the entire heritage sector which can sometimes then engage with a new audience or with users who are not usually drawn to heritage institutions for fear of their own (perceived) ignorance.

Finally, the governance of popular heritage may prove to be extremely complex. Popular heritage is associated with common social practices, attitudes and the use of mass cultural items and spaces. Popular heritage is often associated with foods and mass consumption items that are also often traversed by corporate interests. For that matter, popular intangible heritage faces issues that are often very close to those encountered by heritage institutions focusing on science and technology. Seeking greater autonomy from corporate interest may prove to be intellectually and culturally beneficial in the long-term. Corporate sponsors may hold significant archive material, they may also provide much-needed financial support for intangible heritage, but they may prove to be more reluctant to engage with divergent, creative, subversive or negative references to their brands and images. Heritage professionals must be in a position to help in weighing the costs and benefits of associating with corporate partners. In Hong Kong, the Housing Authority has been an important sponsor of many of these activities. While there has certainly been enough room for critical reflection on public housing in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s – especially with regards to comfort – there may be other interested voices that could offer other kinds of creative opportunities for debating and valuing the social housing experience in the territory.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to acknowledge the Social Sciences and Humanities' Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for their support for this research.

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MAIN PAPERS

Dovetailing: safeguarding traditional craftsmanship using virtual reality

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Dovetailing: safeguarding traditional craftsmanship using virtual reality

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the dialogue between Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and technology, specifically within the domain of traditional craftsmanship. We begin by establishing the current methods of safeguarding traditional crafts, as described in previous issues of this journal, and the benefits and limitations of these. This is followed by an introduction to the concept of digitisation and the Tripartite Digitisation Model (TDM) for capturing, representing and disseminating ICH through digital means. Through a case study of digitising a traditional joinery technique, we explore different methods for capturing data about ICH and reflect on their use for digitisation. The ICH is represented through 3D models, video clips and audio voice-over, and disseminated in an interactive VR simulation. After evaluating the simulation with the people whose ICH we were trying to safeguard, we discuss the benefits and limitations of moving the ICH from its original context into a digital one.

Keywords

craftsmanship, virtual reality, digitisation, joinery, dovetailing, Information Computer Technology (ICT), TDM, carpentry, Håndværkerhuset

Introduction

There is little doubt about the fact that modern technology is the reason why many traditional practices are threatened. One might even argue that there can be no reconciliation between the expressions originating within traditional ways of living (the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) of communities) and practices often manifested in indigenous contexts, and the cultural backdrop for the development and world-views manifested by computing devices (hereafter referred to as Information Communication Technology (ICT) to convey the broadness of the category).

In general and historically, ICT was not conceived and constructed with the intention of safeguarding ICH. It was invented to support the production capabilities of the Western world. Similarly, ICH came about in contexts and communities before the existence of computing devices and was never intended to become intertwined with digital constructions and their inscribed agendas.

In this article, we take a step into one of the most futuristic digital technologies of the 21st century - Virtual Reality (VR), and use it to record traditional craftsmanship. Our ambition with this work is manifold, but we wanted to bring traditional craftsmen into the discussion of VR as a plausible safeguarding method for their craft. During this process we take a critical look at the various ethnographic methods (a methodology of safeguarding) applied in trying to understand and document the specific craftsmanship practice of dovetailing, as well as how these methods are used for turning dovetailing into bits and bytes. The study entails full documentation of dovetailing using four ethnographic methods and a fully working VR prototype where the user can try out a traditional practice in a digital space. First, we will begin by establishing a common ground for traditional craftsmanship and methods for safeguarding it.

Related works - safeguarding traditional craftsmanship

To get an overview of previously used methods for safeguarding traditional craftsmanship we reviewed every article published in the first thirteen volumes of the *IJIH* to identify methods concerned with safeguarding ICH in the domain of traditional craftsmanship (UNESCO's domain E). Sixteen articles were found through Rodil and Rehm's (2015) categorisation of the first nine volumes, in which they sorted every article according to UNESCO's five ICH domains (UNESCO: n.d.). The remaining four volumes were examined based on the titles and abstracts of papers and three more articles concerned with safeguarding traditional crafts were identified and included. Our primary agenda was to discover which methods different entities employ in safeguarding, and which tension fields or gaps exist between traditional (often ethnographical) methods and the digitisation of ICH for public dissemination.

In total, nineteen articles were subjected to careful analysis and sorted according to similarities with the method(s) they either implemented or described as

Table 1
Methods for safeguarding traditional craftsmanship

Safeguarding method	Articles
Workshops and educational programmes	Horjan [2010]; Karakul [2015]; Kennedy [2010]; Ktori [2017]; Moon [2013]; Tranter [2010]; Van Huy [2006]
Written media	Achanzar [2007]; Hoekstra [2010]; Labi [2009]; Song-Yong [2010]; Svensson [2008]
Demonstrations	Fu, Kim and Mao [2017]; Bucur [2007]; Minho [2007]; Musinguzi and Kibirige [2009]
Exhibitions	Han [2007]; Horjan [2010]; Svensson [2008]; Van Huy [2006]
Databases/inventories	Cabral [2011]; Horjan [2010]
Conferences	Horjan [2010]; Minho [2007]
N/A	Keitumetse and Nthoi [2009]; Sarashima [2013]

being implemented by others. In the end, six categories were identified. An overview of our findings can be seen in Table 1. Below, we briefly describe and discuss the various methods.

Workshops and educational programmes

Workshops and educational programmes refer to cases where training in a craft is conducted by trained instructors, either in a more formal setting such as vocational schools or in more informal settings like limited-time workshops. As is obvious, this method requires the active participation of those who attend. Examples of this are the various educational programmes described by Ktori (2017), which aim to safeguard the practice of Lefkara embroidery in Cyprus. The programmes are all taught by practised embroiderers with the aim of transmitting knowledge to younger generations. A more short-term example is described by Karakul (2015), whose study focuses on a one-week workshop for traditional building methods in Turkey. The workshop consisted of master builders teaching groups of students through a master-apprentice relationship. It also involved interviews with the builders, conducted by the students, about their education, apprenticeship and experience.

The direct involvement of the craftspeople makes this method arguably one of the more authentic methods for disseminating information about a craft. Participants (or students) actively performing the craft themselves ensures the added learning benefits that the 'learning-by-doing' approach involves, such as higher engagement and deeper understanding of the material (Felder and Brent: 2003). However, both for short-term and longer-term solutions, this method has the disadvantage of being place-specific, meaning the information is not disseminated outside of the immediate physical context. For short-term solutions, it is also restricted by time. Furthermore, the method requires a certain amount of resources (tools, materials, etc.) which can be costly. Finally, long-term solutions rely on pre-existing interest in the craft from the public to get people to commit on a long-term basis.

Written media

In the case of written media, the articles themselves become the *de facto* method of safeguarding. While most of the articles in the *IJIH* could be seen in this way, what we refer to is when the ICH is explicitly written up and thus documented in a published (and publicly accessible) format. An elaborate account is Song-Yong's (2010) operational sequence analysis of Korean pottery-making techniques. In this study, the process of pottery-making is described and documented step by step. Another example is from Svensson's (2008) ethnographic studies of Hopi pottery and Sámi basketry. Svensson does not go into detail about the processes themselves, but instead describes the other intangible elements surrounding them, such as how they relate to the ways of life of the people who practise the crafts.

This method can theoretically provide all the relevant data concerning a specific craft and is more easily disseminated across space and time than most other methods. However, since articles such as the examples described above are often written by people other than the craftspeople, they will to some degree rely on the author's understanding and interpretations of the craft, as well as their ability to describe it. The written method approach does not offer a way for people to physically interact with the craft, or to experience it, the way other methods allow.

Demonstrations

By 'demonstrations', we mean cases where craftspeople perform their craft in a place where other people can see them, such as a museum or a fair. For example, Bucur (2007) describes the National Festival of Folk Traditions in Romania, an annual event where, among other heritage-related events, craftspeople demonstrate traditional folk crafts in live performances. Fu, Kim and Mao (2017) describe craft demonstrations in the Arts and Crafts Museum Cluster in China, where traditional craftspeople are given a free space both to perform their craft in full view of attendees and sell their products.

Demonstrations share both the benefits and disadvantages of workshops and educational programmes, especially in the case of interactive demonstrations. Both a benefit and disadvantage of this method is that it requires little commitment from audiences for dissemination, however, this dissemination is without experiential learning (hands-on, first-person experience).

Exhibitions

In exhibitions, information about a traditional craft is displayed, usually in museums or at sites relevant to the craft. This often means showing tangible elements such as tools and craft products, but can also be in the form of e.g. pictures and video. For example, Van Huy (2006) describes exhibits created by the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, where photographs taken by craftspeople were organised into three exhibitions. Two of these were located where the craftspeople lived which added to the understanding of the local community regarding the value of their craft.

Similar to demonstrations, this is a low-commitment method, although just as for written media, this method can end up being dependent on the creators' ability to interpret the crafts or the methodologies used to make them.

Databases/inventories

Databases or inventories refer to digital inventories of ICH data, such as pictures, video and questionnaire results. Horjan (2011) created a database with the purpose of storing information that could (and has been) used in further safeguarding efforts, such as educational programmes and workshops. In a rather different example of this method, Cabral (2011) proposed (but did not have time to implement) an interactive online database through which anyone could provide information on the ICH by filling out questionnaires.

Notably, this is the only method we found that is inherently digital, which gives it the same benefits in terms of sharing as written media. However, just as with written media, it does not require active participation from the craftspeople or from participants.

Conferences

Conferences refer to gatherings of stakeholders relevant to the ICH they are seeking to safeguard to discuss issues related to safeguarding. These stakeholders can, for example, be craftspeople as well as people from the tourism sector. An example is Horjan's (2010) study, where one of the outcomes was an expert conference where professionals in heritage and tourism discussed legal issues, development opportunities and education related to traditional crafts in the border area of Croatia and Slovenia.

This method is more suited to the planning of other safeguarding methods, just as in the example above, since it does not involve the public at all. However, it also suffers from the same disadvantages as most other methods already described, namely time- and place-specificity.

Summary

In summary, in the review we have identified the various methods employed for safeguarding traditional craftsmanship as each having their own set of strengths in terms of dissemination. However, it is clear that the immediate challenges for dissemination (and the ability to invoke interest among the public) are primarily limited by the spatial confinement of the crafts or the inability of audiences to experience them beyond being spectators. From this point of tension, we found it interesting to explore how virtual reality could perform as a method for dissemination and as a method for engaging with traditional craftsmen in conversations about their own practice as a potential subject for digitisation and dissemination.

Digitisation

Article 13 of the UNESCO *Convention* states that, while attempting to safeguard ICH, one should *foster scientific, **technical** and artistic studies, as well as research methodologies, with a view to effective safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage* (UNESCO: 2003). This suggests technology as a means of preserving ICH. For traditional crafts, one of the main threats is technology and industrialisation, which has led to many changes in the way they are practised. Demands for increased production have meant that traditional methods have become altered or even obsolete, replaced by machinery (Song-Yong: 2010; Tranter: 2010). As we come from a background in ICT, we see an opportunity to use the very thing that is often a threat to traditional crafts as a means to safeguard them, via the process of digitisation. Digitisation has the same benefits as written media - i.e. accessibility and shareability - while it also has the potential to incorporate the benefits of workshops and demonstrations. But to what degree they are reconcilable is a more complicated concept to come to understand and relates to the research methodology employed in safeguarding and the reflections of its consequences.

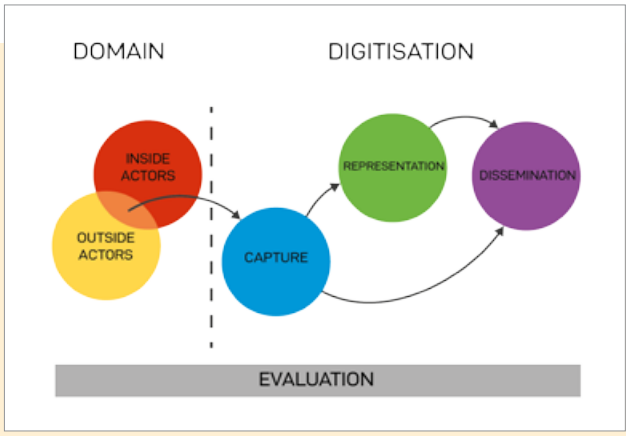


Figure 1
The Tripartite Digitisation Model, based on Figure 2 in Rodil and Rehm (2015).

The Tripartite Digitisation Model

In order to digitise ICH, we made use of the Tripartite Digitisation Model (TDM), as presented by Rodil and Rehm (2015; 2017). This model (as seen in Figure 1), can be broken down into two main stages. The first one, the domain, refers both to the domain as classified by UNESCO (2003), but also more specifically to the context and knowledge associated with the particular ICH to be digitised. Two types of actors exist within the domain: inside actors and outside actors, where the inside actor is the 'owner(s)' of the ICH, and the outside actor is the person or group attempting to safeguard it. As illustrated in Figure 1, the outside actors bring their own (usually technical) domain into that of the inside actors, and it is in this overlap that the second part of the process, digitisation, takes form.

Digitisation consists of three parts. The first one, capture, is where data about the ICH is gathered and analysed, with the purpose of gaining an understanding of the domain and collecting the elements to be digitised. This can, for example, be through traditional ethnographic methods like interviews with inside actors, photos and/or video recordings, or it can be through more technical methods such as 3D-scanning or motion capture. The choice of method depends on the nature of the ICH, and a single method will not necessarily be able to capture all important aspects.

The second part, representation, is where the captured data is structured and translated into digital representations, such as 3D models or as audio narration. The possibilities for representation are of course limited by the types of data captured, as it would be difficult to create e.g. 3D models of something that had not been captured visually. The choice of representation method(s) is often considered in advance of establishing the method of dissemination. But it is also likely that large sets of various types of represented data can be utilised in various combinations in future dissemination forms.

Finally, in dissemination, a digital medium is used to showcase the digitally represented ICH, ideally allowing it to reach a wider audience. This can, for example, be an interactive 3D simulation, a video, webpage, an augmented reality application, etc. Just as for representation, the choice of dissemination is informed by the types of data available, and just as for capture, it is informed by the nature of the ICH. For example, it might make more sense to choose an interactive medium for disseminating a craft process with the purpose of teaching it to users, whereas video(s) might be sufficient for informing people about the importance of a craft to the people practising it. In any case, they can both be digital.

The choice of methods for all three parts is informed by the nature of the ICH, just as the choice of capture and representation is informed by the intended method of dissemination and the disciplinary background of the outside actors. Underlying the process is a continuous evaluation of the process with the inside actors to guard against misinterpretations. For an example of this, we refer to recent work by Rodil and Winschiers-Theophilus (2018), where the continuous community/researcher dialogue enabled outside actors to better gauge their misunderstanding of the ICH in question.

Case study: the practice of dovetailing

To investigate the potential benefits and shortcomings of digitising traditional craftsmanship, we conducted a case study in collaboration with a traditional Danish joiner. Traditional joinery might not be the most obvious choice when talking about ICH, since over time ICH appears to have become almost synonymous with indigenous people. However, as per UNESCO's definition, ICH is *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 recognise as part of their cultural heritage. (UNESCO: 2003). Thus, traditional joinery can be recognised as ICH as long as the individuals practising the craft see it as part of their identity. The specific ICH we are working to digitise is the process of dovetailing, a traditional joinery technique that is no longer taught at Danish vocational schools. The benefit of this case study has been our ability to return to the confined space of the practice for numerous talks and experimentation with our safeguarding methodology.

Throughout the following subsections, we describe our case study in terms of the different parts of the TDM.

Domain

The domain of our case study is traditional craftsmanship (domain E). More specifically, it is traditional Danish joinery within the institution called Håndværkerhuset (the Craftsman House) in Aalborg. Håndværkerhuset was created in 1987 with the purpose of giving local traditional craftspeople a place to practise their crafts in order to preserve them. It contains workshops for seven different traditional types of craft, including clockmaking, carpentry and joinery, where they do both restorations and create new wooden craft products using traditional craft methods. The restoration service is especially interesting, as many of the tasks performed are only possible to complete using traditional techniques - such as dovetailing. Håndværkerhuset is open every Wednesday, and they welcome anyone to come in and observe demonstrations of the different crafts. They also offer tours and demonstrations for vocational schools in the area, however, they have found that interest from these institutions has been decreasing.

During a preliminary visit to Håndværkerhuset, a joiner (hereafter known as 'the joiner') expressed concern about how his craft has changed in recent years and feared that much of the knowledge and skill he learned from his masters would be forgotten. According to the TDM, the joiner is the inside actor having complete domain knowledge of the field, but very limited in terms of technological knowledge. We, on the other hand, are without any form of domain knowledge, but as developers we are aware of the various technological opportunities. Thus the first step is to establish a dialogue between ICH and ICT and

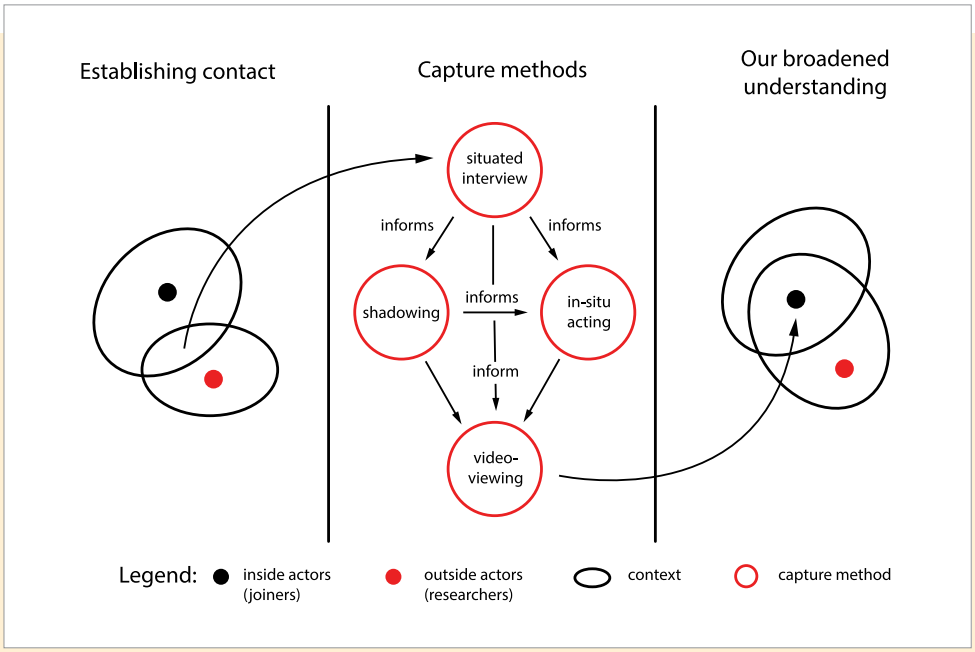


Figure 2
A model representing our capture process, illustrating how the different methods of capture informed each other.
Source: Illustration produced by authors, 16 Dec. 2018.

maintain a dialogical frame for continuous scrutiny of the two fields' ability or inability to be reconciled.

Capture

The capture process consisted of four different capture sessions, each using different ethnographic methods to gain an insight into the domain practice. The choice to use four different methods was not made at the beginning of the case study, rather it became obvious along the way that one method would not suffice in bringing a proper understanding of the domain when looking at the captured data. Thus the method for each session following the first one was chosen based on results from previous sessions, with the purpose of filling in the blanks in our understanding and to facilitate future dissemination, (as illustrated in Figure 2).

Capture 1: situated interview

To gain an understanding of some of the intangible qualities that the joiner recognised as part of his identity, as well as to narrow the scope of the study to a specific topic, we conducted a situated interview. *The situated interview is focused on studying the 'real' person in the 'real' setting ...This allows a more detailed discussion on the particular relationship between the person and the issues in focus* (Ylirisku and Buur: 2007). It was an open format interview, with only an overall entry point to establish a dialogue about the differences between joinery today and traditional joinery, as well as potential topics for digitisation. The interview was audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis.

Based on the interview, we identified three main differences in the intangible qualities between current and traditional joiners' self-perception of their identity. Firstly, traditional joiners were taught through a master-apprentice relationship. The master (*mestersvend* in Danish) did not just teach joinery techniques, but also functioned as a life mentor. The apprentices respected him, and he respected and expressed pride in his apprentices, which in turn taught them to be proud of their work. According to the joiner, current apprentices *don't learn that pride that we learned. In a way, we had it knocked into us, that you should be proud of being a joiner. They don't get that today ... You just need to get money out of them today.*

Secondly, knowledge about the tools and how to maintain them has been devalued. For example, the joiner explained how he was taught to sharpen saw blades. Today, he explained, modern craftspeople buy several blades at once and then throw them away once they get dull.

Thirdly, the approach to a project is different when looking across generations. Much of this is due to the technological advancements that have automated



Plate 1
An example of a dovetail joint.
Photo: Milo Marsfeldt Skovfoged, 2018.



Plate 2
Footage from our shadowing-capture, from both the stationary and handheld cameras.
Photo: Miroslav Kalinov Sokolov and Milo Marsfeldt Skovfoged, 2018.

many of the processes, which has left many traditional techniques obsolete. Today, [all] *components come more or less ready for assembly. It doesn't give that pride in the craft, because it's assembly, and you shouldn't underestimate assembly, but it really isn't anything other than screwing some things together or assembling things that have been finished in a factory.* It was during this capture session that the joiner mentioned dovetailing, which he described as one of the most essential techniques for traditional joinery. Dovetailing is the art of combining wood, without the use of nails or other aids (as shown in Plate 1), often used for making drawers, doors, window sills, etc.

Reflection on the situated interview method for the digitisation of ICH

As an initial capture method, the situated interview provided a surface-level overview of the ICH and the challenges that it faces from the point of view of the inside actors. Locating the interview in the context of where the ICH is practised was beneficial for when the joiner wanted to show us something, e.g. a tool or a craft product, to make his point clearer. The open format of the interview allowed the inside actor to more or less control the conversation, thus focusing on topics important from his perspective. While the situated interview gave insight into the identity of the joiner, it didn't provide much insight into the process of dovetailing, nor the interactions in a master-apprentice relationship.

Capture 2: Shadowing

In order to capture the process of dovetailing, we were inspired by the video-shadowing method described by Ylirisku and Buur (2007, p.65), who explain the following about the method: *...many work activities are automatic and are thus difficult to verbalise or to detail, or may even escape conscious awareness altogether.*

By using two cameras, one handheld and one stationary, (as shown in Plate 2), we were able to get a total overview of the workstation while at the same time getting close-up shots of the joiner's actions. During the capture session, there was no verbal interaction between us and the joiner as it was pivotal that he could direct the rhythm and content as he saw necessary.

By analysing the videos, we were able to break down the process of dovetailing into smaller steps and get an overview of the different tools used. It also provided an understanding of the joiner's movements within his work space, and his use and interaction with the tools.

Reflection on the video-shadowing method for the digitisation of ICH

Shadowing allowed us to capture every step involved, how it was performed, which tools were used, etc.. The use of two cameras was especially beneficial, as we were able to fill in gaps from the hand-held camera footage with that of the stationary camera, and

vice versa. For example, through the hand-held, we could see in detail how the joiner drew lines on a plank, while we had an overview of where in the workshop this took place through the stationary. Using two cameras also diminished the shortcoming of using a camera, namely that if the view is obstructed then the data is not captured. The choice not to communicate with the joiner allowed for a more natural capture of the process. However, while shadowing showed *how* dovetails are made, it did not explain *why* it was done this way.

Capture 3: *in-situ* acting

To fill in blanks from the previous methods, for instance, understanding the stepwise process (inspired by Song-Yong, (2010)) and the master-apprentice relationship, we decided to use *in-situ* acting (Ylirisku and Buur: 2007), where one of the researchers played the role of a new apprentice being taught how to make dovetails. This allowed for natural interaction, asking questions and receiving feedback, between researcher and joiner. This was done immediately following the shadowing session and was documented using two cameras following the same set-up as shadowing.

Reflection on the *in-situ* acting method for the digitisation of ICH

This capture session provided further insight into the process of dovetailing, as it explained the reason and importance of different actions. For example, when outlining the dovetail the exact angle of the dovetail is not as important as the aesthetic, which differs according to personal taste.

The capture session also provided an understanding of the 'feeling' for the master-apprentice relationship, with the use of language, attitude, type of feedback, etc. Having one of the researchers create dovetails themselves, we feel, brought us closer to an understanding of the process of dovetailing from an insider actor's perspective, although of course, it is only partial. Having the joiner act as the researcher's master was also valuable in terms of understanding the master-apprentice relationship. However, it should be kept in mind that a single session is not enough to recreate the year-long bond between a master and apprentice.

Capture 4: video-viewing

As outsider actors, we knew it was impossible to get a complete understanding of the intangible heritage of the entire craft when it had taken the joiner over sixty years to reach his level of expertise. However, if our understanding was incomplete, our dissemination might have provided an incorrect depiction. This is not limited to digitisation but is a constant challenge when safeguarding. Therefore, inspired by a method used by Rodil *et al*. (2014), to minimise the chance of error by exposing our own understanding to the inside actor, we edited the video from our shadowing session to showcase our current understanding of the process. We then asked the joiner to watch the video while commenting (see Plate 3). If the joiner wished to add to the video, either directly regarding the content in the video or generally about joinery, we paused the video and recorded his clarification.

Reflection on the video-viewing method for the digitisation of ICH

This capture session assisted us in understanding the process of dovetailing more thoroughly, as well as the importance of certain elements (tools and techniques) that we otherwise would not have thought about. The method also allowed the joiner to see how others understand the meaning of his craft from the situated methods (and their inability to capture everything), thus he could comment on what others would see.



Plate 3
Footage from the video viewing, with the joiner viewing our edited shadowing footage on a laptop and commenting on it.
Photo: Jedrzej Jacek Czapla, 2018.



Plate 4
A comparison between the real object (left) and our 3D model (right).
Photo: Jedrzej Jacek Czapla, 2018.



Plate 5
A screenshot from our VR simulation.
Source: in-game screen capture made by the authors, 16 Dec. 2018.

Thus, this capture session was very useful in filling in the gaps we were able to identify in our data. Furthermore, by giving the data back to the inside actor, we gained a perspective on the ICH that we, as outside actors, could not have achieved by ourselves. For example, we found out that the pencil the joiner used in drawing measurements, which we had previously dismissed as 'just a pencil', was a very specific type of pencil which was important for making accurate dovetails.

Discussion of capture methods

We found that the various capture methods we used worked well together, due to how data from one capture session could fill in gaps in the data from other sessions. Had we only used one method, e.g. the situated interview, we would have needed to ensure that we were extremely thorough which would have been challenging for several reasons. As an example, we would not have had enough prior knowledge to know which data was missing. Instead, by using four methods, we were able to analyse the data from one session, see what was missing, and adjust accordingly for the next session. This ties into the second reason, namely that using only one method would have restricted the types of data we could gather. Knowing what data we were missing, we could discuss which method was best suited for filling in the gaps of our understanding. In other words, the results of each session informed which method we used next, (as illustrated in Figure 2).

Through the situated interview, we gained an understanding of the joiner's feelings towards the evolution of his craft and what he felt it was important to safeguard. We identified elements that were important for further capture sessions, which we did through shadowing (capturing the process of dovetailing) and *in situ*-acting (understanding the process of dovetailing and the master-apprentice relationship). While reviewing our data, we identified the gaps in our understanding, which we then attempted to fill through the video-viewing session.

An important element in three out of four capture sessions was the use of video recording, which ensured that we gathered as much data as possible, even data we might not find important during the capture session. This proved especially useful in the shadowing session, where we could get a more natural recording of the joiner creating dovetails, but were still able to record all his movements and the tools he used without interrupting him so we could write it all down.

That being said, we have no illusions about having captured everything that is essential to the craft of dovetailing. As previously mentioned, as outside actors we are aware that we will never understand the intangible heritage in the way that the inside actors do. It is worth noting that we chose not to conduct any further capture sessions after the fourth since we deemed that we had a sufficient understanding of dovetails to make the digital representation and ultimately create a dissemination prototype. However, it is entirely possible that a more thorough understanding could have been gained by continuing the capture process.

Representation

The different capture sessions resulted in various types of data in the form of pictures, voice recordings, videos, notes, sketches and transcripts. In order to organise and represent both the tangible and intangible parts we used different technological media.

The tangible parts, such as the tools and materials required for making dovetails, were represented through 3D models. The models of the tools were based on reference images and measurements taken during capture sessions. The result was a set of thirty-five fully textured 3D models, an example of which can be seen in Plate 4. The models were created with Autodesk Maya, while the textures were edited using Adobe Photoshop.

Representing the intangible aspects was more challenging. The process of dovetailing itself was represented by editing the footage from the shadowing session into thirteen shorter video clips. The resulting videos showed the steps the joiner performed throughout the process. Furthermore, to accompany the videos, we wrote a voiceover script, which explained the meaning behind the actions that were happening in the footage. The content of the script was based on the information from the *in-situ* acting, situated interview and video-viewing. Furthermore, the script was written in the joiner's native language, using as many of his phrasings as possible, and from the perspective of a joiner telling the story of how his master had taught him. In order to visualise the joiner from whose perspective the script was taken, we created a 3D model of a human with the traditional uniform of the joiners at Håndværkerhuset (see Plate 5). This model was created using Adobe Fuse CC.

Dissemination

VR as a technical domain and the content for dissemination were chosen by comparing the six identified methods in the nineteen articles found in the review. For example, both workshops and demonstrations provide the possibility of interacting with the inside actor directly, and at the same time, it is possible to try/learn the craft yourself. However, the downside of this is that the dissemination is limited to a specific time and place. Both written media and database/inventories are easier to disseminate across space and time as both can be digitised and sent/read online. This is a common quality to most digital media. However, written media lacks the interaction with the inside actor and is only able to showcase a 'frozen' depiction of the ICH based on the writer's current understanding, a problem most digital solutions also suffer from. This also means that it cannot provide additional information if the reader has more questions. At the same time, the reader only gets visual input in the form of words and in some cases, images, where a workshop provides input to all the bodily senses. Here a digital medium such as virtual reality (VR) also provides multi-sensory input, where the user is able to interact with a virtual world through embodied interaction, i.e. interaction through bodily movements, rather than just interacting through e.g. a mouse and keyboard, thereby combining the 'try it yourself' approach from workshops with the easy dissemination of written media. We therefore chose to experiment with VR as the digital medium for dissemination.

Sherman and Craig (2002) describe VR as the product of four essential elements: a *virtual world, immersion, feedback,* and *interactivity*. In the context of a computer system, a *virtual world* is one that is built and consists of 3D and 2D models. *Immersion* is divided into physical immersion - how much the system is affecting the user's sensory feedback - and mental immersion - how engaged is the user with the generated virtual world. *Feedback* relates to whether the user's actions are accurately translated from the real to the virtual world, and *interactivity* is whether the user's action has an effect on the virtual world.

An example of a previous attempt to safeguard a traditional craft method through VR is in the work of Carrozzino *et al.* (2011). In their work, they capture the process of statue-making in Italy by following a local statue-maker and documenting the process step by step. They represent the process through video clips and 3D models of the materials and tools and disseminate it through a virtual environment that can be experienced either on a regular desktop setup or in an immersive VR system. An evaluation of the system showed that participants enjoyed their method of safeguarding and said that they enjoyed the mix of 'traditional' (the videos) and less traditional (3D models) representations. Regarding the immersive VR setup, they found that participants were expecting to be able to move and act more freely than the system allowed

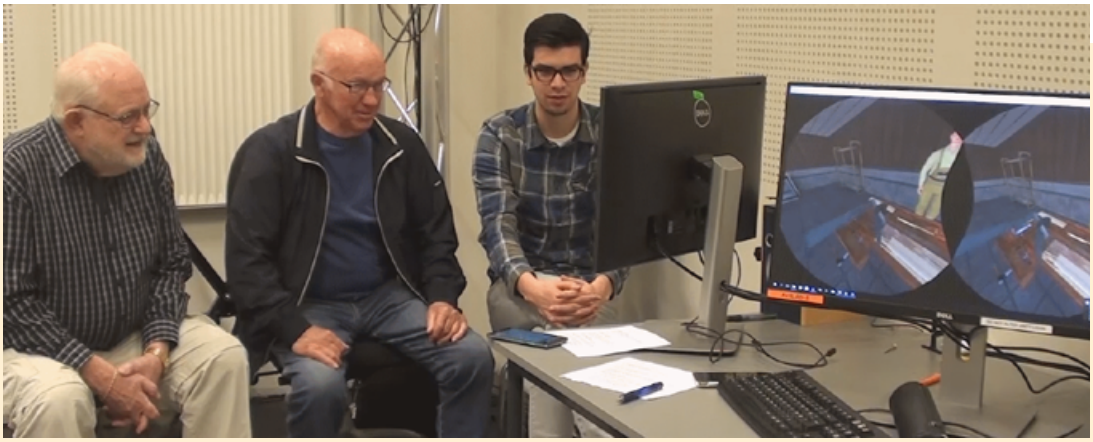


Plate 6
Footage from our evaluation with the joiner (left) and the carpenter (middle).
Photo: Miroslav Kalinov Sokolov, 2018.

them to. Participants also expressed that being able to move around and interact with the virtual environment helped them focus on the content of the ICH (Carrozzino *et al.*: 2011).

Implementing the VR

Considering how VR has previously been used in the context of ICH, we developed a simulation that can be experienced through a head-mounted display (HMD). It was developed in the game engine Unity 3D, using the C# programming language and Virtual Reality Toolkit (VRTK) to implement bodily interaction. For testing it, we used an HTC Vive VR system. This system makes it possible for the user to experience and interact within a virtual world, being inside the simulation as opposed to interacting with a virtual world through a monitor and input devices such as a mouse (an example could be Minecraft).

When a person enters the simulation, they find themselves within a workshop environment with a workbench in front of them and a virtual joiner standing behind it. This can be seen in Plate 5. When the user feels acquainted with the world, they can start the play-through. They learn about the process through step-by-step narrated videos, displayed on a virtual speech bubble coming from the virtual joiner. These videos are the edited footage from the shadowing and the narrative is based on quotes from the situated interview, *in-situ* acting and video-viewing. The user has the freedom of choice to watch the full video first or to perform the steps as it plays. To complete the simulation, they are required to themselves perform the bodily actions they see in the videos (like marking with a pencil, sawing, etc.), using the 3D models provided of the tools that lie on the workbench.

Evaluating the VR simulation with the inside actor

To evaluate the authenticity of the VR simulation, we invited the joiner and a colleague to view it. We were interested to see how well they felt we had managed to represent their craft, as well as how they responded to the method of dissemination, namely VR, something that was new to them. This evaluation was conducted in a lab at Aalborg University, which also allowed us to see if the inside actors were able to recognise their ICH in a different context than their workshop.

As the joiner and colleague had no prior experience with VR, we feared that making them go through the simulation would result in us needing to guide them through every step, distracting them from providing us feedback on our representation of their craft. We therefore decided instead to let them view a screen showing a member of the research group playing through the simulation live. The joiner and a carpenter colleague were sitting together with another researcher, allowing them to discuss what they were seeing, as shown in Plate 6. As the play-through was happening in real time, the player was able to 'pause' when they began to talk, so as to get as much feedback



Plate 7
The carpenter trying the VR application.
Photo: Miroslav Kalinov Sokolov, 2018.

as possible. The evaluation was recorded with a video camera and lasted approximately an hour.

The overall response from the craftsmen was positive. They were especially happy with the voice-over and felt that it managed to incorporate some of the most important intangible aspects of the craft, such as the master-apprentice relationship and the importance of using the right tools. They also noted that we had included all the necessary tools and that they thought they were well represented and easy to recognise. However, we became aware that we had named one tool inaccurately in the voice-over. Through their discussion, we were made aware of two points regarding how to use specific tools that we were unaware of and therefore had not included in our simulation.

At the end of the play-through, we gave the experts the opportunity to try our VR simulation. The colleague tried it briefly (see Plate 7), but he had difficulty interacting with anything and seemed confused about how it worked. Within two minutes, he wanted to go back to the 'real world' and commented that he felt like he was in a completely different world and forgot his surroundings while in VR. Yet, we find it important to mention that the concept of overlapping technology and ICH domain is not only for the benefit of the researchers' understanding of ICH, but also to open up the space of technology for the inside actors - enabling them to also become critical (over time) about their own practices' digital future. The concept of mutual learning within an ICH digitisation discourse is covered in more depth in Rodil and Rehm (2015).

Discussion of VR as a method of safeguarding

The choice of dissemination through VR proved to be a challenge. Due to the relative novelty of VR, and perhaps more importantly, the inside actors' limited relationship with technology, it proved difficult to properly convey to them what the actual purpose of the VR was. However, we also conducted a separate evaluation of the system with nine students in their twenties, who also had limited experience with VR. This evaluation showed that they were able to understand and use our solution without any particular confusion regarding how VR itself works, indicating that our solution could effectively fulfil the purpose of transmitting the ICH to the wider public as playful, embodied interaction with ICH.

All the decisions in this technical domain were made by us and are thus influenced by our perspective on the ICH. All the capture sessions were based on our presumption that they were the best methods for capturing the specific ICH, in doing so we also chose the type of data received, thereby influencing how the ICH was disseminated. Had we chosen not to do shadowing then we would not have been able to edit the footage

down to the smaller clips that were used to show the process in the VR simulation. It should also be noted that we not only chose how to represent the data, but also what data to represent.

Despite our four capture methods we still did not manage to capture every aspect of the dovetail-making process. One of the tools was accidentally named after its bigger counterpart, and up until this point we did not know the tool had different names based on size. We had also missed the fact that two of the tools had to be used in a specific way. One such tool was the saw, where it was important to use small movements to make the cut precise. Going back and looking at the shadowing with this new information we could see that the joiner does indeed use smaller cuts when sawing the dovetails compared to when sawing a piece of wood in two. So while we did manage to capture the data, we did not always manage to identify its significance. This is a problem all outside actors have to deal with, determining when an action is 'just' an action and when it has a significant meaning.

The question then becomes: how can we avoid missing the importance of actions? During the shadowing and video-viewing, the movement of the saw was correct since it was the joiner who performed the task, thus the topic of the movement did not come up and we did not know to ask about it. It was not until the researcher first used the saw wrongly in the VR simulation that the joiner commented on it. One explanation is that for the inside actor, the ICH, in this case the movement of the saw, is second nature so they do not think about how they do it and only when confronted with an incorrect representation do they start to reflect on how they do it themselves. By this example, we were able to confirm what was pointed out by Rodil *et al.* (2014) on how video captured ICH data brings embedded information which is decoded differently by different stakeholders. Only in the dialogue (made possible by the research frame) between outside actors and inside actors can points of confusion, relevance and irrelevance be deconstructed for a proper understanding, and allow for integration into a technological construction.

This problem of identifying the importance of certain steps also shows the downside that all static media is confronted with. If a static medium presents an incomplete or inaccurate representation of the ICH then the recipient will get an inaccurate understanding of it. As outside actors, it could be argued that it is impossible to ever get a complete understanding of the ICH. So the most important thing is to present and confront the inside actor with one's own (incomplete) understanding, enabling them to reflect on their own ICH, to make sure that the data is respectfully representing the insiders' views and skills. With that said, the evaluation showed that the inside actor did recognise the digital representation of dovetailing as being part of his ICH.

Due to the project's limited scope, elements such as the maintenance of tools, choosing the correct type of wood, etc. were not included in the solution, despite the inside actors recognising them as important to the craft. Thus, the final VR simulation is ultimately a product of our choices and agendas and not the inside actors'. While this seems banal, it highlights the fact that few outside- and inside-actor collaborations can continue indefinitely, and although it could be argued that involving the inside actor more would provide a more accurate representation over time, it is hardly the reality of many safeguarding projects. After all, we are working with complicated topics involving identity, world-views and techniques perfected over many years. The fundamental question is now more obvious to us; what really is the objective of dissemination? By querying this point, we wish to expose, in light of our experiences, that the methodological choices will have consequences for the ICH as one cannot capture it all - digitally or otherwise. We would like to suggest that the outside actors at least establish a continuous dialogue between themselves and the inside actors in a more holistic way. In our case, it has been beneficial to our understanding of the domain to expose the joiner to the dissemination of his own craft.

Conclusion

By analysing the nineteen articles from the *IJIH* that focused on traditional craftsmanship, we were able to categorise their methods of dissemination into one of six categories. Based on the benefits and disadvantages of these different methods, we suggested that a digital solution, and specifically a virtual reality solution, could be explored as another way of disseminating ICH. The idea was to combine some of the benefits, like the embodied actions from the workshops, with the wider

dissemination of written media, thereby accommodating some of the shortcomings from these media.

Based on this assumption, we designed a VR simulation of the process of dovetailing. The process was captured using four different ethnographic methods, each chosen based on the shortcomings of the other methods. This provided a more complete picture of the ICH than any of the methods could have provided on their own. Both the video-viewing method and the final evaluation turned out to be particularly insightful as they both confronted the inside actor with his own ICH as seen from the perspective of an outside actor, enabling the inside actor to reflect on his own practice.

The VR solution was designed using data from all four captures, and while the inside actor was able to recognise his own ICH practice, he did not seem to understand VR; it is likely that he also did not understand the benefits of it in relation to other safeguarding methods. Ensuring that the inside actors feel their ICH is being safeguarded is just as important as ensuring that the ICH is spread to new generations. We therefore do not intend for VR, and digitisation in general, to be a replacement for more traditional safeguarding methods. Rather, we believe it could be an addition - or enhancement - with its own benefits, that could potentially attract more attention among younger generations. In light of this work it is a priority to continue to investigate the role of VR as a method where the first step is to ensure that inside actors are better equipped to be critical about technology.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Håndværkerhuset for their time and cooperation. We would also like to thank Rasmus Bugge Skammelsen for providing the voice-over for the virtual joiner in the simulation.

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Beyond the intangible/tangible binary: an analysis of historic built environments in Valencia, Spain

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Beyond the intangible/tangible binary: an analysis of historic built environments in Valencia, Spain

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ABSTRACT

This paper is a theoretical reflection aiming to understand how specific assets of intangible heritage are affected by contemporary discourse. This approach focuses on understanding the protection, preservation and re-enactment of the intangible heritage found in Spanish rural landscapes. By an analysis of the global, national and regional laws, the paper addresses the need to approach the intangible, understanding the peculiarities of places that shape the scenery. The places and 'Assets of Cultural Interest' analysed in this paper are defined as geographic areas associated with a historic event, activity, or people, which exhibit cultural and aesthetic values. Following this definition, these landscapes are experiential cultural spaces, involving a complex set of elements, fixed, semi-fixed and unfixed. The way in which these traditions are viewed and experienced by locals and foreigners plays a central role in many intangible heritage studies, as does the way in which it reflects integrity, authenticity, attachment and a sense of identity, and how it anchors collective memory. It is the intention of this paper to emphasise the need to transfer the phenomenon of intangible heritage from the realm of a lived experience to the world of living places. In doing so some questions arise: Is the intangible cultural heritage contained in rural landscapes authentic? Is it simply the materiality, the past act or the past cultural process, or is it the way the intangible cultural heritage has been managed until today? Are we applying critical considerations to inner and outer perceptions, appropriations and transmigrations when managing cultural heritage?

Keywords

rural heritage, heritage science, historic centres, abandoned landscapes, Spain, Valencia, Basque country, Catalonia, Spanish heritage law

The intangible cultural heritage in Spanish heritage law

When compiling information that could help us understand the consideration of the intangible heritage in this discourse, it was essential to realise the consequences of regionalism, nationalism and universalism in heritage law. Firstly, it is worth noting how Spanish law affects the cultural construct of authenticity and integrity in contemporary Spanish heritage. The case of Spain focuses on analysing heritage laws, the National law (Spanish Government, 1985) and three laws from different regions, the Basque Country (Basque Government 1990, 2015), Catalonia (Catalan Government, 1993) and the Valencia Region (Valencian Government, 1998, 2007), where this study is based. The analysis of these laws is based exclusively on understanding how the discourse has evolved as regards the wider cultural heritage, tangible and intangible.

Contemporary law for the safeguarding of Historical Spanish Heritage dates back to 1985. This law aimed to regulate the most important national heritage under the umbrella of Historical Sites and Monuments, in keeping with the UNESCO *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (1972) and the *Recommendation Concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas* (1976). The national law clarifies what constitutes the Historical Artistic Heritage - *Patrimonio histórico artístico* - in Spain: monuments, gardens, historic places and sites and archaeological sites, all of which are in need of protection as 'Assets of Cultural Interest'. Nonetheless, the Spanish constitution established 'Culture' as a responsibility to be transferred to the different regional governments. Thus, in order to understand the permeability of the regional laws, attention is paid to the following specific considerations regulated individually by each region: I. What constitutes heritage? II. Types of protection and criteria, authenticity and integrity. III. Spread and enhancement. IV. Public collaboration and participation. V. Institutional responsibilities and management.

I. What constitutes heritage?

It is important to highlight that in its 'Preamble' the Spanish law of 1985 specified the relevance of enhancing the material culture of the Historical Artistic Heritage with a set of goods. In the case of vernacular architecture, these were only considered when connected to a specific craft, or were a type or architectural form traditionally employed. Traditional forms of knowledge and activities were treated as



Plate 1
The pilgrims of *les Useres* resting before entering the village after the pilgrimage to Sant Joan de Penyagolosa, Castellón.
Photo: Javier Vilar, photographer of Diputación de Castellón, Spain. 2016.

minority aspects of culture to be studied and recorded (Art. 47). The Basque law (1990) introduced two innovative terms in this regard: 'intangible' and 'cultural space', as locations of activities, creations and beliefs. Place and action were then united for the first time in a space to be studied and recorded (Art. 53). The Catalan law (1993) added historical and cultural properties as regards the historic site. However, in no case is there any mention of the immaterial nature of the site (Art. 7). The only change that the Valencian law (1998) introduced was the term 'cultural value of goods', going beyond the mere appreciation of the materiality itself (Art. 5). It is worth noting that the updated Basque Law (2015) includes the terms 'landscape' and 'cultural routes', expressions which ICOMOS recognised in 2008. The law also considers food to be an intangible asset through which to recognise a place (Plate 1).

II. Types of protection and criteria: the intangible and the tangible.

As regards the type of protection and the criteria for providing recognition, the National Law (1985) recognises a single category of protection, that of 'Asset of Cultural Interest'. This recognition would eventually force municipalities to draft Special Protection Plans for affected areas, and to catalogue each property and any associated outdoor space (Art. 37). In its general dispositions, the Basque Law (1990) introduces the concept of 'cultural space' and establishes two levels of protection: 'Cultural Qualified Asset' and 'Inventoried Asset'. The Catalan Law (1993) introduces the idea of areas of ethnological interest and includes three categories: 'Cultural Asset of Local Interest', 'Catalogued Asset' and 'Movable Objects and Collections of Cultural Interest' (Art. 37). The Valencian Law (1998) introduces the terms 'cultural park' and 'intangible assets' and maintains three levels of protection as does the Catalan Law: Asset of Cultural Interest, Asset of Local Relevance and Movable Objects and Collections of Cultural Interest (Art. 26). Furthermore, the three regional laws use their own *General Heritage Inventory* to catalogue the assets in their territory.

International charts and documents from ICOMOS (1990, 1994 and 2008), the *European Landscape Convention* (Council of Europe: 2000) and the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO: 2003) all made their mark on the conceptual reframing of these laws. The updated Valencian (2007) and Basque (2015) laws incorporated the potential of intangible heritage to be continually reinterpreted and 'reconstructed', subject to their continued intelligibility and legitimacy. The former speaks of cultural events as those which *are an expression of traditions* (Art. 26), while the latter specifies in the explanatory memorandum that heritage should be *transmitted generationally and constantly recreated by communities, interacting with its environment and history in the form of identity, continuity, diversity and creativity*.

As regards the conservation criteria for 'Cultural Assets', regional laws have undergone a conceptual evolution that goes slightly beyond the canonical script which intervened solely on behalf of the materiality of the asset. The Valencian Law (2007) includes the terms 'scene' or 'urbanscape', geared towards guaranteeing and enhancing the values and perceptions of goods (Art. 39). Meanwhile, the Basque Law (2015) includes the 'intangible dimension' in the criteria for physical work, as regards the measures that favour maintaining, upgrading and regularly using the asset (Art. 39) (Plate 2).

III. Spread and enhancement

The National Law (1985) already made provision for spreading and enhancing the protection of cultural heritage. It does not provide any specific measures for disclosure, except in terms of financing and funding, with a *1% state contribution* for the protection and conservation of heritage, albeit without specifying what budget this is to come from (Art. 69-74). The Basque Law (1990) establishes specific measures for disclosure and introduces economic benefits based on aid programmes and tax credits provided by the regional government. The law also reserves a 'Cultural 1%' of the budget, although the terms for this percentage are as ambiguous as those of the National Law (Art. 102-106). The Catalan Law (1993) specifies the dissemination of knowledge of Catalan cultural heritage (Art. 65), and its use and enjoyment in its compulsory education system, but it does not state clearly the form this is to take (Art. 61). The law does include the 'Cultural 1%' and clearly refers to it coming from the public works' budget of the regional government.

In addition to following the same guidelines as the Catalan Law where education is concerned, the



Plate 2
The *Santantonada* celebration takes place in a historic context. A huge pile of bushes is burnt in the central square of the village of Forcall, Castellón.
Photo: Javier Vilar, 2018.

Valencian Law (1998) includes the establishment of outreach activities and training for officials responsible for managing heritage (Art. 88). The regional government highlights unspecified benefits, tax exemptions, financial credits (Art. 91, 94, 95), and the 'Cultural 1%' (Art. 93). The Valencian Law is the only one to include the development of an Annual Plan for the Conservation and Enhancement of Valencian Cultural Heritage, *which clearly expresses its objectives, the criteria for their implementation and the grant concession included in the programme* (Art. 93).

IV. Public collaboration and participation

Public collaboration and participation are reflected in the National Law (1985) in reference to public interest in the expropriation of *Assets of Cultural Interest in danger of destruction, damage or incompatible use* (Art. 37). The Basque Law (1990) specifies the need for owners to collaborate in conserving, caring for and protecting state property (Art. 20). Expanding on this, the Catalan Law (1993) speaks of encouraging citizen participation without specifying a purpose (Art. 3). This law also calls for the cooperation of individuals as cultural supervisors able to enforce the law when situations of danger or destruction threaten any Asset of Cultural Interest (Art. 5). In addition, the Valencian Law (1998) specifies a framework for promoting collaboration with NGOs for the conservation and promotion of heritage.

According to the Valencian Law (2007), enhancement and social enjoyment are to be encouraged through the reinstatement of Assets (XVIII Art. 39), but this law also stipulates that the working groups on these properties will be made up exclusively of technical specialists, meaning that they do not yet contemplate any public participation in the process. In contrast, the Basque Law (2015) explicitly includes public participation in conservation processes, but only when *facilitating access to existing information on the Assets* (Art. 7).

V. Institutional responsibilities and management

The institutional responsibilities and management established in the National Law (1985) are the responsibility of the Spanish Historical Heritage Council, which is in charge of developing national plans for safeguarding and protecting heritage. Different regional laws (1990, 1993 and 1998) established the responsibilities of the regional governments, provincial governments and municipalities. In this regard, it is worth noting that, if requested by a municipality, a Heritage Asset may be eligible for funding from three different administrations. The Basque Law (2015) oversaw the creation of the Inter-institutional Body for Basque Cultural Heritage in order to coordinate the three administrations. This appears to be a major step towards the successful achievement of a unified plan of action. In this sense, the Valencian Law (2007) speaks of

cultural foundations dependent on the administration of the region (XXXV Art. 79).

According to the above, the management of cultural heritage in Spain is fully dependent on policies, and the plans of action are territorially dependent. In fact, no law, whether national (1985) or regional (1990, 1993 and 1998), provides information regarding heritage management. These laws refer to their own regional inventories and catalogues. The Basque Law (2015) includes establishing *mechanisms to allow greater involvement of civil society in the management of cultural heritage*. Unusually, the law includes the need for collaboration with universities, associations and other specialised centres (Art. 77). In fact, heritage is expressed and understood as something that requires scientific institutional support, despite the fact that the subject has not yet been examined in a legal framework in terms of a Heritage Science[1].

The protection of intangible heritage in the Region of Valencia

The UNESCO General Conference established the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage at its 32nd meeting, in the *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003). This committee is in charge of the regulation and maintenance of the *Representative List of the ICH of Humanity*. Belonging to this *List of* ICH properties - in which Spain is the country with the fourth highest number of elements registered - is the maximum recognition an intangible asset can have on the global scale. Within Spain, the Region of Valencia has the most intangible heritage registered, including The Mystery Play of Elx –*El Misteri d'Elx*, The Water Tribunal of the Plain of Valencia - *El Tribunal de las Aguas de la Vega de Valencia*, and the Festivity in Honour of Mare de Déu in Algemesí - *Festa en Honor a la Mare de Déu de la Salut de Algemesí*. It was also the first Spanish region to be included within the UNESCO *Register of Best Safeguarding Practices for Intangible Heritage* with the Traditional Cultural Centre – the School Museum of Pusol de Elche.

The Region of Valencia exercises its responsibility for or authority with regards the protection of heritage through the Law of Cultural Heritage of Valencia, which establishes two categories for the protection of our ICH: 'Assets of Cultural Interest' and 'Assets of Local Relevance'. The regional government is in charge of establishing the measures aimed at the protection, research, conservation, dissemination, promotion and transmission of ICH throughout Valencia.

Criteria for 'Assets of Cultural Interest' and 'Assets of Local Relevance'

Intangible cultural productions and manifestations are in continuous transformation. Many of these have been safeguarded and survive as unique manifestations. The first task of cultural policy for protection is to outline what the object of protection is, identifying the cultural aspects that are of value and interest to society (Crookea: 2010).

The guidelines for the declarations of intangible heritage of the region of Valencia follow the 2003 *Convention* (UNESCO, 2003), the *National Plan for Safeguarding the ICH* (Ministry of Culture, Education and Sport: 2011) and the National Law (Spanish Government: 2015). They are:

- Sustainability
- Respect for human rights
- Mutual respect between communities
- Equality and non-discrimination
- Accessibility
- Respect for animals

There are ten criteria in place in the Region of Valencia:

A) Participation. Community involvement
1. Undeniable protagonism of the community / participant involvement
2. Autonomy

B) Temporal factors
3. Imminent risk of disappearance
4. Continuity

C) Intrinsic factors
5. Specificity, uniqueness
6. Forms of transmission
7. Own local organisation

D) The physical space (location): spatial and material context

8. Diversity of multi-sensory expressions
9. Individual spatial frameworks, temporal integrity and internal space
10. Relevance of the objects

Intangible assets in rural areas of the region of Valencia

The entry of bulls and horses of Segorbe

Declared an 'Intangible Asset of Cultural Interest' by Decree 6/2011, of 4 February, by the Consell, it is the result of the evolution of the practice of moving cattle which are to be run in a closed enclosure or bullring. In essence, this is a running of the bulls in the final section of their journey from the River Palencia to the square where the display is to be held. For the final few hundred metres, the bulls are accompanied by horses and riders who trot alongside them to prevent them from straying from their path or coming to a halt. This run is held on one of the main streets of the town, in the presence of thousands of people who restrict the route of the animals by becoming veritable human walls (Plate 3).

The baptism of animals at Forcall - La Santantonada

This was declared an 'Asset of Intangible Cultural Heritage' by Decree 10/2012, of 5 January by the Consell. The feast of San Antonio Abad on 17 January is celebrated in a unique fashion in Forcall, and is known as *la Santantonà*, the *Portada del Maio*, the *Tallada de la llenya*, the *Pastada de la rolleta, the Encesa de les Tronques, l'Esquellot, the Plantada del Maio, Vestir la Barraca* [Representation of the life of the Saint] and, finally, the *Santantonada*. This parade through the main streets of the town, following a specific order, is the culmination and apotheosis of this pagan/religious festival. Both local residents and visitors to Forcall go through the *barraca* while it burns, saying a prayer, and making a wish which they firmly believe will come true.



Plate 3
The horse riders -*mayorals*- enter the crowded village streets on horseback, followed by bulls. Segorbe, Castellón.
Photo: Javier Vilar, 2017.

The pilgrimages to Sant Joan de Penyagolosa

This was declared an 'Asset of ICH' by the Resolution of 20 April 2015, from the Consellería de Educación, Cultura y Deporte [Regional Department for Education, Culture and Sport]. The calendar of feasts for Valencia includes numerous prayer ceremonies and pilgrimages, remnants of old penitence celebrations in which our ancestors prayed to God and his intercessors, the Virgin and the saints, asking for supernatural protection to ensure health, peace and sufficient rainwater for the crops. Among these it is worth noting the pilgrimages made to the sanctuary of Sant Joan de Penyagolosa, a place of great ethnological, historical and cultural value. This monastery has been a major destination for pilgrimages since medieval times, and at present pilgrimages are still made from the Castellón municipalities of Les Useres, Xodos, Vistabella and Culla, and from towns in Teruel, such as Puertomingalvo. Of these, the pilgrimages from Les Useres and Culla have the greatest heritage value. *Els Pelegrins de les Useres* is one of the oldest pilgrimages, and one which best preserves different aspects of its symbolism and peculiarities: a vow from the town since the Middle Ages, path and ritual, participants (*pelegrins i càrregues*), chants and prayers, food and dress, aspects of socio-religion and identity, etc. These are examples of medieval customs preserved thanks to popular fervour. They are deeply-rooted regional traditions which follow a careful and calculated procedure, possibly unchanged since the 14th century, with celebrations, rests, meals and acts established in a precise sequence (Plates 1 & 4).

The Valencian pilota, play and tradition

This was declared an 'Intangible Asset of Cultural Interest' by Decree 142/2014, of 5 September, by the Consell. It is the autochthonous sport par excellence in the region of Valencia, both for its widespread



Plate 4
The pilgrims of Culla saying their last prayers on the journey to the historic centre of the village.
Photo: Javier Vilar, 2017.

presence in the territory and because it has long been practised. Valencia is one of the few European regions where the *joc a llargues*, which for many centuries was found across most of the continent of Europe, has been faithfully maintained. This primitive form of the game has evolved into different types currently practised in the Valencian territory: *raspall, escala i corda, galotxa, rebot* or *perxa*, which alongside the *joc a llargues*, constitute what is now known as *pilota valenciana*. In addition, a series of cultural, social, ethnographic and linguistic aspects converge around the game, making it an example of the wealth and diversity of our society and its traditions.

The dancing feasts of Sant Mateu or La Todolella –El ball pla o las danzas guerreras

The *Ball pla* is in the process of being declared an 'Intangible Asset of Cultural Interest', 2018, by Order of the Conselleria de Turismo, Cultura y Deporte. The *Ball pla* is a folk dance that is deeply rooted in the town and is passed on from parents to children. It is a sort of couples' dance, most typical of Valencian towns, where it was extremely widespread, especially in the 19th century, but known since the 17th century. It is a traditional dance, a simple dance with a ternary rhythm, characterised - as the name suggests - by a soft shuffle, with the feet sliding on the ground.

Musical societies

These were declared 'Intangible Assets of Local Relevance' by Order 1/2011, of 12 July, of the Conselleria de Turismo, Cultura y Deporte. Protection applies to activities carried out in the field of the musical culture of Valencia by musical societies, through the bands, their associated choirs, music schools for the training of future members of bands and string orchestras. This is, above all, music produced by the community and played in spaces and at times which have the utmost significance for them.

Special attention to the place; the sensory, spatial and material context

These celebrations involve a large number of sensory factors (images, sounds, smells, tastes and touch). Particular value is attached to those vividly containing and interacting with the greatest number of different senses, and not solely with images. In traditional culture, images were not the only, nor the most important, aspect of these expressions. Sound is equally important and it is in danger of being lost. Taste and smell are also relevant.

The living manifestations have contributed to the conservation of spatial frameworks, natural elements and traditional landscapes of celebration, conceived as symbolic locations associated with individual identity. Particular value is attached to manifestations using these frameworks and trajectories found in the collective memory, as these are considered a major and very relevant part of cultural productions and shared symbolism. Value is also attached to the scenic representations which do not alter the original order or distort the traditional mobility of participants. Respect for the tone or intensity of original lighting is valued, as are the acoustics of the environment, especially as regards interference from noises from outside the celebration.

Intangible elements tend to be found in historic town centres, in locations classed as 'Assets of Cultural Interest', protected by their architectural nature and historic evolution. Main squares act as settings where



Plate 5
The *ball pla* traditional dancing is celebrated each year in the old bullfighting court of the village of Benassal, Castellón. Photo: Lluis Puig, 2016.

fires were originally lit, but the invention of electricity transformed them into something different but still appealing. The tiny old windows of the houses were transformed into large balconies. Short wooden lintels were replaced by newer and larger ones. That made room for new wooden balconies from which feasts could be observed, and which also acted as adornments for the public stage (Plate 5).

The perception of the intangible cultural heritage

It has been said that the relationship between man and the cultural environment refers to a society of great socio-cultural value. It is worth noting that socio-cultural, artistic, historical and even spiritual values are contained in the perception of the intangible cultural heritage (De Groot: 2006). These values are equally present in sociology and anthropology, where identity is placed on a common ground, making culture and identity social as well as spatial (Stephenson: 2008). The importance of the urban landscape in maintaining cultural diversity was stressed by the Council of Europe (2000). Specific urban landscapes and the intangible cultural manifestations contained in them contribute to enriching the cultural biodiversity of heritage worldwide. Although these biodiverse historic environments are not necessarily exotic or remote, they require a specific approach, knowledge and negotiation, as well as space for alternative perceptions about what constitutes alternative culture and authenticity (Waitt: 2000).

Cultural identity and diversity in built environments are reflected in spatial vectors (UNESCO: 1976; ICOMOS: 1987). These vectors are determined by constantly reviewing heritage theory and reinterpreting their cultural significance and interactions. In fact, the term 'cultural significance' is widely referenced in the *Burra Charter* (ICOMOS: 1999) when defining compatible uses, related places and objects, and interpretation (Art. 1). In connection with this, Harrison (2012) spoke of new agencies and dialogues with the place or space which made room for new assemblages to eventually challenge the conventional perceptions, assessments and classifications of authenticity. It directly contests how the intangible is able to transform the tangible, the physical appearance of scenery, and their mutual interactions.

Any attempt to clarify the exact meaning of different conservation actions in given cultural or geographical areas highlights the importance of sensitising what represents an intellectual and political space, understanding that the intellectual exploration of the present policies on intangible cultural heritage is



Plate 6
An abandoned farmhouse in Llucena, Castellón.
When a built environment is abandoned the intangible can still be read in the fabric of buildings allowing for different interpretations.
Photo: Juan A. García-Esparza, 2018.

dependent on contemporary discourses founded in the globalisation of the heritage science (Kenway and Fahey: 2009). Nonetheless, what this paper aims to highlight is the independence of regions to rethink how the global affects - or does not affect - the local socio-cultural particularities of their heritage (Daly: 2012). Therefore, rethinking hermeneutics in cultural contexts is very important in order to identify clear ideas to explain the subtle differences that make up the particular; in this case the rural heritage. Perhaps it is all about critically investigating the local ethnographic heritage, how both the intangible and the tangible affect one another (Plate 6).

Harvey (2015) recently explained that, in the practice of patrimonial policies, the national often triumphs over the local, both legally and discursively. This may be true, and therefore justifies the previous normative analysis. Therefore, divergences may arise between regions within a country, regardless of whether a national vision on heritage management predominates. That is why we analyse different norms and discourses of heritage, regional and national, to try to understand how our rural heritage is positioned in the global sphere.

The authenticity of heritage in rural places

It has been said recently that rural societies encourage recreation: they use, dramatise and revitalise specific events (Daugbjerg and Fibiger: 2011; Daugbjerg et al.: 2014). It poses several challenges to the conventional understanding of intangible heritage and its authenticity. Classen and Howes (2006) maintained that objects in the material world *have sensory as well as social biographies*; Schorch (2014) saw this as the complex grammar of embodied culture and cultural embodiment. Furthermore, when highlighting the diverging attitudes of different societies in engaging with cultural heritage, Nagaoka (2015) stated that authenticity is culturally dependent. Most authors emphasise the critical divergences and local particularities of cultural heritage, and in turn, the scalar uncertainty in enhancing contemporary cultural processes (Harvey: 2001, 2015). The understanding of place (García-Esparza: 2015) is a complex grammar that can only be explained by heterodox approaches to cultural heritage (Lixinski: 2015) where recreation and forgetting can refer to beauty contained in reinterpretation or abandonment (DeSilvey: 2017).

In an attempt to preserve the interactions between the intangible and the tangible, regulations have tended to paralyse an innate evolutionary process in built environments. Hence, norms and laws, and rural society, face the task of finding the most appropriate conservation and evolutionary processes in order not to distort the evolution of the place. It is not a well-developed task, since in many cases the search for authenticity and integrity within urban landscapes has diminished the reinterpretation of tradition and the interaction between the intangible and the tangible. Studies on the integrity of rural landscapes showed that the interaction between people and their environment was considered as an exceptional value. Gilmore and Pine (2007) established five genres of authenticity: natural, original, exceptional, referential and influential.

It is important, therefore, to note that the search for authenticity within specific cultures, imbues built environments with idiosyncratic meanings and beliefs. In such places, the intangible can acquire greater significance than fixed or semi-fixed elements (Lennon: 2012; Lennon and Taylor: 2012). Harvey (2015) mentioned the need to offer proactive and positive socio-cultural opportunities to develop contemporary cultural processes, perhaps to be reconsidered within theories of the different scales of heritage, not only under the binary tangible/intangible, but also as a wider social and cultural process (Plate 7).



Plate 7
The ageing process of a place is directly connected to the failure or success of policies safeguarding the intangible. An old woman making handmade cheese in Benassal, Castellón.
Photo: Javier Vilar, 2016.

Bortoloto (2015) referred to authenticity as an extrinsic process, while Kristensen (2015) chose to emphasise its social connotations. Recent literature has linked the term 'value' to the social valuation of heritage at a given time and place. This implies that value involves understanding the nature of the valued object, also referred to as the intrinsic values – shape, textures, materials - of the original creation, or what we call 'static authenticity'; the one once acquired by an object. What this paper wants to ascertain is that 'static' cultural heritage is affected by continuous manifestations that not only evolve over time, but also depend on different actors and contexts. Those manifestations of heritage are hereby referred to as 'dynamic authenticity' (García-Esparza 2018a, 2018b).

As stated by Holtorf and Kristensen (2015), current societies must allow for future 'Nows' to create their own space in which they can act. This seems to pose a double challenge for the present generation, which is required to make the wisest decision it can for its own 'Now', while also considering almost aseptic actions towards future 'Nows'. Therefore, regardless of the critical analysis, the time factor, the norm and the moral space occupied by the future become constraints. This means that any actions taken or decisions made in the past 'Now' or the current 'Now' are catalysts for the future-making of intangible heritage. This is why conscious and subconscious interactions between the tangible and intangible in cultural habitats should not be discarded, but approached thoughtfully.

Conclusions

Values of, and orientations to heritage authenticity and integrity worldwide, have to be seen to establish clear ways to confront all aspects currently affecting the dynamics of specific cultural landscapes. This cannot be achieved without applying a holistic view of heritage. A new paradigm must be applied to each region or geographical zone. In fact, researchers and institutions should increase societal awareness to each cultural, educational and socio-economic reality by using managerial tools to improve the way each cultural landscape is critically conceived and assessed.

The different scales outlined by previous authors and analysed in this study reflect the importance of cultural hermeneutical transmigrations in helping to create lasting structures, institutional and economic architecture for the proper reinforcement of governance, management and action plans from national to local. In the case of Spain, many regions have lacked the technical and managerial skills to chart a path towards the preservation and sustainability

of intangible cultural heritage. It is possible that coordinated plans for cultural heritage management, considering intersections between the intangible and the tangible, may help enhance the authentic meaning of each cultural context.

Another aspect of heritage management to be introduced, particularly in the case of Spain, is the maximisation of participation by developing a newer, more open and smoother approach to the wider cultural heritage. A sense of community, regional or local, and a sense of common ownership not only need to be integrated into the assessment tool, they are also cultural steps forward to be developed by society in order to reclaim improved cultural capital and values in the rural scenery. In short, social awareness in terms of culture and science, is something still lacking when evaluating social sustainability and cultural heritage.

The wider built cultural heritage is highly affected by dynamism. The dynamics of authenticity and integrity need to be understood as dependent on cultural context immersed in a complete historical process up to the present, not just as a past process or context. Being aware of this, the cultural heritage of each region is necessarily responding dynamically and authentically to the current process in which each society is involved. Thus, as cultural heritage is an 'Asset' to be maintained for future generations, the discourse needs to be understood as an essential part of the management process. Giving the discourse, norms and laws the relevance they deserve in the preservation process of intangible cultural heritage, they should be incorporated into wider conservation programmes where they can be merged and interact with the tangible.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my colleagues from the Regional Committee on Intangible Heritage at Valencia Region, Spain for all their support.

Funding

This research has been developed with funding from the project 'Intangible Cultural Heritage in Penyagolosa' from the Ministry of Culture, Education and Sports and the Institute of Cultural Heritage in Spain, CUL/1. A4/2018, and the project 'Crafts and Artisans' evaluation of small municipalities to develop a Patrimonial Territorial Action Plan' from the Regional Government of Valencia, Spain. GV/2017/100. I am acting as Principal Investigator in both projects.

ENDNOTES

1 In the UK heritage science originated with the development of science-based conservation in the British Museum and National Gallery in the mid-twentieth century. At the turn of the century, the Science and Technology Committee highlighted the outstanding quality of individual publications, as opposed to the patchy and poorly co-ordinated dissemination of up-to-date results of heritage science to practitioners in the UK. Thus, a strategy for heritage science to be improved was outlined strongly recommending the need for collaboration in the heritage science sector (Science and Technology Committee 2007, p. 4). The main institutions in the UK, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), representing universities, museums and galleries, English Heritage (EH) representing creative industries, the Institute of Conservation (ICON) and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) encouraged a formal commitment to recognise the full cost of science-based research in the field of cultural heritage and bring forward proposals with the aim both of regenerating the area of research and attracting younger scientists to the field (Science and Technology Committee 2007, p. 11).

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Cross-cultural understanding of Chinese traditional puppetry: integrating digital technology to enhance audience engagement

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Cross-cultural understanding of Chinese traditional puppetry: integrating digital technology to enhance audience engagement

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ABSTRACT

The digital heritage sector has become a highly significant part of the development of cultural heritage. Cultural organisations are increasingly using interactive technology to support the understanding of cultural heritage. This research aims to provide an approach for digital cultural heritage researchers and digital museologists to establish an appropriate position within digital cultural heritage. In this paper, the authors have undertaken a qualitative evaluation of data based on interviews, workshops and fieldwork focusing on potential transcultural audiences, and Chinese/non-Chinese puppetry stakeholders. From these findings, the authors have presented several design suggestions for cultural preservation to surmount transcultural barriers.

Keywords

Chinese puppetry, cross-cultural understanding, digital cultural heritage, digital technology, value-sensitive design, Human Computer Interaction (HCI), thematic analysis (TA).

1. Introduction

In recent years, governments, communities, and academics have increased efforts toward preserving their nations' intangible cultural heritage (Beardslee: 2016; Lowenthal: 1998). Traditional Chinese puppetry is a manifestation of intangible cultural heritage passed down partly through oral teaching, or incomplete writings, but many classical puppet shows are preserved only in the practitioners' memories (Xu and Xin: 2007). Recording and conserving this art form is a difficult and complex endeavour. As a result, today the knowledge and skills

needed to create and perform Chinese puppetry is on the brink of extinction (Huang and Lioret: 2013). At the same time, like other forms of Chinese folk art, traditional Chinese puppetry is forced to confront an increasingly diverse audience. Studies have shown that since the 1980s many scripts have been lost due to modern audiences' lack of a basic understanding of the art form (Wu: 2009; Pen and Clark: 2010). Digital technology offers novel possibilities for preserving cultural heritage, disseminating and providing access to it. It also allows for the inclusion of traditionally marginalised voices (Affleck and Kvan: 2008; Giaccardi: 2012; Kenny: 2009; Liu and Huang: 2005; Nitzky: 2013; Stevens and Shepherd: 2010). Its rise has led to the creation of a new interdisciplinary domain, known as the 'digital heritage sector' (Petrelli *et al.*: 2013), which addresses the interaction with, and the visualisation, preservation, and documentation of cultural heritage (Bonn and McDonough: 2016).

Meanwhile, the development of this new field has not gone unnoticed by Human Computer Interaction (HCI) researchers, who have applied it to countless issues, specifically in the enhancement and enrichment of visitor experiences and engagements (Fraser *et al.*: 2003). Such researchers argue that aspects of intangible heritage require a specific approach and technology for supporting audiences' appreciation and experience of the element (Bonn and McDonough: 2016). However, despite this, few studies have investigated, through contextual, in-depth activities and analyses, just how digital technologies support audiences' understanding and appreciation of heritage. Therefore, before incorporating digital technology into the presentation of traditional Chinese puppetry, it is necessary to analyse the opinions of puppetry stakeholders and audiences to develop potential design insights that support the cultural significance of traditional Chinese puppetry.

Giaccardi (2011) said that each individual brings their own emotional, social, and cultural understanding to their experience of cultural heritage. Several studies have also examined how digitisation may support such emotional experiences of intangible culture (Bai *et al.*: 2015). For example, Shi *et al.* (2013) use electrocardiogram (ECG) signals to construct a somato-sensory system based on emotional interaction. Martínez (2014), meanwhile, has created a tangible puppet with an interactive digital interface to support children while they are learning about emotions. In both these examples, however, the emotions expressed are those of individual users, and there is little connection to the emotions inherent in traditional puppetry. Participants' understanding of puppetry performance has been at best, rudimentary.

Other projects have focused more on using digital technology to provide audiences with an immersive experience of traditional puppetry and an aesthetically-pleasing environment (Zhu *et al.*: 2003; Wan *et al.*: 2015). However, most of these research projects have focused on delivering experiences to users who have the same or similar cultural backgrounds, or who already appreciate the aesthetics of puppetry. The cultural relevance of a puppetry narrative and the in-depth meaning of puppetry movements were less effectively interpreted for the audience (Giaccardi: 2011). Little research has been done on how foreign users may experience or understand other cultures using these tools (Hickey: 2012).

Based on the above efforts, the authors noticed that the design strategy and concept of communication and collaboration with traditional artists or stakeholders has been ignored in these design processes. Ideally, both artists' experience and audiences' thoughts should play a significant role in the process of designing digital heritage tools. Thus, a central consideration of this study was to determine the needs of various relevant communities and how to integrate them into the design (Fox and Dantec: 2014). Few previous design case studies (Güdükbay and Erdoğan: 2000; Hsu and Li: 2005a; Hsu and Li 2005b) incorporate users or audiences into the design strategy; while these groups may assist with testing prototypes, they are unable to express their needs before design commences.

However, approaches such as value-sensitive design exist, where an iterative and explicit consideration of values used to ensure reflective engagement with *direct and indirect stakeholders*. (Friedman: 1996) demonstrates that the stakeholders' role should not be limited to that of counsellor or tester. In addition, studies have not fully examined just how digital technology can engage audiences in a traditional puppet theatre or how communication with puppeteers, stakeholders, and cross-cultural audiences can be integrated into practical design strategies (Carroll and Rosson: 2007;

Hayes: 2011). This study attempts to rectify these shortcomings.

To this end, this study aims to reveal the cultural barriers affecting peoples' experiences of Chinese puppetry and to determine how to engage puppeteers and stakeholders to overcome these barriers. This paper focuses on the role digital technology plays in supporting the intangible cultural heritage of Chinese puppetry, with a particular emphasis on supporting cross-cultural understanding. Specifically, the authors utilise cross-cultural audiences and puppetry stakeholders as logical and critical tools for questioning and problematising the barriers within the cross-cultural spread of intangible cultural heritage and traditional Chinese culture, bringing together experienced professionals, learners, and amateurs. Inspired by value-sensitive design (Le Dantec, Poole and Wyche: 2009), the authors use workshops, fieldwork, and in-depth interviews to engage professionals' perspectives and cross-cultural audiences' experiences in order to create potential design concepts.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. The authors first summarise their own qualitative fieldwork in both the UK and China, and describe the methods employed for this study. Then, using thematic analysis (TA) of the interview data, the authors suggest feasible design concepts to support cross-cultural understanding, illustrate important design approaches that support cultural preservation, and explore the role of digital cultural heritage research. The final section reflects on this study's findings, and outlines implications for both design researchers in digital cultural heritage and digital museum professionals.

2. Fieldwork

The principal author conducted a series of fieldwork sessions in order to better frame the cross-cultural appreciation of Chinese traditional puppetry and explore the possibilities of digital technology to support such appreciation. He first attended a puppetry workshop to familiarise himself with puppetry performance, and conducted interviews with cross-cultural audiences in order to determine the barriers to their understanding. Several fieldwork studies were conducted with professional puppeteers from diverse cultural backgrounds in order to explore potential design concepts supporting cross-cultural

Table 1
Overview of data collection methods in fieldwork with specialists and cross-cultural audiences.

Date	Number of participants	Participant code	Participant background	Data collection methods
Feb 2016	5	SH-A	Puppeteers (3 British and 2 Italian)	Fieldwork (Norwich workshop with puppetry stakeholders)
Apr–Aug 2016	12	CA	Cross-cultural puppetry amateurs (5 British, 2 Russian, 2 Spanish, 2 ethnic Chinese, 1 Danish)	In-depth one-on-one interviews with cross-cultural audiences in Newcastle
Feb 2017	2	SH-B	Puppeteers (1 British and 1 Italian)	Fieldwork and semi-structured interviews in Garlic Theatre, Norwich
March-April 2017	10	SH-C	Puppetry educators and students (Chinese)	Fieldwork and in-depth semi-structured interviews at Shanghai Theatre Academy
April 2017	3	SH-D	Puppeteers, cross-cultural audiences (Chinese)	Fieldwork and in-depth semi-structured interviews at Edinburgh International Festival
May 2017	3	SH-E	Researchers, theatre staff (British)	Presentation at Puppetry Research Conference in Newcastle



Plate 1
Workshop with puppetry stakeholders in Norwich.
Photo: Shichao Zhao, February 5, 2016.

appreciation. Finally, the principal author attended a puppetry research conference in order to discuss the topic with experts in the field.

These studies were undertaken during five separate occasions spanning 42 full days between September 2016 and May 2017, and consisting of six different activities (Table 1). There were 18 male and 17 female participants from eight European and Asian countries. The authors received informed consent from every respondent in order to conform to ethical guidelines.[1]

Throughout this entire process, data was collected using two methods: design ethnography (Dijk: 2011; Raijmakers *et al.*: 2007) and semi-structured interviews (Charmaz: 2014; O'Sullivan *et al.*: 1996). Working with both the Shanghai Theatre Academy and Garlic Theatre was interesting for several reasons. First, participants at these locations had an in-depth understanding of both traditional Chinese puppetry and British puppetry. Second, local commercial theatres and national educational puppetry theatres bring different perspectives to the digital preservation of puppetry; including both kinds of institutions in the data collection allowed for a broader and more forward-thinking perspective. The results of this extensive fieldwork and in-depth interviews provided a unique cross-cultural perspective on the potential ways digital technology could be used to support Chinese puppetry.

2.1. Puppetry workshop

The principal author participated in and observed a puppetry workshop entitled 'Explorations with Everyday Materials and Objects Animating the Inanimate', which included participating in a group performance and having informal conversations with organisers and other participants. He went on to interview three British and two Italian respondents. All were professional practitioners in puppetry and have previous experience of manipulation in traditional Chinese puppetry (Plate 1). Interviews included information on participants' experiences performing for cross-cultural audiences and their thoughts on how technology can support the transmission of puppetry. Respondents provided information on the main issues in puppetry techniques and live animation and how to bring the inanimate vividly to life through collaborative improvisation.

2.2. One-on-one interviews

30–40 minute one-on-one in-depth interviews were conducted by the principal author that included audio recordings and observation notes. Respondents were recruited via an announcement on a student forum for a university's student union and student society website. The announcement explained the study process and asked for input from participants interested in traditional Chinese puppetry (excluding any professional puppeteers). The final participants were twelve puppet amateurs from five distinct

cultural backgrounds; their interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analysed.

These interviews covered three main topics: their appreciation of traditional Chinese culture, the extent to which they understood traditional Chinese puppetry, and their opinions on four videos. These videos contained excerpts from four different traditional Chinese puppet shows: a Quanzhou puppet show recorded from a TV programme; a live marionette performance that displayed the puppeteers' gestures; a silent episode from Daming-Zhangzhou puppet movie; and a scene from the Heidelberg Taiwanese Budaix, which had English subtitles. Asking respondents to reflect on these clips provided an insight into how digital media might help audiences better appreciate traditional Chinese puppetry. Finally, these interviews also solicited participants' suggestions and thoughts on the relationship between traditional puppetry and technology (i.e. their experience with any applications that use interactive media to perform traditional Chinese puppetry and their feedback).

2.3. Garlic Theatre

The next step for this study involved semi-structured interviews at the Garlic Theatre with two British professional puppeteers who had experience with traditional Chinese puppetry (Plate 2). Garlic Theatre is a British visual theatre company that uses images, puppet animation, movement, and live music to create artistically excellent theatre productions.

The principal author used three DSLR cameras to film the puppeteers' performances and the audiences' reactions continuously over the course of three days. After filming, he invited two professional puppeteers from the theatre to provide a workshop that covered five different topics: the experience of local performances, performing in other countries, learning Chinese traditional puppetry, digital puppetry, and the development of puppetry shows. Participants shared their experience with puppetry performance and digital applications, discussed the advantages and disadvantages of each digital technology used to support Chinese puppetry (i.e. 3D animation puppetry performance, immersive theatre experiences, and puppetry tablet applications), and explored trends in the development of Chinese puppetry. During the workshop, the participants also used the different types of performances, videos and some photographs as reference material to spark further inspiration. This workshop was intended to explore the current trends in puppetry performance and two participants' thoughts about the use of digital technology in traditional puppetry.



Plate 2
Semi-structured interviews and gesture filming, Garlic Theatre, Norwich.
Photo: Shichao Zhao, February 16, 2017.



Plate 3
Fieldwork, Shanghai Theatre Academy.
Photo: Shichao Zhao, March 28, 2017.



Plate 4
Fieldwork and in-depth semi-structured interviews, Edinburgh International Festival.
Photo: Shichao Zhao, April 8, 2017.

2.4. Shanghai Theatre Academy

Fieldwork and in-depth, semi-structured interviews were next conducted by the principal author at the Shanghai Theatre Academy, whose Department of Puppetry Performance is dedicated to dramatic art education. In 2003, they developed a puppetry performance curriculum, allowing undergraduate students to take classes in general puppetry and relevant theory. The department is also actively engaged in performing overseas, presenting abundant opportunities for cross-cultural performances. The goal of this fieldwork was to gather a collection of puppetry gestures, with input from the Dean of the Academy of Arts, the puppetry department lecturer, and nine puppetry performance students (Plate 3).

The principal author again used three DSLR cameras to continuously film puppetry students' performances and practice sessions over a five-day period and interviews with study participants. The puppetry students were asked about their learning experiences in the field of traditional puppetry and any previous experience they had of using technology in puppetry performance. The Dean of the Academy of Arts and the puppetry lecturer, meanwhile, were asked about the barriers to cross-cultural transmission of traditional Chinese puppet shows and the role of technology in Chinese puppetry. Both types of interviews provided data on teaching methods in traditional Chinese puppetry and on the preservation of traditional puppetry. More specifically, they allowed participants to reflect on the relationship between traditional Chinese puppetry and interactive digital media.

2.5. Edinburgh International Festival

During the next stage of the study, the principal author attended the Edinburgh International Festival, where he observed a cross-cultural audience's reaction and got feedback about a traditional Chinese puppet show, performed by three Chinese puppeteers from the Shanghai Theatre Academy (Plate 4).

After the show finished, the principal author conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with the three Chinese puppeteers. Participants were asked to reflect on the following two questions: 1) Based on their experiences during the performance, what are the main barriers with which cross-cultural audiences are confronted while watching Chinese puppetry? and 2) What methods did respondents normally use to support audiences in overcoming cultural barriers (e.g. language, dialect, and local culture), and what were the results?

2.6. Puppetry research conference

During the final stage of the study, the principal author solicited opinions and feedback from other puppetry stakeholders, including academic researchers, script writers, and master puppeteers, during a puppetry research conference. Using the previously described

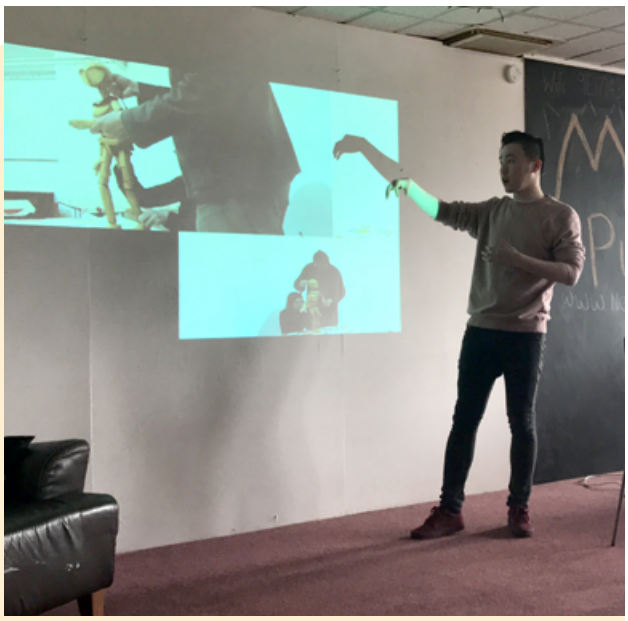


Plate 5
Puppetry research conference presentation.
Photo: Kamarin Merritt, May 1, 2017.

fieldwork to develop some initial design concepts, he conducted a series of discussions on how digital technology can support the cross-cultural understanding of Chinese puppet shows. He also outlined the relationship between traditional puppetry and digital technology in order to develop further discussions (Plate 5).

3. Data analysis

This research uses thematic analysis (TA) to analyse recordings of semi-structured interviews with Chinese and non-Chinese participants to explore their understandings of traditional Chinese culture and puppetry. All the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and anonymised, and are hereafter denoted by the prefix CA (cross-cultural audience) or SH (stakeholder). The data also includes field notes, which documented observations and interactions throughout the process. This approach aims to identify how participants create meaning through their own understandings (Braun and Clarke: 2006). Previous research using this method suggests targeting fluent writers to elicit more detailed and, thereby more meaningful, data (Creswell: 2002; Glaser and Strauss: 1998).

To analyse the interview data, the authors used a five-phase thematic analysis to identify coherent themes (Vivien: 2003). A combination of inductive (coding from the participants' responses) and deductive (literature used to construct the interview questions and to identify latent meanings) thematic analyses were used when analysing interview data, which allowed specific themes to develop.

4. Results

The analysis of the data resulted in three overarching themes which are discussed in the following sections.

4.1. Barriers to the appreciation of Chinese puppetry

The results show that there are four main barriers to a cross-cultural appreciation of traditional Chinese puppetry: incomprehension of the background stories, linguistic barriers, lack of adequate subtitles, and inadequate supplementary knowledge.

4.1.1. Incomprehension of the background stories

Most scripts in Chinese traditional puppetry derive from fairy-tales or folk stories. Understanding the background to these stories plays a significant role in the audience's experience and comprehension; however, cross-cultural audiences lack this background knowledge. SH-C2, a Chinese traditional puppetry lecturer and researcher, expresses this viewpoint:

> *For Chinese traditional puppetry, like this marionette, lots of scripts are derived from Chinese fairy-tales, for example the 'Legend of the White Snake'* [a Chinese folktale describing the White maiden locked for eternity in the Leifeng Pagoda]; *we normally select a small paragraph to adapt for our performance. But most foreign audiences have never heard of this story. This causes them to not understand that this is an anthropomorphic performance telling a story about a snake and a human being.*

Interviews with cross-cultural audiences further support this viewpoint. CA6 explains that because audiences lack background knowledge of the stories, their appreciation of the diverse characters is considerably hindered:

> *Actually, I didn't realise that there is a triangular relationship here. After you told me* [both characters] *are snakes, then I understood more details in the*

story, like why they walk like that... But to be honest, due to not knowing the context of the story, it was pretty difficult for me to understand the main characters.

4.1.2. Linguistic barriers

In addition to audiences lacking knowledge of the stories and characters in Chinese puppetry, their understanding was further hindered by the Chinese dialogue and arias. CA12 told the authors:

I am afraid to say that I seriously have no clue about this performance [the silent episode from the Zhangzhou puppet movie]. *Because there was a lot of dialogue, even monologue, in the show, I couldn't understand it. So I could only watch some of the dancing movements and listen to some of the background music.*

Observations recorded during fieldwork at the Edinburgh International Festival reflect this finding. Authors noted that when the two puppeteers engaged in long stretches of dialogue, most of the non-Chinese audience lost focus and began fidgeting or talking to one another. They paid significantly less attention during these scenes than during acrobatic fighting scenes, for example. A professional Chinese puppeteer with considerable experience in overseas performance, SH-D3 explained this by saying:

I remember when we talked to audiences after finishing our UK performances, they asked us to use English during the show's dialogue, because they literally did not understand what we were singing or talking about in the show. Actually, even most Chinese audiences cannot understand the dialogue well, because the scripts are classical Chinese rather than vernacular, and sometimes we do not speak the lines, but sing the dialogue in traditional opera style. I think all of these reasons led to the audiences' incomprehension.

4.1.3. Lack of adequate subtitles

During the one-on-one interviews with cross-cultural audiences, the fourth video included English subtitles to help all the interviewees understand the storyline. The subtitles did help the audience to understand the story; however, it greatly reduced their appreciation of the puppetry due to the distracting nature of the subtitles. One interviewee, CA7, explained:

I didn't have time to watch [the puppeteers'] *beautiful gestures: that's a shame. Also, I wish there was another way to let me understand this: subtitles are not the best method.*

In other instances, subtitles are used to support live or TV performances of Chinese puppetry. SH-D1, a professional Chinese puppeteer working in theatre, gave his opinion on this trend:

Honestly, subtitles are absolutely not the first choice, because puppetry, being a kind of stage art, is different from movies or TV shows. Although we offer a projection [system] *to display subtitles beside the stage, the audiences find it very difficult to watch the show and check the subtitles at the same time. I mean, they cannot focus on the performance.*

4.1.4. Inadequate supplementary knowledge

Puppetry stakeholders shared methods to support cross-cultural audiences in their understanding, for instance, by using advertising videos or booklets that provide context and background to the performance. However, each of these methods has its own deficiencies. SH-B2 described his opinions of past performances by saying:

Every time we go to other countries to do a performance, we always make an English booklet to introduce the traditional puppetry and the background stories and to provide some introduction to the puppeteers. This is a kind of traditional method, but actually, from my personal observations, most of the audience do not read the booklet, or sometimes they just browse it randomly, hold it in their hands, or simply discard it.

Moreover, CA2, a cross-cultural audience member, expressed her own understanding of booklets' shortcomings:

I saw they offered us that kind of booklet, but I don't think that is enough to support our understanding of the puppetry performance; it is just a limited offering of a few keywords and normally doesn't mention the movements, music, etc.

SH-A1 also shared his concern about how to help audiences achieve a comprehensive understanding of Chinese puppetry:

> *The audience finds it very easy to ignore this kind of information* [advertising videos and introductory booklets], *unless they are seriously obsessed with puppetry. So how to attract audiences with this kind of supplementary knowledge or what kind of methods could support them to understand more useful puppetry information is what we* [puppetry stakeholders] *need to explore.*

4.2. Preference for gestural interactions

The third video was the silent episode from the Zhangzhou puppet movie. This video tells a classical Chinese story with a humorous storyline through acrobatic puppetry movements and without any dialogue. During the interviews, it became clear that some participants were deeply attracted to the complex gestures and technical skills of the puppeteers. For example, CA11 was particularly interested in puppetry gestures and how these gestures helped audiences understand the story:

> *It seems a bit more detailed where he's, like I just told you, with the hand gestures and stuff. I'm impressed by how detailed his whole movement and structures are. He seems quite alive, the middle puppet.*

Despite there being no dialogue, all Chinese and non-Chinese interviewees could understand the storyline relatively well, and the video's comprehensibility was much higher than that of the other videos. For example, CA10 described feeling affection towards the video and that being able to pay attention to the gestures rather than the dialogue improved the information he took in:

> *If* [a performance is] *in a language you don't understand, then you've got that sense that you're missing out on something. Whereas if there is no language, you're not missing out on it.*

Respondents' interest in the performances' movements were not limited to the puppets' gestures, but also included the puppeteers' gestures. As CA8 explained, some even thought the puppeteers' movements were more interesting than the puppets':

> *This video demonstrates all of the movements of puppeteers, this is so interesting. This is so cool, because I really enjoyed watching how* [puppeteers] *manipulate the puppets. It was literally different than I previously imagined; it's much more complex. Normally, we cannot see this kind of movements and gestures, so I am super curious.*

Other interviewees confirmed this opinion. CA7, for example, expressed her preference for gestural movements in puppetry performance:

> *I think there are lots of ways to appreciate puppetry, but for me I prefer to watch how they are doing the performance. This includes puppeteers' movements, especially marionette puppets, where even three puppeteers manipulate one puppet together. There are so many more details that could be appreciated from there.*

SH-E2, a puppetry researcher, reflected on this trend through the lens of his study on the appreciation of Chinese traditional puppetry:

> *The enchantment of Chinese traditional puppetry is not only about puppets' movements; every detail conveys the implications of the whole show. For instance, the cooperation of different puppeteers is also a good way to appreciate Chinese traditional puppetry. And the gestures of puppets, the movements of puppeteers, any other interaction in the show as a part of puppetry passes information to the audience.*

4.3. Digital technology in puppetry

As the rapid development of network and commercial films shook traditional arts, puppeteers and puppetry researchers remained positive in attempting to use digital technology to enhance audiences' experiences. However, Chinese traditional puppetry is a sort of sacred activity which originated in Chinese agricultural society (Pen *et al.*: 2010). And though most Chinese puppetry described Chinese folktales, the main audiences are adults. Although current digital technology has played a significant role in the entertainment value of performances, the traditional cultural meanings of the Chinese folktales did not arouse enough attention.

The digital design and development of Chinese traditional puppetry is therefore a special case study. Despite this, both puppeteers and audience members have thoughts on using digital technology to support puppetry performance. SH-E1, for example, shared the

fact that he and his colleagues had attempted to use 3D technology to enhance their performances:

> *We tried to use 3D animation in our performances, like we would interact with some virtual characters, but I don't think we obtained positive feedback. I mean, at the beginning, the 3D animation attracted audiences, but I found that they did not understand the stories, and plenty of the puppets' movements or gestures were simplified during the interaction.*

CA9 also expressed the fact that while digital technology, in this case puppetry games, could enhance users' entertainment, it also simplified or even reduced their understanding of Chinese traditional puppetry:

> *I think the game was so cool; I could even use the gamepad to control the movements of shadow play, as if playing a video game. But to be honest, I think that kind of game was for entertainment. Because it doesn't seem to have connections with Chinese traditional shadow play: the game used the same characters from shadow play, but that's it. I didn't get any knowledge about Chinese shadow play or Chinese culture. The movements were just like normal game characters' movements.*

In a similar vein, SH-A4, a contemporary puppeteer, was concerned that on a framed, digital screen audiences would not know how big the original puppet was; they could only judge size based on the pendular speeds of the 'loose' elements. The puppeteer is not able to perfectly control each pendular element, so the digital simulation will give conflicting data regarding a puppet's size which may make the viewers dismiss the digital animation as nonsense or unreal. When audiences watch a marionette perform in the theatre, they accept the pendular speeds of the puppet's various elements because they know its original size. The digital animation process, therefore, literally destroys the magic of puppetry, as SH-A4 expressed:

> *Whilst string puppets are often very magical when seen in the theatre, they can be easily stripped of their magic when recorded. This is because of the way the brain processes the data they express, depending on the context and framing in which they are seen.*

Other puppeteers, SH-B2 for example, expressed similar concerns and offered opinions about how to better integrate digital technology into puppetry performance:

> *I think digital entertainment is good for engaging audiences, but we should realise that Chinese traditional puppetry is an area of cultural heritage. Audiences are supposed to get to know the traditional stories and cultures. Unfortunately, I think most digital design studies ignore this crucial point.*

Regarding the cultural implications of Chinese traditional puppetry, SH-D2 suggested that combining digital technology with gestural expression could be used to support audiences' appreciation:

> *Some of the puppetry gestures and movements are derived from Chinese traditional opera and contain a large amount of cultural implications and symbolic significance. I think the technology could specially develop some applications to support audiences to appreciate these details and acquire an in-depth understanding of the stories.*

5. Discussion

Over the past few decades, digitisation initiatives have led to a tremendous increase in digitised cultural heritage objects (Seifert *et al.*: 2017). By conducting interviews with potential cross-cultural audiences and Chinese/non-Chinese puppetry stakeholders, as well as by analysing feedback about participants' understandings of different kinds of puppetry performances, this study offers a series of conceptual designs that use digital technology to enhance and present a better understanding of the cross-cultural appreciation of traditional Chinese puppetry.

5.1. Overcoming cultural barriers through gesture

The findings of this study reflect previous research, in that different languages or dialects were identified as the main barriers to understanding (Xu and Xin: 2007). Despite methods such as providing background information on a performance, character analysis, and English/Mandarin subtitles, cultural barriers still remained and overall feedback was unsatisfactory. The main reason for this is that traditional Chinese puppetry originates from Chinese agricultural culture and

opera, with much of the dialogue (classical Chinese) being taken from ancient Chinese operas or novels. This makes the art form fundamentally different from Western puppetry, which focuses on concise forms of storytelling (Proschan: 1981; Zhao: 2016).

The interviews conducted in this study reflect that: while some respondents (e.g. CA12 and CA7) commented on the viewing environment or background music, they failed to understand the metaphorical elements of these narratives, which further led to the fact that the interviewees were not able to have a coherent understanding of puppetry characters and stories. In the case of complex puppets such as marionettes, helping the audience develop a complete understanding is crucial.

However, the authors considered that in Chinese opera puppetry, improved use of gestures can help break down language barriers for non-Chinese audiences and provide a more accurate understanding of traditional Chinese cultural heritage. The findings showed that enhancing the gestural understanding could potentially support participants to acquire a coherent appreciation of puppetry stories, and increase their interest in the performance. For example, when the authors showed the participants an episode from the Zhangzhou Puppet movie, the movie did not include any dialogue, and it turned out to be more meaningful to many of them. The majority described this video as their favourite because the story was understandable; the story was interesting, and they were curious about how the puppeteers accomplished the complex acrobatics in the clip.

Their response (e.g. CA11) also demonstrates that technical gestures and movements can support a deeper and more complete understanding of storylines and characters, but the use of subtitles may detract from a performance rather than helping viewers to understand it better. Specifically, they preferred to see detailed gestures with explanations when they were watching a puppet show. And gestural understanding could be utilised as an acceptable strategy to support audiences to acquire complementary knowledge of puppetry.

Meanwhile, digital design may also be used as a tool for integrating the gestural resources that support audiences in forming a more systematic understanding of puppetry. For example, demonstrating elemental gestures to audiences, and describing how they reflect each puppet's emotion or motivation may improve the audiences' understanding of puppetry storylines and better convey a sense of traditional Chinese aesthetics and metaphor.

5.2. Dimensions of appreciation

Despite the fact that cross-cultural audiences lack an adequate understanding of traditional Chinese stories and the cultural implications of Chinese puppetry performances, few studies have examined how digital technology can support the aesthetic appreciation and cultural conservation of puppetry performances (Pen *et al.*: 2010). Digital technology offers a possibility for potentially helping audiences not only to better interpret gestures, but also to better understand Chinese culture overall (Zhao: 2019). The results of this study suggest that showing audiences different gestures or movements from different visual dimensions could help viewers from different cultural backgrounds to accurately interpret puppets' gestures.

Moreover, appreciating performance details in Chinese traditional puppetry may improve audiences' understanding of puppetry stories. Surveyed audience members expressed the desire for an in-depth knowledge of puppetry movements and a better understanding of the puppeteers' performance (i.e. their gestures). The authors suggest that gaining this knowledge not only increases audiences' interest, but also gives them a deeper appreciation of the details of puppetry performance. For instance, better understanding the interactions between puppets and puppeteers, or how different puppeteers cooperate to manipulate a single puppet, may allow audiences to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the power of stage magic and to better understand Chinese puppetry as a whole, rather than simply focusing their attention on specific movements. More importantly, this further integrates the methods described in the first section of the Discussion and offers additional resources for cross-cultural audiences to understand traditional Chinese puppetry and opera gestures and engender deeper cultural awareness.

Digital technology has a role to play in bringing these two layers of meaning together. For instance, scholars

have suggested building a digital archive of video resources on the gestures of puppets, puppeteers, and the entire stage (Zhao *et al.*: 2018). Digital technology may also support more flexible operations (e.g. allowing the audience to view a gesture's dimensions from different perspectives), thereby allowing viewers to appreciate the art form based on their own understanding.

5.3. The role of digital cultural heritage

Finally, the results of this study show the conflicting perspectives of puppeteers, educators and stakeholders on how digital technology is changing traditional puppetry performance. Most Chinese puppeteers based in theatres strongly support digital puppetry performance as a tool to improve audiences' entertainment through electronic art forms. They are anxious to make changes to current performance methods to accelerate the development of Chinese puppetry.

On the other hand, some traditional puppetry educators and researchers insist on preserving traditional performance methods (Bonn and McDonough: 2016). They believe that puppeteers are not able to perfectly control each pendular element of the puppet, so digital simulations will seem unrealistic. Animations will also result in conflicting movement data, preventing audiences from determining a puppet's size and as result, dismissing a digital animation as nonsense.

Determining the correct role and positioning of technology is a complicated and controversial topic, and puppetry stakeholders are often critical in questioning and problematising the status of technology (Lawson *et al.*: 2015). Therefore, examining the possible relationships between traditional Chinese puppetry and digital technology brings up questions as to whether digital puppetry performances may threaten traditional performance and skills or other intangible elements.

Additional questions remain regarding whether changing audiences' perception of Chinese puppetry will potentially decrease audiences at traditional theatres. The current study cannot determine whether digital technology can ethically and reasonably be integrated into intangible Chinese cultural heritage; designers are currently exploring different approaches to this question. However, the findings of this study suggest that shifting the emphasis of digital technology in puppetry from entertainment to the support of audiences' appreciation and understanding, would not threaten traditional performances. Future research should examine how interactive technology assists cross-cultural audiences in overcoming cultural barriers and further engages their interest.

5.4. Limitations

In closing, the authors acknowledge that this study engaged some representative samples that were not all-inclusive. However, the findings offer a series of feasible design concepts to support the cross-cultural understanding of Chinese traditional puppetry and illustrate important design approaches that support engagement with puppetry. However, the authors also recognise the need, in future work, to conduct broader participatory fieldwork which includes more kinds of Chinese traditional puppetry, especially endangered forms such as herb/chemical operated puppets (worked by means of gunpowder, which was widely used then, and their performance involved the use of fireworks), water puppets, and flesh puppets (performances by child actors, perhaps acting in the stiff mechanical manner of puppets) (Dolby: 1978).

6. Conclusions

This research is intended to explore how digital technology can support cross-cultural audiences in experiencing intangible Chinese heritage. There are currently no conclusive findings on how interactive digital media can reconstruct traditional Chinese puppetry performance, as intangible cultural heritage. To this end, this study offers suggestions for how digital design may foster cross-cultural audiences' understanding of puppetry gestures and multiple performance dimensions, thereby helping audiences from different cultures to interpret puppets' gestures more accurately. Furthermore, this study revealed that interactive digital technology is better used to support basic and symbolic understanding of intangible cultural heritage, rather than being directly combined with traditional performance.

ENDNOTES

1 This study was approved by the University Faculty of Science, Agriculture and Engineering ethics committee of Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne.

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Gastronomic heritage elements at UNESCO: problems, reflections on and interpretations of a new heritage category

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ABSTRACT

The 2003 UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* paved the way as the first international and binding instrument to safeguard 'intangible cultural heritage'. ICH is a relatively newly-defined concept by UNESCO, differentiated from the category of UNESCO World Heritage related to the 1972 *Convention*. This shift of paradigm – from tangible to intangible, from 'cultural objects' to 'cultural processes', and from protecting to safeguarding – constitutes a renewal of the definition and management of immaterial manifestations as well as their inscription on the UNESCO *ICH Lists*. In 2010, the *Traditional Mexican Cuisine*, the *Mediterranean diet* and the *Gastronomic Meal of the French* were inscribed on the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. These inscriptions represented a step forward in UNESCO's recognition of new heritage categories and, more specifically, the consideration of gastronomy with regard to its symbolic, identity and ritual role in societies. From 2010, more gastronomic elements made it to the *List*. Nevertheless, academic research on food heritage mainly analysed case studies about cuisine and food instead of providing theoretical perspectives, and the effects of food heritagisation on the UNESCO *List* are far from having been thoroughly studied and evaluated through fieldwork. The aim of this paper is to explore the ways in which heritage is constructed 1) starting by defining cultural heritage, Intangible Cultural Heritage and gastronomic heritages, 2) continuing to challenge the actual feasibility of heritagising gastronomy and the social practices associated therewith, via UNESCO, and 3) ending with some reflections on the reasons for the great interest in inscribing food heritage with UNESCO.

Keywords

gastronomy, gastronomic heritage, patrimonialisation, heritage construction, UNESCO, food heritagisation, social practices.

Introduction

***Excursus* on the notions of 'heritage' and 'patrimonialisation'**

Cultural heritage does not exist, it is made (Bendix: 2008, p.255).

Studying and analysing cultural heritage means immediately recognising its artificial nature. Cultural heritage stems from a socio-institutional construction and process called 'patrimonialisation', the same construct that is acquiring new category traits over time – e.g. the shift of attention from tangible to intangible elements – and multiple meanings in terms of content, such as gastronomy as a social practice, or the heritage of war in the form of historical buildings worthy of safeguarding for memory's sake, and as warnings not to repeat past atrocities. As cultural heritage does not exist alone, it is of utmost importance to introduce, and understand, the notions and evolution of 'heritage' and 'patrimonialisation' through a brief historical *excursus*, before delving into the matter of UNESCO intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and the recent inclusion of gastronomic heritage on the UNESCO *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.*

Heritage is nowadays a notion easy to use and mobilise, despite the difficult task of defining it. Multiple theories on the origins of the notion of heritage are as plausible as they are interesting, but we will only examine two of them for the purpose of this article. As a first theory, Jean-Pierre Babelon and André Chastel state that the premise (not yet the conceptualisation) of the notion of cultural heritage dates back to medieval times when the fact of safeguarding and preserving certain objects translated into the modern idea of granting a special value to them (1994), in other words, acknowledging their 'existence value'. This was the case for saints' relics, regalia or religious libraries for religious objects, and archives, ancient monuments or royal collections for royal objects (Le Hégarat: 2015). From another viewpoint (second theory), Krzysztof Pomian identifies the Italy, and later the France, of the Renaissance as the geographic incubators of the notion of '(European) cultural heritage', notably in its artistic treasures and rich private collections (1990). Although the notion of heritage was born and has developed as something, like a religious building, that has to be intrinsically attached to a certain socio-cultural value, its fruition and property at that time was only seen from a private standpoint, and did not correspond to the idea of collective heritage, heritage of a public nature: visible, enjoyable and, possibly, intelligible by everyone. To corroborate the private ownership claim, it is useful to cite the absence of any protection given by the monarchy to, among other things, castles and monuments, as they were totally or partially destroyed to answer spatial or material needs; likewise the case of the clerics who demolished pagan buildings and erased everything troubling to their idea of sacred.

It is only post-World War II, from the late 1960s to be precise, that the concept of 'a common heritage of mankind' emerged, shifting the private nature of heritage to the public sphere and attracting international attention. This, in the context of the Cold War and decolonisation (Smouts: 2005) but also, and foremost, as a result of the well-known international Nubian campaign launched by UNESCO, appealing to countries to save historical monuments in Nubia (Egypt) from being flooded by the waters of Lake Nasser. Dismantling the Abu-Simbel temple, stone by stone, symbolised a new approach to safeguarding heritage via international efforts and common interest, because heritage has been regarded, from that time onwards, as common and collective, for all humanity. For the celebration of its 70th anniversary, UNESCO wrote:

> *World Heritage is a simple idea, but a revolutionary one – that the world hosts cultural and natural heritage of universal value, which humanity must protect together, as its indivisible legacy* (UNESCO: 2019).

What it is possible to extrapolate from these first paragraphs is that heritage definitions are multiple, not only because of the historical and geographical evolution of the term but also because of its meanings and uses. Even a manual on heritage would not suffice to provide a thorough definition as, like any definition, it would only be a snapshot of that notion at a given point in time. The first major studies on heritage took place in the 1980s. Thibault Le Hégarat (2015) calls this period *extension patrimoniale* ('heritage extension') or *tout-patrimonial* ('everything heritage') because almost everything could, potentially, be granted heritage status following an institutional process that Nathalie Heinich identifies as a 'production chain' (Heinich:

2009), referring to the state-controlled process of institutionalising heritage. An example is provided by the race UNESCO Member States ran in submitting application files to have their (trans-) national heritage sites inscribed on the *World Heritage List*. From a sort of holistic perspective, heritage takes an adjectival form – not only cultural and natural heritage but also industrial heritage, immigrant heritage, urban heritage, and many others – and evolves as much in its material as in its immaterial spheres.

In a tautological concept, heritage is everything worthy of attention (safeguarding, conservation, protection, transmission, and so on) and everything may potentially become heritage. From here, it is quite easy to introduce the patrimonialisation discourse, which is more related to the result of a specific process leading something to gaining heritage status, rather than to the heritage object itself. If the neologism 'patrimonialisation' only appeared around three decades ago, its formal conceptualisation dates to more recent times (Davallon: 2015). The term 'heritagisation' entered common parlance because of the continuous expansion of the contemporary movement of patrimonialisation. This movement has been highly orchestrated, and often hyper-commercialised, with cultural and natural heritage sites or intangible manifestations inscribed on the renowned UNESCO heritage *Lists* – the 1972 UNESCO *Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* and the 2003 UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. Patrimonialisation is intended as the process through which cultural (material and immaterial) or natural elements are granted the status of heritage worthy of safeguarding by a collectivity called the 'heritage producers', or rather in UNESCO terms, the 'heritage bearers'. Henceforth, the said collectivity (or community) becomes responsible for the protection, and takes custodial care of the newly-valued heritage practice, as well as for its transmission in order to keep it living and 'usable' by future generations (Skounti: 2010).

The sociologist Emmanuel Amougou (2004) interprets patrimonialisation as:

> *A social process through which legitimate social agents (or actors, if we prefer) want … to confer a set of properties or recognised "values" on an object, an architectural or urban space, a landscape or onto a social practice (language, ritual, myth, etc.). These values are shared by these agents, in primis, and transmitted to the public via institutionalising mechanisms granting protection to such heritage, in secundis.* (My translation)

Already in 1992, Jean-Michel Leniaud provided an avant-garde answer to the selection dilemma with regard to what does not become heritage (exclusion), and which social groups decide what should become so (inclusion). He reckoned that objects having lost their value could acquire a new nature, the heritage-value, via a process of appropriation and according to certain criteria applied to that not-yet-heritage by its practitioners. This process goes under the name of patrimonialisation, and the final recognition is the heritage status of the object.

Following this introductory section, the focus of this article will be on the trajectory the concept of ICH has had with UNESCO, and on a new category considered as worthy of patrimonialisation, i.e. gastronomic heritage. The main objective of this paper is to provide an overview of food intended as a new category in the framework of the inscriptions of intangible cultural heritage on the *Representative List* that issued from the UNESCO *Convention* of 2003. This reflection will build on the exploration of the pathways the concept of ICH has taken to reach UNESCO, the focus on the construct behind food heritage, and the description of the journey gastronomy-related elements have followed to become ICH. Finally, possible reasons behind the 'mass-patrimonialisation' of gastronomy on the UNESCO ICH *List* will be identified.

A 'universal(ising)' paradigm was born: the notion of UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage

In the introduction to issue no. 40 of *Ethnologie Française*, dedicated to *patrimoine immatériel de l'Amérique Française*, Laurier Turgeon writes of intangible cultural heritage as a 'new heritage regime' (*nouveau regime de patrimonialité*) (2010). This differs from what we may consequently call the 'old heritage regime' or Laurajane Smith's 'Authorised Heritage Discourse' (tangible heritage) in that intangible cultural heritage, compared to its tangible counterpart, lays

more stress on objects' affective and memorial values, and their main features are not anchored in authenticity or 'Outstanding Universal Value' (one of the essential conditions without which a heritage, monument or site, could not have entered the *World Heritage List*), but on dynamism, transformation, re-creation, promotion and re-vitalisation of the said ICH by collective groups (the 'communities') practising the intangible element.

Starting from the 1990s, there was an inflation of conventions, actions and policies, from the local up to the international level, whose main object or study was intangible heritage. Without doubt, the leading international and binding instrument to define and safeguard intangible cultural heritage is nowadays the 2003 UNESCO *Convention*, defining ICH as:

> *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 recognise 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* (UNESCO: 2003).

This definition is general because of the breadth of its international application (as of 2019, 178 out of 193 UNESCO Member States had ratified the *Convention*) and the difficulty, nay the impossibility, of setting the parameters of the category. Beyond commenting on the definition itself and drawing comparisons between the 1972 and the 2003 conventions, the historiographic evolution of the concept of ICH and its route through UNESCO up to the gigantic task of all UNESCO Member States ratifying the *Convention* with a universal definition, is often left behind and deserves more attention.

The concept of ICH at UNESCO is a product of the intermingled influences of different countries, primarily Japan (this statement will be explained in a few paragraphs). The process of 'Making Intangible Heritage' (Hafstein: 2018) may date to two founding moments: a letter to UNESCO and a mobilisation in Morocco. As per the first hypothesis, and the most credible story, a well-known letter with a detailed memorandum attached was sent to the UNESCO Director General, René Maheu, by the Minister of External Relations and Religious Affairs of Bolivia in 1973. In this letter, the Bolivian Minister urges international support by nations worldwide to *take action to protect folklore – folk music, folk dance and craft – against exploitation and misappropriation* (Hafstein: 2018), while suggesting the creation of an instrument to list these cultural expressions and protect them from abuse (commercialisation, exportation, appropriation by third parties). While this letter to UNESCO could be seen as the first intention and call to protect and classify ICH at UNESCO, it remained far from the spotlight until recent times. A number of other linked events and personalities could be the origin of the ICH category at UNESCO. In fact, the second founding moment is said to date to modern times, to be precise in Morocco in 1997. The Spanish writer, Juan Goytisolo, and civil society mobilised to save the square Jemaa el Fna, in Marrakesh, which was threatened by the pressure of urban and economic development. The place is known for its concentration of storytellers, acrobats, musicians, snake charmers and many other performers. The fight to protect this cultural space, but also Goytisolo's and the residents' international call for action, are reputed to have been fundamental to the setting up of the UNESCO programme for the 'Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity' as an attempt to identify and safeguard the world's traditional cultural expressions (Skounti: 2009). Acting as the jury president, Goytisolo used these words in his speech delivered at the opening meeting for the first proclamation of the new UNESCO programme on May 15, 2001:

> *The spectacle of Jemaa el Fna is repeated daily and each day it is different. Everything changes — voices, sounds, gestures, the public which sees, listens, smells, tastes, touches. The oral tradition is framed by one much vaster — that we can call intangible. The Square, as a physical space, shelters a rich oral and intangible tradition.*

From 2001 to 2005, three proclamation meetings (in 2001, 2003 and 2005) and a total of 90 Masterpieces (respectively, 19, 28 and 43) were proclaimed. These 90

proclamations would be the last inscriptions inscribed as 'Masterpieces'. In fact, a resolution adopted at the 31st Session of UNESCO's General Conference had already recommended the *preparation of a new international standard-setting instrument for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage* to be submitted at the 32nd UNESCO General Conference (UNESCO: 2001). For this reason, we may say that the programme for the 'Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity' was the ancestor of the UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* adopted on 17 October 2003 by the 32nd session of UNESCO's General Conference and coming into force on 20 April 2006, three months after the 30th instrument of ratification was deposited (UNESCO: 2006). Of course, the 90 previously proclaimed Masterpieces, now called 'elements' according to the 2003 *Convention*, were featured on the new *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*.

Having briefly outlined the way UNESCO adopted its flagship instrument to safeguard ICH, and the 'gestation period' of the 2003 *Convention*, it is now possible to conclude this chapter with a section concerning the reasons and needs behind a shift in the heritage paradigm, i.e. from an idea of cultural heritage related primarily to the monumental (historic centres, such as Florence) to the concept of living heritage, say the 'human towers' (*castells*) in Catalunya. This vision has been 1) diplomatically and economically influenced by Japan seeking to become a leading UNESCO Member State (it provided up to $3,200,000 allocated to, among other things, experts' meetings for discussions on ICH and for drafting the text of the 2003 *Convention*), 2) driven by the then UNESCO Director General, the Japanese diplomat Kōichirō Matsuura, to adopt a legislative framework to safeguard ICH (see his emblematic assertion at the end of this chapter), and 3) inspired by the cultural importance, as well as the legislative and institutional incorporations of intangible practices in Japan, represented by the Japanese government's Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties (1950)[1] protecting 'Intangible Cultural Properties' (*mukei bunkazai*, 無形文化財) (Bortolotto: 2013). Thus, it is not possible to understand the way ICH came into being at UNESCO, and the institutional adoption of the category of ICH via a cultural convention, without recognising the leading role Japan played.

During a roundtable at the *Maison des cultures du monde* in Paris, celebrating the first decade of the 2003 UNESCO *Convention*, Chérif Khaznadar, President of the *Maison*, answered a question concerning the patrimonialisation of ICH:

> *This Convention has been created to rebalance things at international level because there was a convention inscribing marble and stone monuments … essentially located in the Western world. … There weren't any in Africa, nor in Asia … but there is something different in all those countries with the same importance: their music, their performances and their rituals* (Bortolotto: 2013). (My translation)

In UNESCO *fora*, ICH is definitely a heritage category that was created as a reaction to the excessively Eurocentric approach of the 1972 UNESCO *Convention* which applied European concepts and interpretations to cultural heritage, and inscribed World Heritage Sites of 'Outstanding Universal Value', abounding in Western countries but considered lacking in the majority of Asian and African nations. This is why most of the support for the adoption of the 2003 UNESCO *Convention* came from non-Western countries; this was proven by the unprecedented speed of the ratification of this international treaty (less than three years) and by the willingness and need of certain countries to have a binding multilateral instrument protecting their intangible cultural heritage, which was so much at risk due to globalisation and the negative aspects of international socio-economic and cultural integration (Proschan: 2007). The vast majority of countries that first ratified the *Convention* were Asian or African; in order: Algeria (1), Mauritius (2), Japan (3), Gabon (4), Panama (5), China (6) and the Central African Republic (7). As already anticipated, the second reason for the speedy ratification, and the subsequent adoption of the *Convention*, was the influence of UNESCO Director General Kōichirō Matsuura who asserted, in a speech delivered during the 4th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage gathered in Abu Dhabi on 2 October 2009:

> *As soon as I arrived at UNESCO in 1999, I made the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage one of the priorities of the organisation* (Section of Intangible Cultural Heritage: 2009).

The recognition of gastronomic heritage elements at UNESCO: a 'domino sequence'?

As of 2019, 508 elements, nominated by 122 countries, are inscribed on the UNESCO *ICH Lists*[2], and five broad domains of ICH (plus 'other(s)') within the 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* have been proposed, and must be identified by Member States in nomination files for candidature to UNESCO:

1- Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage
2- Performing arts
3- Social practices, rituals and festive events
4- Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
5- Traditional craftsmanship
6- Other(s)

With regard to the identification of the heritage component, an ICH element may not be limited to one single manifestation but can pertain to multiple domains. Although definitions of what each domain comprises are provided, heritage is far more complex, and its conception, interpretation and expressions by different cultures are so diverse that UNESCO recognises that *the boundaries between domains are extremely fluid and often vary from community to community* (UNESCO: 2019). For this reason, it is possible to 'tick' several domains in the nomination file, and it is interesting to note that an extra domain (the sixth) is provided. This is what UNESCO calls 'further domains' or 'new sub-categories to existing domains' and for which it provides a few examples, i.e. traditional play and games, culinary traditions, animal husbandry, pilgrimage and places of memory. It is at this point that we intend to introduce the broad concept and the recent patrimonialisation(s) of food heritage by UNESCO.

Food heritage comprises knowledge of food and culinary skills that communities consider as their shared legacies and common social practices. It encompasses a wide range of socio-cultural aspects, from agricultural products, different dishes and cooking utensils, to manners of eating, drinking and sharing meals (Bessière and Tibère: 2010). Vanhonacker *et al.* (2010) consider traditional gastronomy as:

> *A product frequently consumed or associated to specific celebrations and/or seasons, transmitted from one generation to another, made in a specific way according to gastronomic heritage, naturally processed, and distinguished and known because of its sensory properties and associated to a certain local area, region or country.*

Gastronomic heritage made its entrance into the UNESCO *ICH List* less than a decade ago, and an official definition of gastronomy as intangible cultural heritage has not yet been developed by UNESCO. Chérif Khaznadar also states that there is no category at UNESCO for gastronomy (*Edible Geography*: 2010). As a result, misinterpretations or mis-perceptions concerning the element inscribed are common. As has previously been stated, heritage does not exist; it corresponds to communities' social recognition and institutions' activation processes. Thus, food heritage has to be intended as an historical and socio-cultural construction and, as such, *one can only understand food heritage by the role it has been granted and the interests it serves* (Espeitx: 2004). In order to understand why food has become worthy of patrimonialisation, the first proposals, rejections and inscriptions of gastronomic heritage into the *Representative List of ICH* are introduced with the aim of understanding their 'heritage construction'.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, meeting for its fifth session in Nairobi (Kenya) in November 2010, accepted and inscribed three candidatures related to gastronomy: the *Traditional Mexican Cuisine - ancestral, ongoing community culture, the Michoacán paradigm* (Mexico), the trans-national *Mediterranean diet* (Greece, Italy, Morocco, Spain) and the *Gastronomic Meal of the French* (France). Their inscription on the UNESCO *Representative List* represented a 'shift in outlook' (De Miguel Molina *et al.*: 2016, p.295) by UNESCO towards a new recognised, formalised, yet not defined, category: gastronomic heritage. According to point C.3. of the dossiers' *Domain(s) represented by the element*, all three nomination files have in common two domains, falling within *Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage* (1), and *Social practices, rituals and festive events* (3). None of them had specifically identified gastronomy, food or culinary

heritage as a sub-category in point 6 'Other(s)', nor did other gastronomy-related nomination files that were later inscribed. Although the 2010 nomination files were accepted, their 'gestation period' was longer than average as UNESCO took time to accept this newly-proposed category, finally intended and interpreted mainly as a social practice incorporating traditions, knowledge transmission, craftsmanship and other aspects of the communities (all the country's inhabitants?) in the countries proposing the dossiers.

The first UNESCO Member States presenting their culinary traditions for inscription on the *List* were countries for which food already represented a relevant 'pull-factor' for the tourism industry (for example, the renowned, but often generalised and stereotyped, Mediterranean cuisines), and a cultural trait and attraction, e.g. French nouvelle cuisine post-1970. The means through which these pioneer countries proposed their gastronomy and constructed the heritage narrative behind it would have been limited without the support of different stakeholders beyond the political influence of the States concerned, e.g. academia, gastronomy experts, chefs, and tourism promoters via marketing strategies. Despite these efforts, the earliest food-related nominations were mainly denied on the grounds of their *uniqueness, excellence and superiority on the global scale* (Matta: 2016, p.341), and echoed more the criteria necessary to be inscribed on the 1972 UNESCO *List* (authenticity and the OUV) rather than reflecting the purposes of the 2003 *Convention*. For this and other reasons (the novelty of the food heritage category and the top-down approach that created the candidature dossiers), the first food-related nominations proposed before 2010 were initially rejected by UNESCO experts in their evaluation phase. In fact, the Mexican dossier *People of Corn. The Ancestral Cuisine of Mexico. Rituals, Ceremonies and Cultural Practices of the Cuisine of the Mexican People*, submitted in 2005, pertained principally to the symbolic role of maize as a staple of Mexican national identity. Mexico's nomination was in fact refused but in its evaluation it also revealed *Mexican cuisine's tendency to conceal ethnic heterogeneity by promoting a fictional homogenous nation-state* (Moncusí and Santamarina: 2008). Concerning the aims of the first French dossier in 2008, it seemed that the interests behind the inscription were those of demonstrating that the French cuisine was the 'best gastronomy in the world', as former French President, Nicolas Sarkozy, stated (Sciolino: 2008), more than inscribing an element to safeguard it or to ensure respect for the ICH concerned, as cited in the purposes of the *Convention*. The Mediterranean diet candidature had a steeper path to climb, given the trans-nationality of the nomination (four countries) and the difficulty in reaching a consensus relative to the definition of the element. During the first international, interdisciplinary and preparatory meeting for the nomination of the Mediterranean diet in Rome in 2005, scientists were more inclined to name this heritage 'traditional' (almost ancestral) 'Mediterranean' (pertaining to the Mediterranean basin) 'diet' (reflecting medical and nutritional aspects conceptualised by the physiologist, Ancel Keys, in the 1960s). On the other hand, anthropologists tended to prefer the term 'alimentation' to encompass the social and cultural aspects of the Mediterranean *díaita* – from ancient Greek δίαιτα, way of life – as incorporating the changes, evolutions and re-creations by the local communities involved. Anthropologists also opposed the use of 'traditional', being a concept constructed by the medical field in the case of Mediterranean alimentation.

From the nomination files' point of view, the first gastronomy-related candidatures showed more market development-oriented and international prestige-leading characteristics. From the point of view of UNESCO, as many authors underline (Matta: 2016; Moncusí and Santamarina: 2008; Medina: 2009 and 2017), the reluctance to inscribe gastronomy-related elements was due to 1) the high probability of the misinterpretation of culinary heritage (how can this heritage, so personal and of everyday usage, be evolutionary and re-created by communities? What is the 'traditional' alimentation feature of the element inscribed and how could it be safeguarded?), 2) the spatio-temporal and conceptual breadth of the category of gastronomic heritage (for instance, which food is more, or the most Mediterranean, for which community and according to which social practice? What illustrates the 'mediterraneity' of the Mediterranean diet in the countries inscribed? What about the representativeness of the non-inscribed countries?), and 3) to the eventual nations' race to inscribe their gastronomy in a sort of 'domino' sequence (will all world cuisines become ICH? Will there be as many nominations as there are UNESCO Member States that ratified the 2003 *Convention*?).

Following the first failed attempts to inscribe gastronomy on the *ICH Representative List*, three meetings are emblematic and retain our attention as they may represent what paved the way for the acceptance of alimentation as Intangible Cultural Heritage at, and by, UNESCO. First, after the refusal of its nomination file by UNESCO, Mexico organised an international and scientific meeting in Campeche in 2008 to enhance and promote the heritage value of cuisine. The objective of the meeting, titled *La cocina como patrimonio cultural: criterios y definiciones*, was to provide UNESCO with some recommendations, gathered in the so-called *Declaración de Campeche*, to sensitise the organisation to culinary- and gastronomy-related candidatures. A second and similar initiative took place in Barcelona in 2009, when countries interested in presenting the Mediterranean diet dossier adopted the Barcelona Declaration (Medina: 2017). Last but not least, in November 2008 the Peruvian delegation at UNESCO, supported by France and Mexico, pushed for an expert meeting during the third session of the Intergovernmental Committee in Istanbul. The *Expert Meeting on Culinary Practices* was scheduled to take place in April 2009 in Vitré (France) to discuss the role of culinary practices in implementing the 2003 *Convention* (UNESCO: 2019). As a result of the meeting (4-5 April 2009), not only the Bureau of the 4th Session of the Committee, officially motivated by the refusal of prior culinary nominations due to the incompleteness of the files, rather than by their (temporary) ineligibility at UNESCO for the reasons outlined in the previous paragraph, but the expert meeting itself, paved the way for the acceptance of culinary nominations and inscriptions by UNESCO in 2010 – Mexican cuisine, Mediterranean diet, French traditional meals, and Gingerbread craft from Northern Croatia, the latter not directly related to gastronomy but to traditional craftsmanship using food. The acceptance of the new category boosted and led nation-states to propose their cuisines at UNESCO in the already-mentioned 'domino' sequence of gastronomy-related nomination files. Today, the gastronomy inscriptions range from the Japanese *washoku* and the Korean *kimchi* to the Armenian *lavash* and Arabic and Turkish coffee, not forgetting calls, proposals and attempts from countries interested in inscribing their national cuisines (the Peruvian cuisine), a national typical food (the French baguette) to trans-national dishes (couscous proposed by the Maghreb countries).

Despite the fact that gastronomy is now an acknowledged UNESCO (sub-?)category, the challenge of setting the boundaries of this ICH element, potentially concerning millions of people, and the nomination of which is basically open to all interested nations, has not yet been met, nor has an answer to identifying the 'traditional' aspects of the elements inscribed and their representativeness been clearly established, a task that may be easy for the relative specificity of the Croatian *licitar* (gingerbread) but an arduous, nay impossible, mission for the Mediterranean diet. Still, countries have proposed and continue to propose their typical gastronomy and their food practices to UNESCO in order to acknowledge local particularities and, according to recent research (Caldwell: 2002; Karaosmanoğlu: 2007; Hiroko: 2008; DeSoucey: 2010), to counteract the effects of global commercial integration and food circulation, as *governmental and private institutions ... work to stabilise, promote and manage the particularities of 'national' foods and cuisines and the image of the countries themselves* (Matta: 2016). The response to forces of globalisation could be provided, or at least conceptually launched, by the patrimonialisation of these 'at risk' elements of ICH by UNESCO – at risk in the sense that they risk being flattened, homogenised and bent to conform to global culinary practices and food consumption. One of the main risks is also that countries propose gastronomy-related nomination files where the cultural heritage in question acts as a nostalgic reminder of past and local practices before a globalised present (this has been criticised multiple times concerning the patrimonialisation of the Mediterranean diet). Unknowingly, states may act in concert with this gastronomic social awareness-raising, and UNESCO could be acting as a cultural mediator and a universal vehicle of expression in this international and common forum via the 2003 *Convention* and its *Lists*.

Interpreting and reflecting on gastronomic heritage constructions

Segments of culture acquire cultural heritage status once particular value is assigned to them argues Regina Bendix (2008, p.258). From this assumption, it is easy to deduce that the condition to become cultural heritage, and the value the object acquires thereafter, is not something granted arbitrarily to a monument, a landscape or a traditional dance. According to Davallon

(2015), a number of 'actions' (*gestes*) are required, and assure the successful patrimonialisation of the newly-valued heritage object. Notably, these *gestes* are 1) the interest in the object by the heritage community or heritage bearers (there is no heritage without a community practising or recognising it as such), 2) the knowledge production behind it (nature and origins of the object or element), 3) the recognition of heritage status (heritage activation and formalisation), 4) the collectivity's access to the heritagised object or element, and 5) its transmission to future generations (temporal continuity past-present-future).

The researcher's attention should focus on the motivations behind the process of heritage construction and its recognition. In Western societies, the massive expansion and recognition of heritage was mainly motivated by a sense of urgency due to fear of loss (Peckham: 2003, pp.4-5), a loss of identity and disorientated cultural roots, especially after the two world wars, leading to a phenomenon called 'heritage inflation' to protect objects deemed to be of value, and to an increasing demand for patrimonialisation. Despite the increase in heritagised objects, it must be borne in mind that the heritage construction starts as a result of an inclusion/exclusion process. If it is true that heritage is everything worthy of attention (safeguarding, conservation, protection, transmission, and so on) and that not everything becomes heritage, then it is interesting to consider those elements evolving and entering into the realm of heritage, especially at UNESCO, and independently from their origin or nature, because they allow a deeper understanding of both the intentions and the process of heritagising and the meanings given to the heritagised object.

The 2003 UNESCO *Convention* sets out an international and binding framework to identify manifestations of intangible cultural heritage and its list of domains are aimed at including different categories of heritage rather than counting on their exclusiveness. Again, everything can potentially become heritage if 'well-constructed'. For this reason, certain elements once considered out of the heritage prism have recently been proposed for patrimonialisation. From 2005, food has become heritage, or better, worthy of patrimonialisation, and the race countries run to heritagise their culinary practices has not stopped yet. The interest in inscribing elements so attached to everyday usage (ingredients), so changeable (cooking and recipes), so broad in meaning (traditional cuisine) and so varied in manifestations (sharing the meal, animal husbandry, food crafts, fishing, etc.) in the UNESCO lists are multiple. This article has tried to understand and interpret the construction of gastronomic heritage through the first gastronomy-related nomination files, at first refused and then accepted and inscribed into the *Representative List of ICH*, after effective lobbying and (international) experts' meetings in order to ensure the formulation of food heritage dossiers 'fit' with the purposes of the 2003 *Convention*. The following three aspects behind gastronomy heritagisation are identified and conclude this article, as they represent the common characteristics of food-related proposed and inscribed nomination files: food heritage as an identity marker (1), as an economic asset (2), and as a political agent (3).

1. If the feasibility of inscribing food cultures with UNESCO has been proven, and UNESCO has recognised that gastronomic heritage is an expression of the cultural identity of communities, it is still hard to understand which communities the inscribed element encompasses, how social groups practise this intangible expression of their culture, and in which ways the ICH inscribed is manifested and how it is possible to understand how it is *constantly recreated and transmitted to future generations* (UNESCO: 2003). How is it possible to safeguard something the definition or delimitations of which are left so vague? From the scientific point of view, research, fieldwork and further reflections are still needed to shed light on this nebulousness. However, it is interesting to note from the communities' viewpoint how they have come to identify themselves with gastronomy in heritage terms – the way food is produced and consumed - even though the communities themselves do not necessarily know what intangible heritage is or are acquainted with the patrimonialisation process. Cultural identity is both a primordial and a decisive factor in the patrimonialisation process as it activates the cultural heritage construction process, in turn vitalised, nurtured and mobilised by the official recognition of the heritage element. This is why food is identified here as an identity marker, because communities now experience a strengthening of their sense of 'belonging' by sharing their gastronomic heritage, not only with a group of 'heritage bearers', but also internationally. The recognition of gastronomy has the power to encourage pride at the local level, while it

is also the vehicle of international renown. This sense of belonging sometimes goes even beyond pride – that could be the case with the French traditional meal or the Mediterranean diet – when gastronomy takes the lead in the panoply of territorial and regional claims. It may also be the case for Mexican cuisine, where indigenous knowledge plays a crucial role in the production of 'ancestral cuisine' or, more generally, in the case of the preservation of Latin America's indigenous cultures and food practices, now menaced by globalisation (Matta: 2016; Medina: 2017; De Garine: 1979, p.82). The emergence of food heritage, and its patrimonialisation by UNESCO, may be a direct response to the risks of cultural homogenisation brought about by globalisation and international socio-economic integration, and a way through which communities reassure themselves of their own identity.

2. In this over-patrimonialisation process aimed at stopping a (possible) process of heritage disappearance due to globalisation or destruction, culture has become an object to be exploited as an economic resource, especially in the tourism field. The UNESCO label represents a powerful 'pull-factor' in touristic terms, and the value of inscribed cultural heritages can be (ab)used in the promotional and marketing cocktail of tourism destinations. In particular, the patrimonialisation of food heritage encourages those countries having their gastronomy on the *ICH List* to sell their 'alimentary culture' as expressed in local products, cultural landscapes or via the creation of gastronomic routes and fairs. The tourist does not necessarily need to understand all the heritage constructs behind the art of the Neapolitan *pizzaiuolo* and the reasons behind its patrimonialisation. Instead, (s)he wants to live a 'unique' experience thanks to eating or tasting a 'traditional' food and following an 'authentic' social practice recognised by UNESCO. As already stated, even if the majority of people do not know what cultural heritage is, this concept tends to be associated with traditions, authenticity and community. And this is a valuable promotional brand. Moreover, the promotion of the triptych food-heritage-tourism usually stresses the nutritional (*The Mediterranean diet is the best dietary regime in the world*), the self-promotional (*The best gastronomy in the world*), and the environmental (*Eating insects in Mexico is good for the planet*). On large or smaller scales, each destination can differentiate and develop its touristic offer based on gastronomy and, as Gascón says in Medina (2017) *the patrimonialisation and the conversion of food into a tourist attraction could help the valorisation of the rural production model using raw materials*. This model has the potential to obtain higher quality products, exploits the ecosystem sustainably and is less polluting and product-homogenising than the agro-industry (2017). From this standpoint, food patrimonialisation is highly strategic and potentially profitable, beyond its cultural and heritage value.

3. The patrimonialisation of gastronomic heritage encourages communities' pride in themselves, and is a powerful means of attracting tourists, but first and foremost, it is activation. Of course, the initiators of the heritage construction process and their proposal for recognition may be members of civil society, but the proposal to put forward any ICH element as a candidate to UNESCO is sent by Member States at the end of the process, and, to pass, any patrimonialisation should serve political purposes stemming from the will to increase a country's reputation by fostering gastro-diplomacy. For example, the suggestion of inscribing Peruvian cuisine on the *ICH List is seen as the corollary of an ambitious developmentalist discourse promoted for a decade by governmental and private actors* (Matta: 2011). Thus, each ICH activation answers a specific selection, construction, proposal and activation – say patrimonialisation – process, validated by political support. No less important, is the fact that one of the most innovative aspects of the 2003 *Convention* is that states must provide legal protection for the element. In fact, the inclusion of heritage elements on the *Representative List* assures the creation of legal instruments of protection by the state proposing the file, and this must be done before the candidature of the element is presented to UNESCO.

Conclusion

Cultural heritage is a 'social agreement' (Medina: 2017) between different stakeholders, from institutions and political bodies to groups, communities, and many other social and cultural agents. The most renowned international instruments for recognising, protecting and safeguarding heritage are today the UNESCO cultural conventions, translating the contemporary protection needs cultural heritage requires, and acting as mirrors of the evolution which the concept of heritage

itself has experienced over decades. In particular, a shift of paradigm from the monumental and environmental to a living conception of heritage re-created by communities, has been formalised by the adoption of the *Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage* (2003). In the ICH patrimonialisation context, food is acquiring an ever-increasing importance at the economic, political, socio-cultural and tourism levels, and it seems that the patrimonialisation of gastronomic heritage represents the symbolic message contemporary societies are sending out: in a post-modern and more and more homogenised society, food consumption included, the need to differentiate, to share all sorts of cultural diversity and praise them through heritagisation, seems one of the most effective ways to survive culturally in the globalised world. After having spoken of the *tout-patrimoine* of the 1980s, should we start thinking of the 21st century as the *tout-immatériel* or, more specifically, the *tout-gastronomie*? In relation to different ways of searching for happiness, the philosopher and historian, Theodore Zeldin, writes: *Gastronomy is the art of using food to create happiness*. Can we say that heritagising gastronomy is the way through which contemporary societies revitalise their socio-cultural contentment while nurturing their identity, pride and self-reassurance, and the place where they find comfortable shelter in the globalised world?

ENDNOTES

1 According to the *Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties* enacted in 1950, cultural properties include not only tangible properties such as shrines and temples, but also intangible properties, e.g. skills, crafts or traditional festivals.

2 The *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding*, the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* and the *Register of Good Safeguarding Practices*.

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(Co-)curating the rural traditions and material culture of villages: a case study in Wanju, Korea

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(Co-)curating the rural traditions and material culture of villages: a case study in Wanju, Korea

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses the need to preserve and protect the value of material culture related to the rural lives of the villagers of the Wanju area in the south-eastern part of Korea. It starts with the following questions. Does the museum and cultural property protection policy in Korea actually protect cultural resources? What about the marginalised cultures of rural villages and their material culture? Will they all disappear? And because these cultural resources are relatively modern, are we neglecting their safeguarding because they are not old enough? In this article, I examine the current status and characteristics of material culture that have been found through studies of residents living in the rural villages of the Wanju area, and consider how they acquire value as heritage. In particular, I seek to find a connection between tangible and intangible cultural heritage through links between various cultural resources. Fieldwork and interviews with the villagers enable them to uncover the history of villages and their residents, and to curate their own experiences and settings, an important way to facilitate an integrated approach to identifying material culture in rural areas and rescuing these undervalued cultural resources.

Keywords

material culture, cultural resources, ontological analysis, community curatorship, Korean rural villages, Wanju, *gotgamkal*, *on-dol* heating system, *jak-du*, *yogang*, 1945 liberation

Introduction

This study discusses the preservation and protection of the value of living heritage found in rural villages. In the past, some researchers of rural society have studied this culture by focusing on ways of living or patterns of behaviour transmitted from the older generation (Jae-yul Choi: 1986). Others have seen it as a result of accommodation to the natural environment of surrounding areas which includes economy, lifestyle, speech patterns, ways of

thinking and values, historical artefacts and historical sites (Sang-bong Im, Hwa-gyeong Kim: 2006). Although both characterisations are centred on culture, previous studies tended to emphasise the cultural totality, abstract pattern, and remoteness in history of rural society. However, I decided to investigate rural culture from the perspective that living heritage, comprising material and non-material cultures, provides concrete, diverse and rich evidence of rural culture.

Therefore, cultural resources are here defined as material and non-material data relating to people's lifestyles. The institutional protection systems in Korea do not recognise these as belonging to the category of folk cultural properties so they cannot be registered as such because they do not meet the necessary criteria, such as scarcity, artistry, or acknowledgement by academia. However, these cultural resources show us how times have changed since the era of Japanese colonial rule and liberation in the late Joseon period.

At present, the villages' living heritage formed of rural traditions and material culture is only recognised as a resource for local development through tourism promotion, exhibitions and so on. However, the value of rural traditions and material culture is more important than ever. There is great interest in preserving and exhibiting these in museums of various types. One of the factors that triggered a change in the perception of the values and importance of living heritage is the new cultural property policy of central government and the municipalities.

The recognition of cultural resources has extended from the traditional to the modern, and the range of items deemed worthy of preservation has expanded from the property of famous people to those items owned by ordinary people. A typical example is the registered cultural property system of the Cultural Heritage Administration, which was created to preserve modern cultural resources and future heritage systems designated by several municipalities.

At the same time, various national and private museums are expanding their activities to identify and value the heritage of recent times, and are introducing material culture from the country and the regions to ordinary citizens. Museums can conduct research which deals with general subjects including the humanities, society, culture and the arts, and human values. Cultural resources are not handled in any one type of museum. As of January 2018, there are 873 museums in Korea, 225 of which have exhibited artefacts related to material culture. They range from folk museums, history museums, agricultural museums and museums of daily life, to university museums, eco-museums, and museums of women's history.

There are differences in the degree to which value is ascribed to material culture in museums, in how collections are interpreted and in how exhibitions are conceptualised, designed and developed. However, a lack of fieldwork in preparing content for exhibitions is becoming an unfortunate trend. There is also a lot of interest in purchasing artefacts from dealers who acquire items without recording the details of their history and provenance. This study therefore starts with the following questions. Does the museum and cultural property protection policy actually protect living cultural assets and cultural resources? What about the marginalised cultures of the rural villages and their material culture? Will they all disappear? And because these cultural materials are relatively modern, are we neglecting their preservation because we don't regard them as old enough?

Ultimately, these questions are linked to the challenge of recognising the importance of the living heritage of farming villages. In this article, I examine the current status and characteristics of living heritage that has been identified through surveys of residents in rural areas. In particular, I seek to re-create the connection between tangible and intangible heritage by finding links between various types of cultural resources.

The status of living heritage in rural villages

The project team of which the researcher was a member, carried out a survey of 170 villages between September 2018 and January 2019 in six towns in Wanju-gun County: Unjeong-myeon, Hwasan-myeon, Gyeongcheon-myeon, Bibong-myeon, Gosan-myeon, and Dongsang-myeon. Wanju-gun County is a mountainous area with a relatively small amount of cultivable land; its main agricultural products are rice, beans and barley.

The six areas studied belong to the mountainous part of Wanju-gun County, and produce persimmon, jujube, chestnut and soybean. The research started with us contacting the heads of the villages where the survey was to be conducted. Cultural materials were then collected during interviews with the residents. Researchers visited the homes of those villagers who had been recommended to them and carried out field investigations. In the process, we learned that there are people in the villages still using old items alongside modern ones. Most of the residents are very elderly, so we can confirm that this material culture is in imminent danger of disappearing from use.

We followed certain procedures to investigate, record, and preserve selected artefacts. First, we tried to gather basic information about the item: location, the name and address of the owner and manager, etc.. Secondly, we created data fields to describe the artefacts - type, name, quantity, manufacturer, date, use, material, structure, and form of the materials. Thirdly, we processed the data – recording the process of an artefact's creation, its state of repair, preservation status and historical background. We considered the meaning of the objects in the life of their owners and how that meaning may have changed over time.

Various kinds of farm equipment and household utensils produced or kept in villages by individual residents or village units were documented, and many of the artefacts are similar. The case of a 'knife for dried persimmon', for example, is related to the unique activity of a specific region. The area is known for producing the bulk of Korean dried persimmon. This type of knife, or *gotgamkal*, is a tool used to cut off the hardened ends of the fruit and to peel the persimmon. The handle is made of wood, and the blade is often cut from the end of a sickle, and the knives are usually made by the blacksmith, or at home by villagers.

The sizes and shapes of the blades vary according to the size of the persimmons produced in the area. *Duri* persimmons are native to the village we surveyed, so the knife blades had to be small enough to deal with them (Plate 1).

Information about the buildings used for the traditional process of storing ginger and about the iron sheds used for animals is also significant because these buildings no longer exist. The ginger storage buildings were built to store ginger for several months, and it had to be kept at a temperature below 15 degrees. In the village we studied the ginger storage house was called a *xiangul*. Most village houses used to be heated by the *on-dol* method in which heat is conveyed upwards from the lower part of the house, so many villagers dug under their own floors to store ginger, sweet potatoes and radishes. Nowadays the building of mechanical low-



Plate 1
Duri persimmons, Wanju-gun, Gosan-myeon, Daehyang village.
Photo: author, November 12, 2018.

temperature warehouses has caused these practices to all but disappear, but there are still a few houses that have ginger stores.

Other aspects of living heritage are related to women's work, such as the *dotu-mari* and *badi* (traditional weaving tools), spinning wheels, sewing machines, laundry bats, brass drums, millstones, brass irons, mortars and various kitchen utensils, as well as hemp, ramie and silk clothing. Data related to wedding ceremonies such as gifts, *honseoji* (wedding vows) and *sajudanja* (a ceremonial document recording details of the bridegroom's birth - hour, date, month and year) were also discovered. These artefacts are not only related to gender, but they also demonstrate the differences in the class or wealth of families. Some poorer informants said that they did not bring anything when they got married, or that they only brought a few sanitary items, while there were others from wealthy families who made long bridal lists. Under Confucianism, this was a formality which all honourable families had to follow.

Several elderly women had still kept their wedding clothes and wedding vows very carefully. The *honseoji* (wedding vow) took the form of a letter sent from the groom's house to the bride's home. The wedding vow pictured was written by Jae-deok Kim (Gwangsan Kim), the father of Myeong-hyeon Kim, and it was sent to Goheung Yu's house on October 28, 1959 (Plate 2). The following is a summary of the contents:

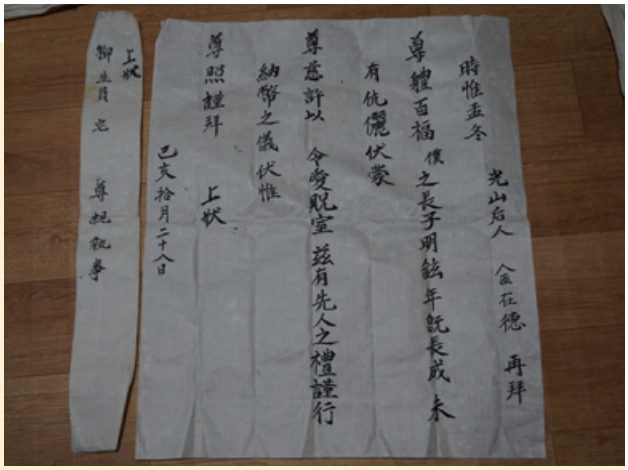


Plate 2
Wedding vow written by Jae-deok Kim, 1959.
Photo: author, November 20, 2018.

It is a very cold season. Hope all is well. Please excuse my eldest son, Myeong-hyeon Lee who has already grown up, but has yet to come into his full potential. It is the honour of my family to have your precious daughter a friend of my child. Therefore, I will do my best in all my heart, that the ritual between the two will be blessed. [my translation]

For centuries, brides have stored their wedding vows in a chest and cherished them for the rest of their lives. Their final step was to put their wedding bow on top of their wedding ritual box. Yeong-sun Yu (80 years old) of Seokjang village still cherishes the wedding vow written by her father-in-law, and kept for the last 60 years in the same chest.

Collections of prizes, such as the Grand Prize for women issued by the *Saemaul Undong* (New Community Movement) office were also found. The *Saemaul Undong* movement in rural areas emphasised the importance of the roles of the village leader and the president of the women's association. In the 1970s, village leaders played an important role in managing the 'family registration' of the village. From 1983 to 1987, the *Saemaul Farm Journal*, an almanac written by the leaders, was used to accurately describe the temperature, weather, and the rainfall of each day. The record shows, for example, that the Bibong-myeon area has been engaged in watermelon farming since the 1980s when this crop became popular. Various types of greenhouses were also introduced at this time.

Musical instruments (*Jing, Kkoengwari, Janggu, Sogo* etc.), funeral money collecting boxes and *yo-ryeong, yeonja banga*, and *muk-ju* (items related to religious practices) were also discovered. A *yo-ryeong*, a bell which makes a high-pitched noise when shaken, was used by the village community to mourn the dead (*sangyeo-bangwul*), but is rarely used now.

An exceptionally long rosary (240cms) was also found. A sacred object, comprising a string of beads with a cross dangling from one end, was used by Catholics when praying, enabling the user to keep count of the number of times they repeat their prayers. The rosary was used not only within the family, but also when the inhabitants of the village gathered together to pray. Catholicism came to the Korean Peninsula in the late Joseon Dynasty, and arrived in the villages around 1839



Plate 3
Group interview at Gujae Village Hall in Gyeongcheon-myeon, Wanju-gun.
Photo: author, December 10, 2018.

after the persecution of *Gihae*, as many worshippers from Chungcheong province settled there.

Finally, there are artefacts left over from the war in rural villages, such as grenade rings, land mines, rain jacket string and stores of ammunition. There is a flagpole in the village of Yongbok, built by Gi-soon Lee (89 years old) 5 years ago, using parts taken from grenades. He still proudly flies the South Korean flag on this flagpole. Gi-soon Lee took part in the Korean War and fought in many battles in Wanju-gun county and because of his wartime experiences he has many items from that time. The memory of the war in the village is an important part of his identity.

The abundance of living heritage that can be found in the villages shows how agriculture has changed in rural areas due to modernisation, filial piety, rural leadership and the *Saemaul* movement, as well as to changes in the village community and its lifestyle. It is therefore necessary to analyse why these cultural materials still remain in these houses as they do.

Finding values through the curatorship of villagers

The villagers have their own stories about the times through which they have lived. Their relationships with their parents, their spouses, their children and their neighbours create unique personal stories, and because they are genuine stories, it is critically important to record and preserve them. The use of cultural heritage should be preceded by rigorous research into the experiences and memories of the individual holders of specific artefacts, so that the saying, *to re-discover the value of cultural heritage is to find new value in it* becomes true (Plate 3).

The profound truth about many aspects of living heritage is that most of it is short-lived or lost due to rapid social change. Since the 2000s, there has been a sudden rise in the number of modern houses being built in rural areas, and as a result there are many cases of artefacts being thrown away or sold off to junkyards and dealers. Even where artefacts survive, it is nearly impossible to know the full story of an item without speaking to the original owner. In order to appreciate the cultural values of these artefacts, it is pertinent to exhibit them, while rigorously researching the entire life of the village. In addition, it is also important that village residents come to realise the value of their own collections through this process.

Whenever a survey was conducted at a house that contained such artefacts, a list was made of the materials left in the house. The location of the artefacts

in rooms, on floors, in kitchens, warehouses, and so on was also documented, as was the use of tools whether for agriculture, food preparation and shelter, or for ceremonial artefacts and their significance. The research captured a picture of life in that particular home, and recorded the history of the occupants, including how things differed for a woman before and after her marriage, or before and after the remodelling of the house, and of who was part of the household - parents, siblings and so on.

This survey method provided an interview environment which resonated with informants' memories about their objects, enabling them to give informed responses to basic questions and revealing specific details about them, like how they were acquired and how they were used in the recent past. In addition, the informant's appreciation, thoughts or opinions of the artefact was important, often revealing new facts about the owner, family members or other villagers.

Enabling the villagers to curate their own history allowed us to examine items and identify what they represented in terms of traditional knowledge and practice. For example, the *jak-du*, was a tool used by Bang-rye Kwon (84 years old) to chop up 'rice straw' in order to feed the cows or build clay walls (Plate 4). Cattle-raising was common just 20 years ago - people who spent their childhoods in rural areas will remember cows pulling carriages or ploughing rice paddies. But as cattle-raising disappeared, so too did the *jak-du*. These days, cows are fed with long rice straw, but in the past, people cut the straw into shorter lengths using the *jak-du* because it was more convenient to boil up shortened straws with food waste. There are various reasons for the change. Firstly, cattle are less important today as ploughing and harrowing have become mechanised. Secondly, the practice of keeping cattle in or near the house was dirty and smelly and has become less acceptable as attitudes to hygiene have changed. Thirdly, modern boilers are now used for heating, so the traditional stoves which used cow pats for fuel are no longer needed. Also, it used to be children who looked after the cattle, but these days children go to the city for their education so there is no one now to take care of the cows. Since the early 2000s *jak-du* have disappeared as they are no longer needed. Through researching the living heritage of rural villages, we can see how various aspects of modernisation make this a complex socio-cultural study.



Plate 4
A *jak-du*, Juk-dong Village, Hwasan-myeon,
Wanju-gun, owned by Bang-rye Kwon (84 years old).
Photo: author, January 14, 2019.



Plate 5
Towel, Bibong village, Gyeongcheon-myeon,
Wanju-gun made by Yeong-sun Yu (80 years old).
Photo: author, November 20, 2018.





Plates 6 and 7
Cotton clothing, Bibong village, Gyeongcheon-myeon, Wanju-gun made by Yeoung-sun Yu (80 years old).
Photos: author, November 20, 2018.

Various women's hand-made items survive. The possessions of Yeong-Sun Yu (80 years old), Chun-chak Yi (81 years old) and Bo-im Han (86 years old) respectively, living in three remote villages, include clothes made before their marriages as well as various other handicrafts and tools. Weaving was one of the main domestic tasks women performed in traditional societies. All the processes from spinning threads such as hemp, silk, ramie, and cotton to using a loom (*gilssam*) to weave these into fabrics were an important part of daily life (Plates 6 and 7).

Koreans have always had a fondness for being clean, and their towels are perfect examples of it. These include everything from facial towels, head towels, neck towels, foot towels, and hair towels, to towels specifically used for sweating, cleansing, bathing, wiping, and scrubbing.

Yeong-sun Yu made various clothes and towels to take with her when she was married in Bibong village, her hometown. She embroidered cross-stitch flowers, grass, and pheasants on cotton cloth (Plate 5). An old woman recollected that in her youth all the women of the same age in the village got together to do cross-stitch. The items show not only the status of Yeong-sun



Plate 8
Hemp pants made by Chun-chak Yi (81 years old) Sungjae village, Gosan-myeon, Wanju-gun.
Photo: author, January 17, 2019.



Plate 9
Keumsu gangsan (embroidery) by Bo-im Han (86 years old), Juklim village, Gosan-myeon, Wanju-gun.
Photo: author, January 8, 2019.

Yu's family, but also relate to the women's subculture related to bride's wedding lists at that time.

After the liberation in 1945, the silk industry was in gradual decline, yet some wealthy families in rural areas could still afford to make and use it for everyday clothes. On the other hand, imported threads and fabrics were being introduced into the villages. We learnt that in the 1950s and 1960s cotton clothing was often used as casual wear.

Hemp pants were one of the items Chun-chak Yi (81 years old) was given when she married at the age of 20 in Bongdong (Plate 8). Yi was from the Jeon-un Yi lineage, the eldest daughter of nine children, and her mother-in-law cared deeply about her bride's wedding list. Even after the marriage, she often received clothes from her in-laws. The main feature of pants made of hemp is that the fabric 'breathes', making it suitable for hot summers; the pants keep the wearer cool and they are easy to wash. According to Yi, she wore the clothes on her bride's wedding list for a couple of years and has kept them folded away ever since. Traditional Korean hemp pants worn by women are a good example of how fashion has changed.

Embroidery has long been a way of expressing Korean artistry. Bo-im Han's (86 years old) embroidery work reveals the remarkable changes that took place in Korean embroidery after the liberation in 1945. In particular, new industrially-produced materials like acrylic, polyester and woollen threads started to be used (Sun-young Lee: 1991). The work depicting the letter *keumsu gangsan* was made in 1949 by Bo-im Han, and it is meaningful because she embroidered it for her *honsu* or bride's wedding list (Plate 9).



Plate 10
Yogang, Juklim village, Gyeongcheon-myeon, Wanju-gun, belonging to Jung-sul Park (71 years old).
Photo: author, December 18, 2018.

The *yogang* or Korean chamberpot is also important. It was one of the most common artefacts found in the survey. A *yogang* is a small night stool that can be placed in any of the rooms in the house. Plate 10 shows a chamberpot or bowl used by the parents of Jung-sul Park (71 years old). A few years ago there was a fire in the house and a lot was lost. Fortunately for Park, the family *yogang* was recovered; Park was quoted as saying 'I am very glad.' A *yogang* was a necessity in the Korean *hanok* (traditional house) because the toilet was often separate from the house so it was awkward to go to the toilet at night.

As a result, all households had some sort of *yogang* placed in each room. Park, our informant, said that he purchased some of his elderly parents' *yogangs* in the market around 1920, during a very cold winter. The *yogang* has become one of his treasures as it reminds him of taking care of his parents who are now deceased. He remembers his father saying he should have bought alcohol with the money he spent on them! These days, his *yogang*, which was once cleaned daily to go in his parents' room, sits in plain view reminding him of his past.

A *yogang* was widely considered a necessity for all classes, and was one of the most common items on a bride's wedding list. They were sometimes made of brass or other metals. Before her marriage, Yong-ja Eom (71 years old) of Hwa-jung village, claims that she was so poor that she was only able to bring two items from her wedding list; a *yogang* and a washing bowl. Also, when the palanquin was used as the main means of transportation, it was said there was always a *yogang* in the palanquin (*gama*). It was mainly used by upper class women. These *gama yogang* were quite small, about the size of a man's fist.

Many artefacts are both tangible heritage in that they are real objects, and intangible heritage because of the stories related to them. It is a vast field. Through the above-mentioned fieldwork, it can be seen that intangible cultural heritage values can be identified directly by the residents themselves as they 'curate' their own stories about their lives and their possessions.

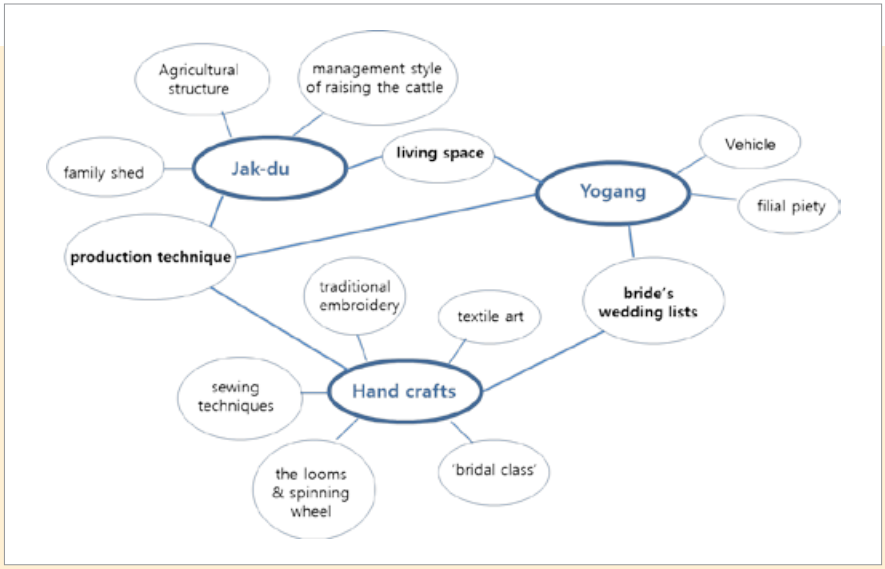


Figure 1
Example of ontology: An Integrated Approach to Tangible and Intangible Heritage in Wanju-gun.
Source: author, 2019.

The tangible and intangible cultural heritage of rural life

In recent years, exhibitions have changed from being artefact-oriented to containing stories related to intangible cultural heritage. The *Arirang* and *Blue Jeans* exhibitions held by the National Folk Museum in recent years are good examples of exhibitions which explain peoples' diverse life stories and their memories regarding their treasured artefacts. Similarly, the 70 stories of the *70th Anniversary of Liberation* exhibition held at the National Museum gave a number of individual perspectives on the liberation struggle. The people living in the Dongjin River area had their life stories featured in an exhibition, running through the millennium, which was similar to this study. However, we approached our study as a way of revealing the original stories told by the villagers rather than as an interpretation or assessment by outside researchers. We recognised the integrated value of artefacts such as the *jak-du*, the *yogang*, and other hand-made items discovered in rural village areas. The reason for choosing these items is that they all belong to a common theme of arts and crafts as well as to a sub-category of intangible cultural heritage, because they have meanings which can be explained by ontological analysis.

Ontology indicates the relationships surrounding a subject. It should be noted that ontological evidence is only reliable when an expert confirms the relativity of the terminologies concerned. Since ontological analysis is not the study of similar terms, but of the *relationship* of objects and stories and ideas, it requires professional insights to ensure accuracy (Han-hee Hahm *et al.*, 2018).

An ontological analysis of the *jak-du*, *yogang* and other handicrafts is presented above in Figure 1. The *jak-du* takes a different form in each household because its owner makes it for himself after purchasing the blade from a blacksmith. The *yogang* can be aesthetically pleasing, made from materials such as brass, bronze, bamboo, pottery or wood. Home-made handicrafts and the tools used to make them are also valuable artefacts - including looms and spinning wheels.

On the other hand, the characteristics of the living space (called *jeongju gonggan* - settlement space) can be well expressed by tangible objects, like the *jak-du* (straw cutter) and the *yogang* (chamber pot). The straw cutter is closely related to the use of *on-dol*, a system for both heating and cooking in traditional houses. The traditional night stool was also essential when the toilet was located outdoors and away from the main house. The following sentences may explain these sentiments. 'A child hurt his foot while using the straw cutter to feed the cows while his parents were busy in the fields.' 'Children were worried that their parents

would go to the bathroom in the dark cold winter night, so they bought a night stool for them.' 'A woman who got married longed for her parents and sewed clothes for them with the hemp fabric that they had given her as a wedding gift.' These examples are all related to the Korean concept of filial piety.

The 2019 Filial Piety Culture Education Programmes of the Daejeon Hyo Culture Promotion Agency include traditional etiquette, the tea experience, the *yangban* (noblemen class) experience, table manners, and education in filial piety. Among other things, making *hanbok* (traditional dress), tea drinking and table manners were also frequently dealt with. As seen from the previous examples, artefacts such as straw cutters, night chamber pots and hemp clothes also have important intangible attributes in which social customs, morality, and consciousness are explicit.

The common value shared by the *yogang* and handicraft items is that they were all on wedding lists. The bride's wedding lists detailed the things that would prepare the new couple for life after marriage, though the lists differed depending on the class and social status of the individual. In addition, women's handicrafts also provided data showing the economic and social changes of modern times. We have learnt how women from the upper class attended 'bridal classes' in the 1940s and 1950s with their peers before marriage, and how traditional embroidery and sewing techniques have changed since imported thread and fabrics were introduced into rural villages. These tangible items allow us to connect with the intangible cultural heritage they represent. Intangible cultural heritage can thus be embodied in tangible objects. When objects are collected and displayed with their stories in a museum, the traditional tangible and living intangible heritage can provide a place of nostalgia for the old and a place of education for the young.

Conclusion

In the case of living heritage, its transmission is often disconnected; the need to protect such data should therefore always be kept in mind. In particular, in the case of data closely related to daily or domestic life, the method of intergenerational transfer must be transformed into a method of participation that enables more human interaction. In order to do this, local museums must preserve memories of the local lifestyle and its surrounding culture.

Museums collect artefacts in various ways. Acquired artefacts are preserved in warehouses with the appropriate storage environment, and are used as source data for developing plans for an exhibition. In other words, when planning a specific exhibition, the museum staff will review its collection of artefacts. However, while national museums have hundreds of artefacts; smaller museums may have very few items in their collections. Museum exhibitions can be broadly divided into permanent exhibitions, temporary exhibitions, exhibitions of collections, etc. As can be seen from the testimony of a museum official (47 years old) that *the utilisation rate of artefacts in museums is 10 percent in the case of non-national museums*, artefacts may have to be found by borrowing from private owners or other museums and institutions (personal interview: January 3, 2019). Preparing for such exhibitions would require academic research rather than fieldwork. Due to limited finances, manpower and preparation time, it is inevitable that for most small museums, content will be developed from existing documentation and by borrowing objects from other institutions as well as through personal networking with colleagues and collectors.

In most cases, there is not sufficient information about the artefacts in storage or documentation about their accessibility. In fact, not many records of artefacts, whether ancient or modern, in a museum provide detailed information. To provide sufficient data about artefacts, the ideal is to carry out fieldwork and collect cultural materials and information simultaneously. Fieldwork among the older rural villagers, while they are still alive, is critically important so that they can describe past events and their daily lives, or important recent changes to the village. This matters because there are still many significant artefacts in these rural villages which only the older residents can describe.

In addition, the collection of data in this way means that the residents rather than just being the subject, become the curators of their own heritage, and can tell us about the history of the village as well as about their personal histories and their social relationships. By having professional researchers do fieldwork to gather data about cultural heritage, we can identify the values

of both tangible and intangible heritage. This method pays attention to the actual 'story' of the tangible material, and makes it meaningful in ways not covered by existing evaluations of tangible cultural property.

Those artefacts exhibited in relation to the intangible cultural heritage in Korea have been related to the daily life of their owners, tools used by the craftsmen who make traditional crafts, or the accessories used for ceremonies. However, as has been demonstrated through the above-mentioned examples, other types of material culture contain intangible cultural heritage values because of the intrinsic value of knowledge about the traditional ways of life and culture of people in the past.

Surveying rural villages, we noticed that the villagers wanted the history of their villages written up in book form. However, this has not yet happened because in-depth research and analysis of the cultural resources of actual village residents has been minimal. Korea needs to think seriously about the implications of rapid modernisation and industrialisation, because local traditions, memories and material culture related to rural village culture are rapidly changing and disappearing.

Cultural artefacts are different from existing heritage surveys in that they require us to obtain interview data directly from their owners. Oral documentation helps convey the owners' emotions and moods associated with the artefact which helps maximise our understanding. This helps protect cultural heritage by making the local people realise their own memories and items are valuable. Listening to stories about the artefacts owned by the old people of the villages in the course of conducting the surveys developed into an opportunity for the residents to value their cultural heritage anew.

In this way, we can raise awareness about the importance of cultural materials in remote rural areas. In the future, field researchers should actively survey cultural artefacts kept by villagers and explore their intrinsic intangible cultural heritage value. For this purpose, this article presents an ontological analysis of the cultural artefacts of Wanju-gun. They are the cultural outcome of technology, knowledge, values, symbolic systems, and the social interaction of people in everyday life. A museum which was able to present both the tangible and intangible heritage would be invaluable.

The time has come for museums to pursue quality of information rather than quantity of objects. Through research and survey, exhibition and public exposure, museums must discover the key values of people's material culture and recognise its importance. 'Rare intrinsic value or artistry' are the qualities required for an item to meet the criteria for 'cultural property' in Korea, but as has been shown here, other qualities are important too.

The range of artefacts to be found in the villages may be limited, many of the items may look the same or have been used in similar ways. However, there are stories relating to many of these items and it is the stories that distinguish them and make them important. These artefacts are often undervalued; we need to find ways of recognising them as cultural property.

Acknowledgement

This work was supported by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea and the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF-2017S1A5B8057729)

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SHORT PAPER

Christmas cribs: traditions of *szopka* art and craft in Cracow

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Christmas cribs: traditions of *szopka* art and craft in Cracow

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ABSTRACT

Intangible cultural heritage plays an immeasurable role in the existence, continuation and development of communities. Intergenerational transmission helps to strengthen the bond between people. The first legally binding act of international law concerning this issue is the UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* of 2003. This article discusses the role and the significance of Cracovian nativity scenes for the local community, for whom they represent a 'living' tradition. Cracovian nativity scenes, inscribed on the UNESCO *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* in 2018, are the first Polish entry on the *List*. The issues discussed include perspectives on the principle of sustainable development in the cultural sector and present the challenges of safeguarding intangible heritage in the context of increasing commercialisation and globalisation.

Keywords

Kraków / Cracow, nativity scene (*szopka*), travelling nativity plays (*jasełka*), crib, Christmas traditions, Christmas crib competition, Wawel dragon, 'living books', sustainable development, Poland

Introduction

Intangible cultural heritage is an indispensable element of human existence; it is a transmitter of values. The coining of the term 'intangible cultural heritage' was preceded by strategic programmes and projects for the protection of folk culture and folklore (Aikawa-Faure: 2009, pp. 13-44; Lenzerini: 2011, pp. 101-120). Folk culture became the foundation upon which national and regional cultures would form. Carefully maintained traditional wisdom, heritage and skills are like a mirror through which one can recognise, protect or reconstruct that which constitutes the identity and the memory of a community. Intangible heritage is a 'driving force', thanks to which a given idea or an artistic vision finds its expression in tangible creations. The 'Preamble' of the UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*,

emphasises *the deep-seated interdependence between the intangible cultural heritage and the tangible cultural and natural heritage*. Therefore, in order to safeguard heritage more effectively, it is necessary to consider not only the tangible substance of an element, but also the intangible aspect ingrained in the social fabric and in the local environment.

Poland ratified the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* in 2011. Cracovian nativity scenes were among the first entries on the *National Intangible Cultural Heritage List*. On 19th December 2018, the Minister of Culture and National Heritage awarded Kraków's makers of nativity scenes Honorary Badges of Merit for Polish Culture (Decree: 2012). This cultural phenomenon meets the requirements of the *Convention* and serves as an example of the artistry and values shared by the cultural heritage of humanity.

The nativity scene (*szopka*) tradition in Kraków

Kraków, the former capital of Poland, is a city with a long history, captivating visitors with its monuments and its works of art. It is a city where the past meets modernity. It is located in the southern part of Poland on the Vistula River and is a flourishing administrative, academic, cultural and industrial centre with a well-developed transport infrastructure. In 1364, the king of Poland, Casimir III (the Great), founded the Academy of Kraków, which became the first Polish university and one of the oldest institutions of higher education in Europe and indeed, in the world. Nowadays known as the Jagiellonian University (*Universitas Jagellonica Cracoviensis*), it is conducting scientific research of international importance and offers a wide range of educational programmes.

The authorities and the citizens of Kraków engage in numerous strategies intended to protect the region's cultural heritage. A special emphasis is given to the tradition of nativity-scene-making, which has been practised continually since the 19th century. This corresponds with Article 2, paragraph 1 of the *Convention*, which discusses intergenerational transmission and heritage being *constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history* [Art. 2(1)]. Cracovian Christmas nativity scenes – or cribs - illustrate the mystery of the Nativity. This tradition commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ, whose teachings and ministry gave rise to the Christian religion. Inside the scene there are figurines of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, angels, shepherds and the Three Wise Men, as well as miniatures of animals. The legendary Wawel dragon is also a popular motif.

In keeping with tradition, makers of nativity scenes usually include a personal detail as a means of artistic expression. This can be considered as an example of the 'revitalisation' of an old custom [Art. 2(3)] and an expression of how today's creators continue to identify with it: in the construction of their nativity scene they aspire to capture the essence of the tradition, but also to add a touch of their own creativity and personality. This form of folkloric handicraft is therefore enriched by new values, thanks to which cultural diversity increases while remaining rooted in the past.



Plate 1
Antique nativity scene by Michał Ezenekier.
Source: The Seweryn Udziela Ethnographic Museum in Kraków, 6 January 2019.

Construction of nativity scenes was initially the craft of artisans from the suburbs and villages surrounding Kraków. The oldest crib, made by Michał Ezenekier, is on display in the Kraków Ethnographic Museum. It dates from the mid-19th century (Plate 1). It is 225cm high and its base measures 150 x 40 cm (Ethnographic Museum: 2019). Each element was made by hand. The details show the author's artistic skill and his respect for the legacy of his ancestors.

Starting in the 1930s, a competition for the most beautiful Cracovian nativity scene has been held annually in Krakow's Main Square on the first Thursday of December. Some of the contestants have been cultivating this tradition for generations. The process of creating a nativity scene may take several months. The figures, their clothing, the construction and the decorations on the interior are all hand-made. The makers pay close attention to every architectural detail, drawing inspiration from the historical buildings of Krakow and from local folklore. Their style pays homage to distinguished people from the city's and the country's history, but also includes contemporary people and events of international significance.

The dedication to building a nativity scene true to the knowledge passed down from generation to generation reinforces a sense of identity and fosters creativity (Art. 2(1) of the *Convention*). The scene is made from fine cardboard and strips of wood or plywood which are covered with colourful tin foil. Creativity plays a significant role in the protection of cultural pluralism. Even though nowadays it is possible to find nativity scenes with built-in mechanisms that set the figurines in motion, or ones which function as music boxes, the craft still observes generations-old precepts. Nativity scene-makers favour traditional materials and working by hand.

Article 2, paragraph 2 of the *Convention* lists the manifestations of intangible cultural heritage and, among them, the skills relating to traditional craftsmanship (domain E). Taking this into consideration, Cracovian cribs can be considered not only as handicraft products, but also as fine and elaborate works of art. Cracovian cribs are a vehicle of culture which was ingrained in society. They are characterised by a combination of personal, temporal and situational aspects. The makers of nativity scenes 'speak', they are in a dialogue with the present. This





Plates 2 A and B
Some examples of present-day Cracovian nativity scenes.
Photos: Tomasz Jefimow, 2011.

can serve as a means of preserving *the sense of identity and continuity*, as indicated by the UNESCO *Convention* (Plates 2A and B).

Cracovian nativity scenes are a cultural phenomenon with a historical provenance that embodies traditionalism and folk art. At the same time, it is also a culture-forming phenomenon, since every year the Christmas crib competition is open to participants of all ages; it is attended not only by the locals, but also by tourists who wish to feast their eyes on all the colours and to experience the magical, legendary spirit of Kraków. The competition helps to promote knowledge of the city's history and cultural heritage, and also appeals to children and adolescents (Plates 2C and D).

The making of nativity scenes and the dedicated competition bring society together. Cribs create a space for people to spend time together, which inspires reflections of an axiological and normative nature. There are shows and workshops on traditional methods of making nativity scenes. In light of Article 3, paragraph 2 of the *Convention*, this can be considered as an example of informal education - which frequently proves more effective than institutional forms of teaching because it occurs in the presence, and with the participation, of people who act as 'living books', repositories of tradition. Intangible cultural heritage is fragile and ephemeral, therefore every initiative that sets out to popularise it ought to be supported on both a local and a national level.

International protection and the principle of sustainable development

In the days from 27th November to 1st December 2018, the 13th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage took place in the Republic of Mauritius. New cultural phenomena were added to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. Cracovian Christmas cribs *(Nativity Scene (szopka) tradition* in *Kraków / La tradition de la crèche (szopka) à Cracovie)* were among those new entries. The nativity scenes constitute the first entry from Poland to be included on the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. International





Plates 2 C and D
Some examples of present-day Cracovian nativity scenes.
Photos: Anna Kaczmarz, 2015.

cooperation, implementation, the synergistic integration of regulations and best practice all play an important role in the protection of cultural heritage.

In the face of globalisation, commercialisation and increasing consumerism, it is necessary to intensify efforts to ensure effective safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and to harmonise the systems of international law (Article 16-18 of the *Convention*) with domestic activities. Here we touch upon the principle of sustainable development, which postulates the integration of political, social, cultural and industrial activity. The origin of the principle of sustainable development is attributed to the field of economics (Jabareen: 2008, pp. 179-192; Soini, Dessein: 2016, pp.12; Nocca: 2017, p.28). However, it is critically important to ensure that heritage values are not isolated from the essence of identity for economic gain.

The principle of sustainable growth needs to be adapted in line with an understanding of the value of heritage. Then, instead of declining, cultural pluralism can be expanded and maintained. Taking the above factors into consideration decreases the threat of reducing cultural assets to mere material objects, or evaluating them only according to rigid formal criteria. It is vital to appreciate the essence of intangible cultural heritage, which is 'living' and which runs through the totality of the products of human intellect.

Incorporating the principle of sustainable development into the safeguarding of heritage will help support artists and creators, stimulate economic growth, create friendly spaces and places of employment in the cultural sector - on the basis of international cooperation, but without abandoning the nation's own 'roots'. It should be noted that the free flow of ideas is a significant factor in creative development and in the emergence of diverse forms of cultural expression (*Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions:* 2005). However, it should also be stressed that in order to nurture cultural diversity, it is necessary to ensure social justice, respect for personal dignity and to avoid the unification of cultures.

Conclusions

Cracovian nativity scenes are an important part of the life and customs of the local people. The cultivation of a folk craft helps to shape regional culture. Intangible heritage is crucial for understanding and decoding heritage in its tangible form. Together with the tangible elements, it enables us to interpret and articulate given aspects of cultural heritage. Cracovian cribs combine both of these aspects, helping to maintain identity and a sense of community.

The UNESCO *Convention* states that intangible cultural heritage is a factor in *bringing human beings closer together and ensuring exchange and understanding among them*. Cracovian nativity scenes fulfill the role of uniting people and generations. Coexistence, in a society which is currently permeated by various interwoven and overlapping social, cultural, economic and technological phenomena, calls for the reinforcement of the values of regional culture. Intangible heritage can help in promoting tolerance, overcoming stereotypes, and in supplanting meanings which, instead of serving memory, might otherwise be reaffirming counter-memory.

The multi-tower constructions of Cracovian nativity scenes were once used by carol singers to put on travelling nativity plays (*jasełka*). Their style, architectural, aesthetic and artistic values are characteristic of this specific region of Poland. In terms of their form and meaning, they do not have counterparts in any other European countries. In 2018, Cracovian nativity scenes were included on the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*, which should be conducive to ensuring greater cooperation for the development of a long-term strategy to safeguard the tradition, and the exchange of knowledge and experience. International-scale safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage means elaborating a model of cooperation which takes note of the plurality of diverse values, phenomena and cultural assets, which together constitute a common heritage, without, of course, neglecting the perspective of the community where they were created.

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Participation in the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: The role of Communities, Groups and Individuals. Author: Filomena Sousa, Collaboration: Vera Refólio.

(Memória Imaterial CRL. Alenquer. Portugal, 2018)

Rachel Watson

The Participation in the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: The role of Communities, Groups and Individuals. Author: Filomena Sousa, Collaboration: Vera Refólio.

(Memória Imaterial CRL. Alenquer. Portugal, 2018)
ISBN: 978-989-99397-4-5
Open Access:
https://www.memoriamedia.net/pci_docs/The_Participation_in_the_Safeguarding_of_the_ICH_Filomena_Sousa.pdf

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This publication examines the issue of participation by communities, groups and individuals (CGIs) in the recognition and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, approaching this key theme from multiple directions. The author argues that the 2003 UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* changed the narrative around intangible cultural heritage, as a semi-defined set of social, economic and political conditions was added to the language used to describe community activities that had become subject to safeguarding (pp. 3-4). In doing so, she also argues that this safeguarding activity imposes additional risk - the potential that the heritage ceases to be a living and dynamic entity, subject to pressures of population, resources and external inputs, and becomes a static exercise, one concerned more with maintaining the 'recorded' example accurately than with continuing to evolve to suit the population within which it is situated.

The first chapter discusses the nature of involvement of CGIs as a key aspect of the 2003 UNESCO *Convention*, notwithstanding the absence of detail within the document as to how this is to be achieved. Concepts such as participation and consent are explored, particularly in the context of a group or community - is it enough to demonstrate the consent or involvement of a few representatives of the community, or is evidence of a more widespread community participation required? Over what period of time or what proportion of the process is involvement necessary? How can involvement be demonstrated and

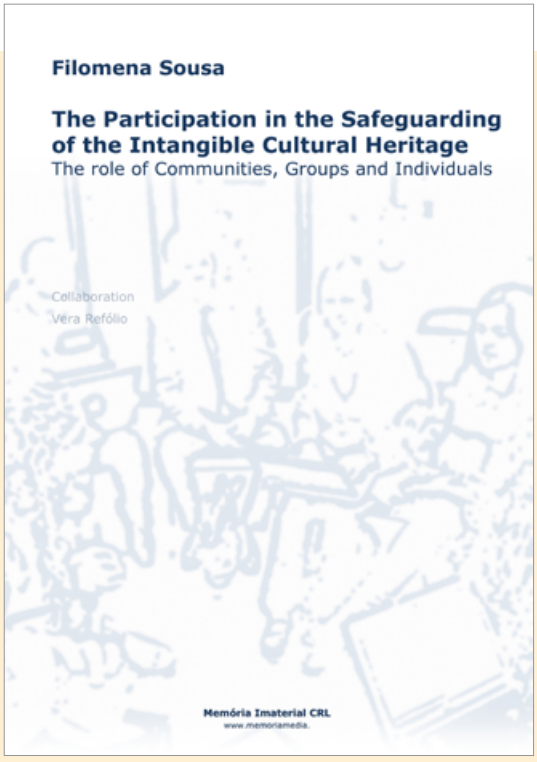
proven to be legitimate and effective in achieving the aims of safeguarding heritage under the *Convention*? These key themes are examined and discussed in the context of previous nominations received under the *Convention* and prior studies conducted on these.

The second chapter examines different methodologies that have been tried in previous nomination processes, attempting to draw distinctions between processes driven by States Parties and those driven by different types of heritage organisations. While the *Convention* text is deliberately vague as to recommended methods of achieving participatory safeguarding outcomes, studies such as this are integral to creating an idea of what a best practice approach may look like - enabling increased success rates across genuine attempts at participatory processes for the nomination and safeguarding of intangible heritage with the communities, groups and individuals truly responsible for the survival of the practice in its original setting.

Overall, the author draws the conclusion that, although the importance of community involvement in the process is recognised and discussed within nomination processes, real and genuinely inclusive participation remains relatively rare. The author attributes this to five factors:

- excessive centrality of the States Parties in the heritagisation process;
- diversity of interpretations of the concepts;
- deficit of information among the groups, communities and individuals;
- deficit of experience in the improvement of teams comprising different actors; and
- deficit of methods and professionals to operationalise the participation of communities, groups and individuals.

This publication seeks to provide initial responses to several of these factors throughout its discussion, paving the way for further research and discussion of the issues and methods of overcoming these barriers to success. Genuine participatory safeguarding of intangible heritage under the *Convention* will require each of these factors to be addressed and resolved, probably in more than one way, so as to allow different State frameworks to be accommodated within recommended best practices.



The publication concludes by positing a framework of methods and techniques that could aid the involvement of communities, groups and individuals in the safeguarding activities that fall under the UNESCO 2003 *Convention*. It is presented as a theoretical approach that can be adjusted as appropriate to relevant cultural contexts. The framework itself is an interesting document, drawing from studies and observations of previous nominations, as discussed throughout the publication. However, the framework is introduced almost as an afterthought - the publication had not previously appeared to consist of a series of case studies with the purpose of building a definitive framework for better practice, and little discussion is directly applied to the framework once it has been compiled. If the overall aim of the author was to produce a sample methodology that could be utilised to increase the participation rates of communities, groups and individuals within nomination processes, perhaps a preferable approach might have been to dedicate an entire publication to the exploration and dissection of case studies? This could involve carefully discussing and interrogating each aspect of a case study that was worthy of inclusion in the methodology or presenting counter-arguments to a possible inclusion. In doing so, a methodological framework could have been built, with a solid demonstration of success clearly articulated to accompany each recommended course of action. The current content and layout of the publication leaves the methodology almost as the afterthought of the publication that commenced the process, but does not take the work to its comparative and documented pinnacle.

The technological component in the second chapter regarding the correlation between different methods of digitally capturing and inventorying examples of intangible heritage was fascinating, providing an additional consideration in the pursuit of participatory safeguarding of intangible heritage. The role of the choice of platform in enabling community participation was well demonstrated in this publication, however additional elements are open to consideration in a larger study of this area, including factors such as metadata choices, the levels of technical prowess required to navigate data entry and the ultimate aim of any information capture - retrievability and findability.

Overall the publication raises a number of key challenges for practitioners who seek to proactively safeguard intangible heritage in accordance with the guidelines of the 2003 UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. The importance of the genuine involvement of traditional owners of the heritage in this process cannot be denied, nor can the risk of arbitrarily halting the natural evolution of the heritage practice in the course of registering it for safeguarding be minimised. Communities, groups and individuals who work with heritage practitioners on these projects must be acknowledged and involved in the process as the true owners of that which is to be protected, and as such, have roles within the process that reflect this reality. This publication's broad approach to identifying and addressing key areas of weakness in the existing process has contributed to the journey towards genuine participatory safeguarding practices under the *Convention*.

The African Roots of Marijuana, by Chris S. Duvall (Durham, North Carolina and London: Duke University Press, 2019)

Richard Stoffle

The African Roots of Marijuana
Chris S. Duvall
(Durham, North Carolina and London: Duke University Press, 2019)

Paper ISBN: 978-1-4780-0394-6 / Cloth ISBN: 978-1-4780-0361-8

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The fact that Africa's omission from cannabis histories comes from an intellectual tradition that marginalises the African contribution to world culture, is a central finding of this book. African knowledge is fundamental to the now-dominant global practices of cannabis use. African vocabulary and technology are historically documented and inseparable. Words and phrases, paraphernalia and techniques, plants and knowledge variably survived the Middle Passage. Although industrial slave plantations constituted a new form of social organisation and communal life, the ancient traditions and cultural centrality of cannabis use amongst Africans persisted. Cannabis use today thus represents a thousand years of African intangible heritage and cultural continuity.

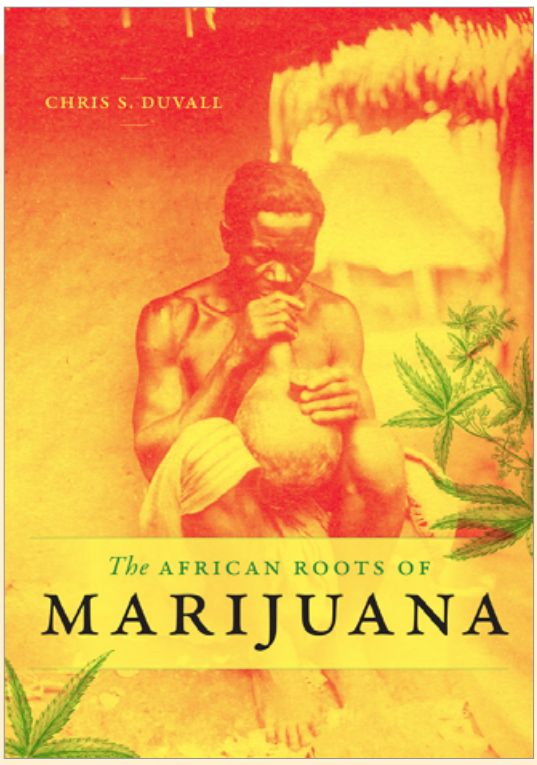
This book stands as an iconoclastic contribution to a debate that is hundreds of years old, and one dominated by arguments for and against European colonialism and African slavery. To add a new perspective to such a well-travelled topic, a book must offer something unique and this one does. The author begins with an argument for yet another essay on cannabis and African people. A search using these terms together in our University of Arizona library documents thousands of articles and books on similar topics. However, Duvall devotes considerable space to showing that the extant literature is overwhelmingly biased either for or against a number of sub-themes that have dominated the African-cannabis debate. Perhaps this point is more important than the details of the biases and Duvall's analysis of why they have misdirected academic and public discussions for more than three hundred years. Stepping back from the details, we are told that the arguments for and against African slavery and its role in European colonialism dominated what scholars and others could and did say about both Africa and cannabis.

The social constructions of cannabis as a mind-destroying drug linked with the perceived racial inferiority of the African people worked together to serve as an ongoing excuse for African slavery and the political suppression of both the drug and the people. This is the unique focus of the book.

Unlike many other authors, Duvall, a professor at the University of New Mexico, USA, argues that he is an objective, data-based scholar. He defines himself as a geographer and political ecologist, but based on his publications he clearly qualifies as an ethno-historian and cultural ecologist. His scholarship on this topic has consequently developed into an argument for the ancient relationship of African peoples with cannabis. His research suggests that for more than a thousand years the plant occupied a culturally central place in pre-colonial African society. Like other mind-altering natural plant products, such as those used by traditional peoples around the world, the plant had religious and spiritual roles. It was originally perceived to be a gift from the Creator designed to expand reason and open portals to other dimensions. Thus cannabis was less of an escape from the world than a means of engaging its complex dimensions. The plant (and its associated spiritual practice) is thus part of the ancient cultural heritage of African peoples and continues to be important in the heritage of Caribbean peoples today.

The book is organised into three major sections developed over 351 pages, including a very brief 'Table of Contents', 106 pages of useful 'Notes', and 10 pages of 'Index'. The 'End Notes' are organised by chapter where they document a reference point; a style that precludes an alphabetically-listed bibliography of references organised by types of sources. Despite being filled with maps and historic photos there is no listing of these. Most of the maps were produced by the author so they do illustrate what is being said in the text. Figures and maps contain original data and special analysis by the author thus reflecting his expertise as a geographer. All photos are referenced as being in the Author's Collection. This is clearly a unique and scholarly book.

Part One is an introduction where major components of the cannabis-African connection and both kinds of approaches, are criticised as biased. While some biases were caused by limited access to colonial records, Duvall argues that most were either apologies for colonialism and African slavery or pushbacks against these apologies. Chapters entitled 'Cannabis and Africa' and 'Race and Plant Evolution' lead to a recommendation for a plant-centred history of African peoples due to the long-term co-evolution of both African society and plant genetics and distribution.



Part Two is about how cannabis came to Africa, what happened to it there, and how it crossed the Atlantic. Basically this portion of the essay is the recommended plant-centred history called for earlier. Here the author talks of 'Cannabis Cultures' reflecting the centrality of cannabis and the resulting human/social co-evolution. He argues for cannabis movement and cultural learning occurring over more than a thousand years of regular interactions. There were specific routes of arrival (well-mapped by the author) ultimately from the Far East but with significant stops in the Middle East (Levant) and on to north and east Africa via trade routes. The movement of cannabis and subsequent cultural learning was more from person to person (traders and seamen) rather than as an explicit export crop or a religious movement. North Africa maintained the cultural use of cannabis much as it had been in the Middle East, but south of the Sahara people primarily smoked it using a wide variety of pipes, some stylistically imported from the Middle East. Innovation occurred in the plant and its uses due to the hundreds of sub-Saharan cultural groups and environmental settings.

Among the many interesting stories is that of the 'African cough' which derived from the smoking of cannabis (pages 106-107). The cough was apparently unique and ubiquitous. Europeans travellers were disturbed by the cough and made reference to it in their travel accounts. One observer suggested that the cough was in part an affectation designed to elicit a humorous response from Europeans.

By the historic period cannabis use in Africa, as observed by European travellers, was quickly socially constructed as being both a harmful drug and one of the reasons (along with assumptions of cannibalism and general moral corruption) why African people were better off (that is culturally improved) by being enslaved on 'civilized' industrial plantations in the Americas.

African people brought the cannabis plant and the culturally-associated medicinal, spiritual and religious ceremonies to the Americas. They did so alongside sailors and traders. It moved like tobacco and potatoes as part of the 'Columbian Exchange' (Crosby: 1972) having such an obvious purpose that it was only questioned by plantation owners and European scholars who argued for its restriction. Here again the author pushes back on most theories of its origin and movement. Cannabis now developed new uses and purposes suitable to the physical and psychological environment of suppressive plantation slavery. It, like other things African (Stoffle and Baro: 2016), was often kept *sub-rosa*, away from colonial observations and restrictions. Cannabis, like other formerly-suppressed African cultural practices, emerged and was further modified after slavery. While fundamentally a part of the African heritage, cannabis and its uses were creolised to fit the oppressive lives of the people in the Americas.

Part Three contains integrated discussions and some conclusions. The issue of working under the influence is addressed as part of the colonial, and later national, efforts to suppress cannabis use. But cannabis was easily grown, whereas alcohol and tobacco required more effort and were more publicly observable. The author concludes, *Cannabis was a low-input environmental resource that laborers valued because it enhanced their capacities to endure marginalization and exploitation* (page 161). In addition it became a form of heritage resistance against the legacy of the diaspora, slavery and the organised diminishment of African people and their cultures.

The book should be purchased by every scholar and lay student with an interest in this topic. Have it on your bookshelf because it is more like an encyclopedia than a one-time read. There are many portions of the book that will set off further debates, although much of it is designed to put aside old and false 'truths'. The challenge is that the author comes to hundreds of conclusions about a wide range of topics. Tracking the ancient presence of cannabis, for example, is done by using archaeology to analyse the forms of excavated smoking pipes, linguistic analysis to uncover words and phrases about smoking in dozens of old African languages, and even using ethno-botanical analysis of pollen from dry caves. Despite the obvious scholarship on these key issues, the author still draws conclusions from the evidence that are difficult to check. This occurs because the author's sources, using the End Note referencing style and a lack of an integrated bibliography, become their own labyrinth. At some level, however, the reader must largely respect the document-based authority of the book.

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