

Safeguarding Experiences in Central and Eastern European Countries and China



INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE



10th Anniversary of the Entry into Force of the 2003 UNESCO Convention
through the Prism of Sustainable Development

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edited by Hanna Schreiber

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Title

Intangible Cultural Heritage: Safeguarding Experiences in Central and Eastern European Countries and China.
The 10th Anniversary of the Entry into Force of the 2003 Convention through the Prism of Sustainable Development.

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Layout, cover design and typesetting

Magdalena Piotrowska-Kloc, Printomato

© 2017 National Heritage Board of Poland
ul. Kopernika 36/40,
00-924 Warszawa

ISBN 978-83-63260-95-8

Printed by

Łódzkie Zakłady Graficzne

The views expressed in the articles published in this volume are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the institutions they work for, neither the National Heritage Board of Poland nor the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage.



NARODOWY INSTYTUT
DZIEDZICTWA
NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD OF POLAND

Ministerstwo
Kultury
i Dziedzictwa
Narodowego



Niematerialne
Dziedzictwo Kulturowe
NARODOWY INSTYTUT DZIEDZICTWA



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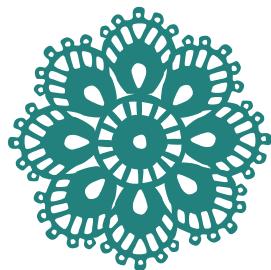
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PART 3.

**CREATING THE ICH SAFEGUARDING
SYSTEM – CURRENT CHALLENGES
AND SOLUTIONS**

The intangible cultural heritage of Romania: current situation and future directions

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...one of the priorities of the Ministry of Culture and National Identity in the last year was to draw up the most important legal instrument referring to the cultural heritage, including the intangible cultural heritage: Tezele Codului Patrimoniului Cultural (The theses of the cultural heritage code). After being presented for public consultation, in November 2016, the preliminary theses were approved by a decision of the government. The document represents the preliminary stage to elaborate the Codul Patrimoniului Cultural (cultural heritage code), aligning the national legislation to the European principles.

Introduction

Over the last three decades, increasingly more experts around the world have been expressing their concerns over the negative effects of growing globalisation on the cultural diversity of people, especially on the living heritage of humanity – as a dynamic phenomenon and a permanent transformation. They have drawn attention to the need of adopting measures aimed at ensuring its safeguarding and preservation.

It is in this context that UNESCO adopted the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage – the first international legal instrument – at its 32nd session of the General Conference. In the very first lines of the Convention, we can read that

the processes of globalization and social transformation, alongside the conditions they create for renewed dialogue among communities, also give rise, as does the phenomenon of intolerance, to grave threats of deterioration, disappearance, and destruction of the intangible cultural heritage, in particular owing to a lack of resources for safeguarding such heritage¹.

After approximately two years, on 29 December 2005, Romania accepted the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage², becoming the 30th state party to the Convention.



¹ Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/convention> (accessed: 30 October 2016).

² Law no. 410/2005 on the acceptance of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted in Paris on 17 October 2003 (*Legea nr. 410 din 29 decembrie 2005 privind acceptarea Convenției pentru salvagardarea patrimoniului cultural imaterial, adoptată la Paris la 17 octombrie 2003*, Monitorul Oficial [The Official Gazette], no. 17, 9 January 2006).



However, it is worth mentioning that important steps with regard to the safeguarding of living heritage had already been made in Romania a few decades ago. The primary example is the first initiative to document the Romanian traditional culture, made by Dimitrie Gusti (1880–1925), a personality crucial to the Romanian culture in the interwar years, founder of the Sociological School of Bucharest, sociologist, philosopher, and aesthetician. He based his research on the idea that the research of the nation should start with research of the village, the fundamental basis of Romanian people. In 1925, Dimitrie Gusti initiated an extensive campaign, in which interdisciplinary teams of researchers – sociologists, ethnographers, geographers, and other experts – have studied the relevant expressions and manifestations of village life.

Ten years later, this impressive project was partially transposed into a more tangible form: the Romanian Village Museum (Muzeul Satului Românesc), founded in 1936, one of the first open-air museums in Europe. Although its initial objective was scientific research, during their research in the territory, the team members collected representative items – furniture, ceramics, textiles, tools – and the best way to exhibit them was to place them in peasant houses from different ethnographic areas. This led to the birth of a village in the city centre of Bucharest called The Dimitrie Gusti National Village Museum (Muzeul Național al Satului 'Dimitrie Gusti') (Gusti 2010).

Other considerable initiatives from the last century that aim to preserve and promote the Romanian living heritage together with the accumulated experience have contributed to the creation of a solid ground for the acceptance and implementation of the 2003 Convention.

Brief introduction to the history and current situation of the intangible cultural heritage of Romania

Romania is divided into three historical regions, from the center to the borders: the intra-Carpathian area, outlined by the arch of Carpathian Mountains; the area east of the mountains; and the south of the mountains, bordered by the Danube: Europe's longest river, which separates the Carpathian area from the Balkan Peninsula.

The geographical and historical framework has determined the Romanian culture and its own ethos. The identity of Romania has formed as a mix of ancient Dacian and Roman elements, with many other influences. In Antiquity and the Middle Ages, the most important influences came from the Slavic peoples and the Byzantine Empire.

First scientific concerns for intangible cultural heritage, or folklore (as it was understood in Romania in that era), appear in the second half of the 19th century. The merit goes to Bogdan Petriceicu Haşdeu (1838–1907), Romanian writer and philologist, who approached the folklore from a scientific point of view for the first time, and established its main links with other areas: history, philology, and psychology (Chițimia 1968, 671–74).

Over time, different definitions have been made, and a multitude of terms have been coined to denote this highly-varied field, each of them focusing on a different area; the intense activity, the continuing concern for folklore and ethnography, all generating ‘reservoirs’ for important information about the identity of Romanian people.

The multitude of customs, traditions, rituals and social practices can be divided nowadays into 9 main ethnographic regions: Transilvania, Maramureş, Crişana, Banat, Oltenia, Muntenia, Dobrogea, Moldova, and Bucovina.

In Romania, there are a number of governmental and non-governmental institutions and competent bodies at the national and local level that directly and indirectly play a vital role towards the management and promotion of intangible cultural heritage.

The attributions of main institutions are established by the central piece of ICH legislation: Chapter IV of the Law no. 26/2008 on the protection of intangible cultural heritage. According to article 17, the Ministry of Culture and National Identity (Ministerul Culturii și Identității Naționale) plays a central role and ‘coordinates at the national level the activities of public institutions with responsibilities in the field of intangible cultural heritage’³.

Other specific duties with reference to intangible cultural heritage include developing policies and strategies and providing financial support to the institutions responsible for the identification, conservation, protection, and promotion of intangible cultural heritage of Romania. The Ministry of Culture and National Identity also supports the institutions involved in the implementation of safeguarding strategies for intangible cultural heritage.

However, the institution directly responsible for intangible cultural heritage is the National Heritage Institute (Institutul Național al Patrimoniului), a public institution of national importance, subordinated to the Ministry of Culture and National Identity through the Department of Conservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture (Direcția Conservarea și Promovarea Culturii Tradiționale). According to article 18 of the Law no. 26/2008, its main duties are: ‘to initiate and



³ Legea nr. 26 din 29 februarie 2008 privind protejarea patrimoniului cultural imaterial, Monitorul Oficial, no. 168, 5 March 2008.



Doina, © Institute of Ethnography and Folklore 'Constantin Brăiloiu' – Romanian Academy.



Lad's dances in Romania, © Motoc Ioan.

develop projects and programs regarding conservation, protection and promotion of the intangible cultural heritage', 'coordinate on the methodological level the activities of cultural establishments in the field of intangible cultural heritage', 'implement education programs in the field of traditional cultural expressions'. However, perhaps the most important activity of the Department of Conservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture is related to the organisation and administration of the National Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage (Registrul Național al Patrimoniului Cultural Imaterial).

In line with the provisions of the 2003 Convention (article 13: Other measures for safeguarding), in 2008, Romania designated a competent body for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory: the National Commission for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Comisia Națională pentru Salvagardarea Patrimoniului Cultural Imaterial). It plays a significant role in the activities concerning intangible cultural heritage. It is a scientific body without a legal personality, subordinated to the Ministry of Culture and National Identity. The organisation and the functioning of the Commission, as well as the main responsibilities of this scientific body, are established by the articles 13, 14, and 15 of the Law no. 26/2008, and the Order of the Minister of Culture no. 2102/2014⁴. We mention only some of its duties: 'coordinating the activities tied to protection and promotion of the intangible cultural heritage under the cultural policies of the Ministry of Culture and National Identity', 'developing the National Safeguarding Program', 'conferring the title of Living Human Treasures for domains of the intangible cultural heritage', 'drafting the national lists of the intangible cultural heritage', and elaborating the nomination files for the UNESCO ICH Lists.

Beside the above-presented institutions and bodies, other key institutions and organisations are directly involved in the safeguarding process of ICH in Romania: County Centres for Conservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture (Centrele Județene pentru Conservarea și Promovarea Culturii Tradiționale), research institutes of the Romanian Academy, universities with ethnology programmes, ethnographic museums, cultural institutions, professional associations, NGOs, researchers, and individuals operating in the field of intangible cultural heritage.

All the relevant institutions, organisations, and bodies are actively involved in the safeguarding, development, and promotion of intangible cultural heritage and work in a complementary way.

⁴ *Ordinul Ministrului Culturii nr. 2102 din 19.02.2014 privind organizarea și funcționarea Comisiei Naționale pentru Salvagardarea Patrimoniului Cultural Imaterial.*



Safeguarding measures at national and international level

One of the first safeguarding measures undertaken by Romania at the national level was 'to identify and define various elements of intangible cultural heritage present in its territory', as established by the article 11 of the 2003 Convention. In this way, in 2008, our country initiated a process of drafting two relevant instruments: The Repertoire of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Romania (Repertoriu Național de Patrimoniu Cultural Imaterial – Repertoire, from now on) and The National Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage (Registrul Național al Patrimoniului Cultural Imaterial – Register, from now on).

According to the authors, the Repertoire represents 'a synthesis of all phenomena of the Romanian traditional culture' (Ministerul Culturii și Identității Naționale. Comisia Națională pentru Salvagardarea Patrimoniului Cultural Imaterial 2009, 2014). Furthermore, it is the most important tool for inventorying Romanian intangible cultural heritage elements. The competent body responsible for the entire work was the National Commission for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The Repertoire has now reached the first part of the second volume out of a series of three bilingual volumes (Romanian and French). The five domains of the 2003 Convention provided a starting point in the process of drafting the Repertoire, however, taking into account the diversity and the complexity of the Romanian traditional culture, the entire work has been subdivided into thematic chapters, leading to the following structure:

The first volume (2009) is dedicated to four out of five domains, as defined by the 2003 Convention, and consists of nine thematic chapters: art forms of language and oral traditional expressions; folk music and dance; toys for children and youth; feasts, social practices and rituals; traditional practices for preventing, controlling and curing diseases; traditional craftsmanship; traditional food; language.

The second volume is divided into two parts, both dedicated to the last of the five domains: volume IIA (2014) encompasses and systematises the knowledge about the man and the universe, knowledge of the earth, ethnobotany, and practices concerning the animals, while volume IIB, which is currently under work, will contain elements of intangible cultural heritage referring to the organisation of space and habitat.

The third volume will be dedicated to the intangible cultural heritage of the ethnic minorities of Romania.

In the process of drawing up the Repertoire, the information obtained from the questionnaires that had been addressed to the communities was compared and completed with previous bibliographical and documenting instruments, such as: the *Atlasul etnografic român* (Romanian ethnographic atlas), monographs, field research documents, materials from folklore archives, and others.

The two volumes of the Repertoire that have been published can also be accessed in electronic form, on the official website of Ministry of Culture and National Identity in Romania⁵.

According to the Law no. 26/2008, article 12, the Register is designed as follows:

- a) a list of elements of intangible cultural heritage no longer used or remembered by communities;
- b) a list of intangible cultural heritage elements that are in danger of disappearing;
- c) a list of active elements which represent the existing intangible cultural heritage of Romania.

The second important safeguarding measure undertaken at the national level, in line with provisions of the article 13 of the 2003 Convention, was the creation of a series of legal instruments related to intangible cultural heritage.

As previously mentioned, the Law no. 26/2008 on protecting the intangible cultural heritage is the central piece of legislation in regards to the ICH of Romania. It establishes the general framework for the identification, documentation, research, protection, preservation, promotion, enhancement, transmission, and revitalisation of intangible cultural heritage elements. This law contains relevant provisions concerning intangible cultural heritage: the definitions of the terms and expressions (article 2), the main characteristics of ICH (article 4), the 5 domains of the ICH, the Living Human Treasures title (article 7), the safeguarding measures for ICH (article 9), the National Register of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (article 12), the institutions and bodies responsible for ICH (Chapter IV).

Other legal instruments are:

- Law no. 410/2005 on the acceptance of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted in Paris on 17 October 2003;
- Order of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage no. 2436/2008 on the elaboration of the National Programme for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage⁶;
- Order of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage no. 2491/2009 on granting the title

⁵ Volume I: http://www.cultura.ro/sites/default/files/inline-files/Repertoriu_Patrimoniul_Cultural_Imaterial_vol_I_franceza.pdf; volume IIA: http://www.cultura.ro/sites/default/files/inline-files/Repertoriu_Patrimoniul_Cultural_Imaterial_vol_IIA_romana_si_franceza_0.pdf (accessed: 30 November 2016).

⁶ *Ordinul Ministrului Culturii și Cultelor nr. 2436 din 08.07.2008 privind elaborarea Programului național de salvagardare, protejare și punere în valoare a patrimoniului cultural imaterial*.





Craftsmanship of Horezu ceramics, © Romanian Peasant Museum.



Craftsmanship of Horezu ceramics, © National Heritage Institute, Romania.

of Living Human Treasures⁷ with subsequent additions and amendments by the Order of the Minister of Culture no. 2148/2013⁸;

- Order of the Minister of Culture no. 2102/2014 on the organisation and functioning of the National Commission for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage;
- Law no. 102/2015 on establishing the National Day of the Romanian Traditional Costume⁹.

In line with the provisions of the 2003 Convention, Romania has established the National Program of the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Programul Național pentru Salvagardarea Patrimoniului Cultural Imaterial) through the National Commission of the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The Order of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage no. 2436/2008 on the elaboration of the National Programme for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage provides the main directions of the Program:

- documenting, inventorying, and studying of ICH elements and editing the National Register of ICH through identifying the communities, groups, and individuals that keep the elements of intangible cultural heritage alive;
- safeguarding, conserving, transmitting, and promoting of the ICH elements through special programs and projects, as well as through collaborations and partnerships with institutions, bodies, or specialists;
- valorising ICH through projects that amend legislative and administrative frameworks;
- promoting ICH through programmes and/or projects, raising awareness through campaigns and editorial projects;
- protecting ICH by writing regulatory drafts and strategies to support communities, groups, and individuals that bear elements of ICH in order to preserve and transmit it to the new generations;
- international cooperation in the field of ICH through liaising with homologue institutions and organisms from the countries that have ratified the UNESCO 2003 Convention.

According to the article 14 of the 2003 Convention, the States Parties 'shall endeavour to capacity-building activities for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage'. In this sense, the

⁷ *Ordinul Ministrului Culturii, Cultelor și Patrimoniului Național nr. 2491 din 27.11.2009 pentru aprobarea Regulamentului de acordare a titlului de Tezaur Uman Viu.*

⁸ *Ordinul Ministrului Culturii nr. 2148 privind modificarea alin. (1) al art. 11 din Anexa la Ordinul Ministrului Culturii Cultelor și Patrimoniului Național nr. 2491 din 27.11.2009, pentru aprobarea Regulamentului de acordare a titlului de Tezaur Uman Viu.*

⁹ *Legea nr. 102 din 7.05.2015 privind instituirea Zilei Naționale a Costumului Tradițional din România, Monitorul Oficial, no. 323, 13 May 2015.*



Ministry of Culture and National Identity, in collaboration with the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe under the auspices of UNESCO, and with the support of the Dimitrie Gusti National Village Museum, has organised the National Workshop 'Implementing the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage at the national level', which took place in Bucharest in June 2016.

The workshop was attended by representatives from governmental and non-governmental organisations, communities, institutions, and individual experts who were personally involved in the implementation of the Convention.

The workshop not only contributed to adding value to national efforts of working on the effective implementation of the 2003 Convention, but it gave the main actors of the ICH sector a possibility to exchange experiences.

'In order to ensure better visibility of the intangible cultural heritage and awareness of its significance' (article 16 of the 2003 Convention), Romania has inscribed six elements on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity: 'Căluş ritual' (2008, previously declared a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, in 2005); 'Doina' (2009); 'Craftsmanship of Horezu ceramics' (2012); 'Men's group Colindat, Christmas-time ritual' (2013, multinational file, Romania and Republic of Moldova); 'Lad's dances in Romania' (2015); 'Traditional wall-carpet craftsmanship in Romania and the Republic of Moldova' (2016, multinational file, coordinated by Romania).

One more nomination file was submitted to the Intergovernmental Committee to be examined at its twelfth session (2017): 'Cultural practices associated to the 1st of March' (a multinational file coordinated by Romania and elaborated together with Bulgaria, Macedonia, and the Republic of Moldova).

Two more application files are currently in progress: 'The blouse with *altiță*', the traditional women's blouse characterised by the presence of embroidered fields: the collar (chest and sleeves) called *altiță*, the vertical or diagonal stripes on the sleeves, the *brețară* (a bracelet-like element that supports the sleeves around the wrists) and a pleated element (an ornamental strip under the *altiță*); and 'Oina game', a traditional sport game known since the 14th century, practiced outdoors.

Future directions

The initiatives mentioned above have significantly contributed to the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage of Romania. However, some issues still require our attention. The main

challenges faced by our country are: the insufficient knowledge of the regulatory framework and of the National Safeguarding Programme for ICH, the existence of some confusing provisions within the legal framework regarding the responsibilities of the institutions involved in the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, the local public funding of events promoting false values of cultural heritage, the acculturation process that alters traditional values, the low interest of the youth in continuing the transmission of intangible cultural heritage elements.

In this regard, one of the priorities of the Ministry of Culture and National Identity in the last year was to draw up the most important legal instrument referring to the cultural heritage, including the intangible cultural heritage: Tezele Codului Patrimoniului Cultural (The theses of the cultural heritage code). After being presented for public consultation, in November 2016, the preliminary theses were approved by a decision of the government. The document represents the preliminary stage to elaborate the Codul Patrimoniului Cultural (cultural heritage code), aligning the national legislation to the European principles.

Moreover, in 2016 the Ministry of Culture and National Identity has drafted the Strategy for Culture and National Heritage for 2016–2020. The draft of the Strategy is a document of public medium-term policies and contains information about the strategic vision and the priorities of action, with relevant references to intangible cultural heritage.



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The intangible cultural heritage of Slovenia and the activities of the Coordinator

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We consider it very important to question the possible consequences of our decisions related to the elements, to the bearers in the field, to the considerations of certain elements as suitable for inscribing on the Register, to the proclamation of ICH of special significance, and to the decisions on preparing a nomination for inscription on the Representative List.

Initial reflections on intangible cultural heritage

The first debates in response to the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage started in Slovenia in 2004. In cooperation with the Slovene National Committee of ICOM (Slovenski odbor ICOM), the Institute of Slovene Ethnology (Inštitut za slovensko narodopisje) and the Institute of Ethnomusicology (Glasbenonarodopisni inštitut) – the last two at the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Science and Arts (Znanstvenoraziskovalni center Slovenske akademije znanosti in umetnosti) – and the Slovene Ethnographic Museum have organised a panel discussion on intangible cultural heritage (Zdravič Polič 2004, 257). The participants discussed the relationship between tangible and intangible heritage, research methodologies, and the significance of ICH for Slovene ethnologists and folklorists. Since different terms may be used to translate 'intangible heritage' into Slovene (such as *nematerialna / neopredmetena / neoprijemljiva / neotipljiva / nesnovna dediščina*), the discussion also highlighted the issue of terminology (Slavec Gradišnik 2004, 262). In the same year, the first article discussing the relationship between the tangible and the intangible in ethnographic museums (Čeplak Mencin 2004) and the first Slovene translations of the definitions adopted at the International Conference of ICH Experts held in Paris in 2002 (Smrke and Slavec Gradišnik 2004) were published in *Etnolog* – a periodical publication of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum.

In 2005, the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia (Zavod za varstvo kulturne dediščine Slovenije) published a book *Nesnovna kultura dediščina* (Intangible cultural heritage), presenting the most important ICH elements in Slovenia (Prešeren and Gorenc 2005). The idea of the publication was to draw the attention of both the professional community and the



lay public to the importance of ICH, to promote the political will to ratify the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and to begin implementing actual measures for its safeguarding (Koželj 2005, 11).

Ratification and implementation of the UNESCO Convention

From 2006 to 2008, the project Register of the Intangible Cultural Heritage as an Integral Part of a Uniform Cultural Heritage Register was led by the Institute of Slovene Ethnology at the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Science and Arts. Its aim was to prepare the guidelines for the Register of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Slovenia (Križnar 2008). In 2008, the Act ratifying the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage¹ entered into force, and the Convention was implemented by the new Cultural Heritage Protection Act.² In addition to movable and immovable cultural heritage, it included ICH.³ According to the Act, the public service related to the safeguarding of the ICH is delegated to the Coordinator for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Koordinator varstva nesnovne kulturne dediščine) with the following responsibilities: to identify, document, research, evaluate, and interpret the intangible heritage; to coordinate and independently propose the entry of elements of the intangible heritage in the national register; to advise the bearers of ICH on its integral safeguarding; to coordinate the work of museums and institutes related to the preservation of the intangible heritage of special significance; to coordinate the work of museums and institutes related to the safeguarding of the intangible heritage and cultural spaces connected with it; and to perform other tasks related to the intangible heritage as commissioned by the Ministry of Culture.⁴ Between 2009 and 2010, the function of the Coordinator was performed by the Institute of Slovene Ethnology at the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Science and Arts.

The Cultural Heritage Protection Act forms the basis for the Register of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Register nesnovne kulturne dediščine) kept by the Ministry of Culture. In addition, the

¹ *Zakon o ratifikaciji Konvencije o varovanju nesnovne kulturne dediščine*, Uradni list Republike Slovenije [The Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia] 2/2008, 8 January 2008.

² *Zakon o varstvu kulturne dediščine (ZVKD-1)*, Uradni list Republike Slovenije 16/2008, 15 February 2008.

³ Originally referred to as 'living cultural heritage' and in 2016, following a proposal by the Coordinator, changed to 'intangible cultural heritage' (*Zakon o spremembah in dopolnitvah Zakona o varstvu kulturne dediščine (ZVKD-1D)* [the Act amending the Cultural Heritage Protection Act], Uradni list Republike Slovenije 32/2016, 6 May 2016).

⁴ *Zakon o varstvu kulturne dediščine (ZVKD-1)*, art. 98.

Act also defines the proclamation of ICH elements of special local or national significance.⁵ While the inscription of an element in the Register does not carry any legal consequences for its bearers, the proclamation of an element of special significance includes safeguarding measures, support for its bearers and practitioners, and the engagement of the state in the protection of the area important for the safeguarding of the element (Kovačec Naglič 2012, 15–17). The notion of ICH was also incorporated in the Rules on the Cultural Heritage Register (2009)⁶ and in the Rules on the Registry of Types of Heritage and Protection Guidelines (2010).⁷

The Slovene Ethnographic Museum – the Coordinator for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Slovenia

Since 2003, the Slovene Ethnographic Museum has added ICH to its basic mission of protecting, introducing, and promoting the understanding of material cultural heritage (Smerdel 2003, 25–26). The knowledge about ICH is disseminated at the museum through exhibitions, events, workshops for children and adults, and through lectures and seminars. We have been paying special attention to ICH since 2011 when the Ministry of Culture assigned the function of Coordinator to the museum.

To perform the responsibilities of the Coordinator, the museum has proposed an establishment of a special Intangible Heritage Department with additional employees, however, only one member of the museum staff is assigned to work in the field of ICH on a full-time basis. Some coordination tasks are performed by other museum employees and especially by the curators, who participate in the informal working group in addition to their routine assignments. Museum staff is also active in the field, preserving or re-establishing contacts with bearers of ICH elements, providing them with advice on its safeguarding, assisting in the process of writing applications for the Register, and engaging in education. The activities of bearers are documented with photo and video cameras. Cooperating with the bearers, the Coordinator also prepares proposals and texts for the entry of elements in the Register, cooperates in the proclamation of ICH of special significance, and participates in the preparation of UNESCO nominations which are the responsibility of the Ministry



⁵ Originally as 'living masterpiece of local or national significance', since 2016 'intangible cultural heritage of special local or national significance' (*Zakon o spremembah in dopolnitvah Zakona o varstvu kulturne dediščine [ZVKD-1D]*).

⁶ *Pravilnik o registru kulturne dediščine*, Uradni list Republike Slovenije 66/2009, 21 August 2009.

⁷ *Pravilnik o seznamih zvrsti dediščine in varstvenih usmeritvah*, Uradni list Republike Slovenije 102/2010, 17 December 2010.



Making bobbin lace in Idrija Lace School, 2014. Photo by Nena Židov.



Easter dances and games in Metlika, 2017. Photo by Nena Židov.

of Culture. The representatives of the Coordinator maintain contact with institutions responsible for the safeguarding of ICH abroad and participate in various professional conferences on ICH in Slovenia and abroad.

The Coordinator's working group that consists of ICH experts from different Slovene institutions (Ministry of Culture, regional museums, Institute of Slovene Ethnology, Institute of Ethnomusicology, Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Slovene National Commission for UNESCO, and other experts as required) meets three times annually to examine the initiatives for inscription on the Register, as well as to consult the Coordinator and the Ministry of Culture about the proclamation of ICH elements of special significance, and when making decisions concerning applications to UNESCO lists.

As the National Coordinator, the museum contributes to raising public awareness about ICH. In 2011, a website was set up (<http://www.nesnovnadediscina.si/>) to provide information on the procedures for entering the Register, the activities of the Coordinator, current events, and publications on intangible cultural heritage. The content, available in English, includes short descriptions and photographs of the elements entered in the Register, some of them accompanied by video presentations. Most of them are created by our Department of Ethnographic Film. The museum also promotes the Slovene ICH, particularly the elements and bearers inscribed in the Register and the elements proclaimed to be of special national significance. In order to raise the profile of the elements in the Register, the corporate image of the Coordinator also includes the logo of the Register, which the bearers can use in their printed materials, websites, and products.

Elements with bearers inscribed in the Register have been also presented at museum exhibitions. Carnival groups were presented at the exhibition *The Carnival Heritage of Slovenia* in 2012 (Pukl, Valentinič Furlan, and Židov 2012, 258–59) at the travelling exhibition *Slavic Carnivals* organised by the Forum of Slavic Cultures, first presented to a wider audience in June 2014 at the headquarters of UNESCO in Paris (Rogelj Škafar et al. 2014) and later at the exhibition *Pust ima veliko obrazov* (Carnival with many faces) in Ljubljana Puppet Theatre (2015). In 2012, the proclamation of the 'Traditional production of Carniolan sausages', as intangible heritage of special national significance, was accompanied by a small exhibition about a butcher in Ljubljana who had been producing Carniolan sausages between the two world wars (Dular 2013). Moreover, an exhibition entitled *Velikonočna dediščina Slovenije* (The Easter heritage of Slovenia, 2013) presented elements related to the celebration of Easter ('Škofja Loka Passion play', 'Making Palm Sunday bunches in Ljubno', 'Easter games with Easter eggs', 'Making Bela Krajina Easter eggs'). In 2014, an exhibition *Tradi-*





cionalno izdelovanje papirnatih rož (The traditional making of paper flowers) was shown, presenting the producers of paper flowers and their products. In 2016, an exhibition *Ribniško suhorobarstvo* (Ribnica woodenware, a craft connected with the making of useful wooden objects by hand) was established. All elements inscribed in the Register by 2014 were presented at an exhibition entitled *Nesnovna kulturna dediščina Slovenije skozi fotografijo* (Slovenia's intangible cultural heritage through photographs).

Bearers of the ICH are also presented at various public events. For example, since 2013, we have organised a tournament of the game *pandolo* on the Museum Square, involving the bearers of this traditional activity (Zidarič 2014). During the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Convention, there was also a tasting of culinary goods at the museum, where visitors could also meet the bearers of these elements of heritage (Jerin 2013). During the European Heritage Days in 2015, the museum, in cooperation with the Consortium of Slovenian Craftsmen Centres (Konzorcij rokodelskih centrov Slovenije), organised the first Slovenski Rokodelski Festival (Festival of Slovene crafts), which presented over 40 craftsmen from 9 craft centres in Slovenia.

In 2012, we published *Priročnik o nesnovni kulturni dediščini* (Handbook of intangible cultural heritage) in order to inform the wide public about the basic terms related to ICH in light of the UNESCO Convention and the related inventorying, documenting, safeguarding, preparing applications to UNESCO lists, and about the procedures for inscription on the national Register (Jerin, Pukl, and Židov 2012). In the following year, a calendar with photographs of elements and bearers inscribed in the Register in 2013 was issued; its copies were sent to all the bearers. In 2015, the bilingual publication *Register of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Slovenia (2008–2015)* was published in order to inform ICH experts from abroad about the elements inscribed in the Slovene Register, to increase awareness of the importance of the ICH of Slovenia, and to encourage its bearers to prepare applications for the Register. The publication presented 42 elements inscribed in the Register from 2008 to August 2015, with short descriptions and photographs (Jerin and Židov 2015).

The representatives of the Coordinator participate in professional gatherings connected with ICH at home and abroad and also organise such events themselves. In 2012, the museum organised two panel discussions: on the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage at the local and national levels, and on international visual research on carnivals (Pukl, Valentinič Furlan, and Židov 2012, 259–60). In 2013, we organised an international conference on the promotion of ICH and published the conference proceedings in a bilingual publication (Jerin, Zidarič, and Židov

2014). In 2014, an international conference on documenting and presenting ICH on film was subsequently organised and the proceedings were published in another bilingual publication (Valentinčič Furlan 2015).

By the end of 2016, 56 elements had been entered in the Register (Ministrstvo za kulturo 2016), which itself has existed since 2008. The elements are listed in the following domains: expressions and language (1), performing arts (6), social practices, rituals and festive events (22), knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe (3), and traditional craftsmanship (24). Eight elements were proclaimed as ICH of special national significance ('Škofja Loka Passion play', 'Shrovetide customs in Cerkno', 'Shrovetide in Drežnica and Drežniške Ravne', 'Making Palm Sunday bunches in Ljubno', 'Traditional production of Carniolan sausages', 'Shrovetide rounds of the Kurenti', 'Making Slovene bobbin lace', 'Making Idrija bobbin lace'). In 2016, the 'Škofja Loka Passion play' was the first element from Slovenia to be inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

Final reflections

The Slovene Ethnographic Museum deals with ICH in two ways: by continuing its previous activities in this area, and by dealing with ICH in the spirit of the UNESCO Convention and in its function as Coordinator for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Židov and Jerin 2015). We think that ethnographic museums are suitable institutions for the safeguarding and promotion of ICH, as such activities belong more or less organically to their regular scope of activities. Dealing with ICH also gives us more opportunities for research, whilst also making us look with fresh eyes at certain basic concepts, such as heritage and tradition, including their re-created and new kinds (Židov 2014, 158). The Convention also requires us to navigate between politics and professional disciplines (Knific 2010, 129–31).

Some specialists in Slovenia feel that there are unresolved issues related to ICH in the spirit of the Convention and in connection with both the Slovene Register and legislation (Židov 2014; Kunej 2015). We consider it very important to question the possible consequences of our decisions related to the elements, to the bearers in the field, to the considerations of certain elements as suitable for inscribing on the Register, to the proclamation of ICH of special significance, and to the decisions on preparing a nomination for inscription on the Representative List.





Door-to-door rounds of Kurenti in Markovci, 2015. Photo by Nena Židov.



The making of trniči cheese on Velika planina, 2013. Photo by Nena Židov.

The implementation of the UNESCO Convention is undeniably a great professional challenge and represents an enormous responsibility towards the bearers of ICH. Perhaps not all specialists involved are sufficiently aware of this responsibility. In addition, one serious problem in Slovenia is the lack of adequately trained personnel. Since only one person in the museum is employed full-time to deal with ICH in the spirit of the 2003 Convention, the required work could not possibly be accomplished without the cooperation of museum curators. Moreover, a rather limited number of people work in the field of ICH at the Ministry of Culture. We are thus of the opinion that the work to bring inscriptions to UNESCO lists urgently requires additional personnel.

The Coordinator's work so far has undoubtedly had an effect on the increased awareness of the importance of ICH in Slovenia and of the elements and bearers included in the Register. The bearers are also becoming increasingly interested in their elements being inscribed in the Register or proclaimed as elements of national significance, as well as becoming involved in applying for inscription on the UNESCO Representative List. Furthermore, intangible cultural heritage is included in education and is the subject of a number of different projects. Many local communities are already aware of the importance of their intangible heritage for the local identity and recognisability.



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Networks of intangible cultural heritage experts in Hungary

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The database can be joined by anybody because it is believed that every individual willing to help – whether to assist the communities or to spread the word making the principles of the Convention 2003 more visible – can be very important in the entire process of implementation.

In order to identify, document, and develop a tailor-made system of local safeguarding and preservation of intangible cultural heritage elements, as well as facilitate their promotion, transmission and access, the cooperation and efforts of experts are crucial.

Different networks were established on the national level by the body responsible for implementing the safeguarding tasks nationally – the Directorate of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Hungarian Open Air Museum¹ – such as the Network of Experts. The realisation of its tasks is locally facilitated by the County Coordinators.

The Hungarian Open Air Museum (Skanzen), as an integrated institution of heritage protection, is able to realise the collection, documentation, archivisation, and the functional interpretation of tangible-built-intangible heritage, and at the same time raise questions.² The Skanzen possesses a diversified civil and professional network (see Káldy and Nagyné Batári 2014 for details), moreover, it functions as a well-working knowledge centre, with its functions spanning from giving folk architectural advice to training teachers and museum managers. In such circumstances, a community and a professional network related to intangible cultural heritage have emerged.

Their main purposes are to raise awareness on the importance of safeguarding the ICH, to make the principles of the Convention 2003 more visible, to foster the exchange of different herit-

¹ For information about the Directorate, see Csonka-Takács 2010, 48.

² For more information about the Skanzen, see: skanzen.hu/en.





Dr. Eszter Csonka-Takács in the panel with Iwona Opetčeska Tatarčevska and Dr. Velika Stojkova Serafimovska (on her right) and with Vanda Illés and Professor Jacek Purchla, the chair of the panel, on the left, October 2016. Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

age-safeguarding measures and strategies, and to attract the widest possible public attention towards the importance of cultural diversity.³

Organisational structure

The involvement and active participation of competent experts in a wide range of fields are essential for implementing and achieving the diverse tasks regarding the safeguarding and preservation of intangible cultural heritage elements. Each expert contributes to and participates in the realisation of specific tasks according to his or her own localisation, field and area of expertise. The coordination of locally participating experts in various fields and the fulfilment of the state's obligations regarding the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage of the country, as prescribed in the UNESCO 2003 Convention, can be greatly facilitated by the existence and operation of a well-organised network of experts. 'Implementation could be helped by a network of researchers, cultural experts and representatives of NGOs' (Csonka-Takács 2010, 50).



Voluntary Network of Experts

In Hungary, the Network of Experts is a database of individuals, groups, and organisations involved in the field of intangible cultural heritage at the local level. The establishment and operation of this wide-ranging network draw upon the existing networks of non-governmental organisations together with networks of scientific, educational, and cultural institutions and their active, locally operating members. The Network of Experts includes members of non-governmental cultural organisations; individuals working in centres of culture, research and education; as well as those managing museums and public collections competent in any of the various domains of intangible cultural heritage; at the same time, it possesses a comprehensive knowledge of the given community or region, its attributes and cultural life.

³ *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Paris, 17 October 2003*, art. 13 (available online: www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/convention).



The network includes:

1. scientific experts (researchers, museologists, educators, university students): university departments and institutions, museums and research centres;
2. membership of relevant non-governmental organisations nationally: folk art associations, revival heritage groups, homeland interest groups, settlement preservation associations;
3. cultural experts (culture managers, exhibit and public collections and archive managers and educators): culture centres, archives, art schools.

Experts are directly involved in the heritage safeguarding work of individual bearer communities or regions by contributing to the identification, mapping, and inventorying of the local heritage elements, promoting the development and implementation of strategies for the safeguarding of such elements, encouraging communities to propose elements for the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage (Szellemi Kulturális Örökség Nemzeti Jegyzéke), and providing guidance and direction throughout the nomination process, providing information and raising awareness at the local level, as well as encouraging and assisting the development of local educational programmes to promote particular elements.

The database can be joined by anybody because it is believed that every individual willing to help – whether to assist the communities or to spread the word making the principles of the Convention 2003 more visible – can be very important in the entire process of implementation. A form has to be filled out by each expert, stating their field of expertise and contact details, which they agree to place on a publicly accessible database. This database is on the website of ICH in Hungary, maintained by the Directorate of ICH in the Skanzen.⁴ The communities interested in nominating an element and groups organising an event can freely search for a suitable expert suitable.

County Coordinators

The Directorate relies on the mediating work of county rapporteurs. The Skanzen created this professional network based on the institutions of the county museum system to coordinate and facilitate the promotion, the awareness-raising, and to give professional guidance to the commu-

⁴ See: szellemikulturalisorkseg.hu/index0.php?name=szakmai_halozat_tagok.

nities. By selecting an expert – most commonly an ethnographer⁵ – from each county, a group of professionals has been formed, which helps in mediating information, informing and looking up communities, and preparing the nomination document. They provide professional advice for interested communities and organise orientation forums with the participation of the Directorate, facilitating contact between the involved parties. The tasks of the County Coordinators are to initiate and coordinate the documentation of intangible cultural heritage elements in their counties and regions, to organise local forums and meetings, to transmit information to communities, to provide professional counseling to affected communities, to link the communities with the network of experts, and to maintain continuous contact with the Directorate of ICH.

The Directorate provides regular training and informational sessions for the County Coordinators and also organises 2–3 meetings annually to exchange ideas and experiences and to coordinate specific tasks.

Heritage elements included in the National Inventory in the latest years are one of the great examples of the hard work of the county rapporteurs.⁶



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⁵ The list of members of the coordinators is available online: szellemikulturalisorkseg.hu/index0.php?name=f41_megyei_refereensek.

⁶ For elements inscribed on the National Inventory, see: szellemikulturalisorkseg.hu/index0_en.php?name=en_f22_elements.

Intangible cultural heritage in the system of cultural heritage protection in Poland

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... an integrated approach to safeguarding is not only possible but in fact desirable. Sometimes by protecting the tangible heritage (for instance, certain landscape designs), we can simultaneously protect intangible heritage as well (for instance, specific practices related to that particular place). Hence, the preservation of the landscape including its natural environment is a prerequisite for the protection of heritage.

UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage laid out in Paris on 17 October 2003,¹ entered into force in Poland on 16 August 2011. By submitting the ratification documents, Poland became the 135th state that acceded to it. It is worth noticing, however, that intangible heritage had already been included in the system of protection of cultural heritage in Poland before. There had not been a law however that would be dedicated exclusively to the protection of intangible cultural heritage neither before 2011 nor after the ratification of the Convention. The subject of this article is to signal the place of intangible heritage in the system of the safeguarding of cultural heritage in Poland.

We should start by noticing that the legal framework for the protection of cultural heritage in Poland, both tangible and intangible, should be seen, above all, in the context of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2 April 1997.² It contains a direct reference to the issue of protection of national heritage (Article 5 of the Constitution), cultural heritage (Article 6 section 2 of the Constitution) and cultural goods (Article 6 sections 1 and 73 of the Constitution). Legal protection of cultural heritage is based on the preamble and the provisions of Articles 5, 6, and 73 of the Constitution. In the official introduction to the Constitution, we can read:

... beholden to our ancestors for their labours, their struggle for independence achieved at great sacrifice, for our culture rooted in the Christian heritage of the Nation and in universal human values, recalling the best traditions of the First and Second Republic, obliged **to bequeath to future generations** [emphasis mine – K.Z.] all that is valuable from over one thousand years' heritage ...

¹ Dziennik Ustaw [Journal of Laws] 2011 no. 172 item 1018, 8 February 2011.

² Dziennik Ustaw 1997 no. 78 item 483, 2 April 1997.





Professor Katarzyna Zalasińska, Professor Magdalena Gawin and Professor Jacek Purchla during the Forum, October 2016. Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

The preamble thus refers to the value of cultural heritage and points out the primary purpose of its protection: preserving it in the best possible condition and passing it on to future generations. The precise specification of the matter that is indicated in the preamble as protected is made in the above-mentioned Article 5 of the Constitution: 'The Republic of Poland shall safeguard the independence and integrity of its territory and ensure the freedoms and rights of persons and citizens, the security of citizens, safeguard the national heritage and shall ensure the protection of the natural environment, pursuant to the principles of sustainable development', in Article 6 section 1: 'The Republic of Poland shall provide conditions for the people's equal access to the products of culture which are the source of Nation's identity, continuity and development', and section 2: 'The Republic of Poland shall provide assistance to citizens of Poland living abroad in maintaining their links with the national cultural heritage'.

Article 5 of the Constitution, which states that the Republic of Poland safeguards national heritage, thus defines it as one of the basic objectives of the state. Furthermore, the clarification of the role of heritage is provided in the Article 6 of the Constitution, which states the obligation of making it available to the public and ensuring equal access to it. The State is also obliged to provide this access to citizens of Poland residing abroad to assist them in keeping ties with it. Article 6 of the Constitution refers to a broader category than Article 5, as it speaks about the dissemination and provision of cultural goods, and not merely 'safeguarding' it, i.e. the concern for preservation to an undiminished degree.

Articles 5 and 6 of the Constitution should be seen as general provisions of the axiological standard, which set out the basic and inalienable tasks of the state. Thus, it should be recognised that, in the light of the provisions of the Basic Law, the constitutional obligation of the State is to create conditions for the proper performance of tasks related to the protection of cultural heritage, including its material and non-material creations. At the same time, Articles 5 and 6 of the Constitution do not provide grounds to limit the scope of these provisions only to the material heritage. Therefore, they constitute a directive for an inclusive perception of all elements of heritage, and thus should logically exclude fragmentation of the safeguarding systems, though this fragmentation is observable in international law (Schreiber 2016, 391–94). This means that the protection of the intangible heritage is grounded in the Constitution.

On the statutory level, there are no regulations in Poland directly dedicated to the protection of intangible cultural heritage. Nevertheless, this issue is inscribed in the activities focused on the protection of monuments and the activities of cultural institutions, particularly museums. Above all,



the protection of the intangible heritage is embedded in the mission statement of museums, as defined in Article 1 of the Museums act, dated 21 November 1996:³

The museum is a non-profit organisational unit that aims at collecting and continuously protecting the material and immaterial goods constituting the natural and cultural heritage of mankind; informing about the values and contents of collections; disseminating knowledge on the fundamental values of the history, science and culture of Poland and the World; shaping cognitive and aesthetic sensitivity; and facilitating the use of the gathered collections.

Of course, the activities of museums, as explicitly stated in Article 2 of the Museums act, focus mainly on collecting, cataloguing, researching, storing, and ensuring security and maintenance, but it is also worth mentioning the other tasks through which museums carry out their mission:

- arranging permanent and temporary exhibitions;
- organising research activities and scientific expeditions, including archaeological explorations;
- conducting educational activities;
- supporting and promoting artistic and cultural dissemination activities;
- making collections available for educational and scientific purposes.

Particular attention should be paid to the task of dissemination of culture, which enables the museum to go beyond its classical framework and become an institution of remembrance that actively engages in social processes, thus strengthening the protection of heritage, especially its intangible manifestations. Thus, rather than remaining mere guardians of collections that record the identity of past generations, the museums have begun to play an important role in the field of education, as well as in promoting and pursuing artistic activity and facilitating the spread of culture. It is partly due to the fact that they have started filling the gaps in areas where the activities of other institutions (e.g. schools, cultural centres) have weakened or in some places disappeared. It should also be noted that museums, despite their unquestionable financial problems, have built an extremely strong position within the framework of protection of cultural heritage in Poland, taking on tasks far beyond their usual scope of duties.

Another element of the system of safeguarding cultural heritage that affects the protection of intangible heritage in Poland is the regulation concerning the protection of monuments. It should be recalled that according to Article 2 of the Convention, the concept 'intangible

³ Dziennik Ustaw 1997 no. 5 item 24 with further changes.

cultural heritage' includes 'practices, ideas, messages, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces related to them', thus material objects, often corresponding to the legal definition of a monument, defined in the glossary in Article 3 of the Monuments protection and preservation act, dated 23 July 2003:⁴

immovable or movable property, parts or assemblies thereof, created by humans or related to human activity and constituting the testimony of past times or events, the preservation of which is in the public interest due to its historical, artistic and scientific value.

Furthermore, the Article 6 of this Act further clarifies that movable monuments are, in particular, musical instruments, folk art and handicraft products as well as other ethnographic objects, the preservation of which is an important condition for transmitting the non-material heritage to future generations.

There is also no doubt that the protection of intangible heritage is also affected by another element of the system of cultural heritage protection in Poland: the phenomena of intangible heritage that are inscribed in specific cultural landscapes. In such cases, an integrated approach to safeguarding is not only possible but in fact desirable. Sometimes by protecting the tangible heritage (for instance, certain landscape designs), we can simultaneously protect intangible heritage as well (for instance, specific practices related to that particular place). Hence, the preservation of the landscape including its natural environment is a prerequisite for the protection of heritage. It is worth mentioning here that the Monuments protection and preservation act introduces the form of legal protection of the cultural landscape in Poland, understood as 'human-perceived space, containing natural elements and products of civilisation, historically shaped by natural factors and human activities' (Article 3 clause 14 of the Act). Municipal councils may, in fact, create cultural parks to preserve the cultural landscapes and to preserve the distinctive landscape areas with immovable monuments characteristic of the local building and settlement traditions (Article 16 section 1 of the Act).

The restrictions pointed in the Act that pertain to the territories of cultural parks, allow a harmonious shaping of the landscape which respects the tangible but also the intangible heritage in a given area. Notwithstanding, the Monuments protection and preservation act provides protection of historical landscape designs through listing them in the register of monuments. An example of a protected monument as a landscape covering numerous architectural



⁴ Dziennik Ustaw 2003 no. 162 item 1568 with further changes

objects is Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, listed in 1999 in the UNESCO World Heritage List. It is worth recalling that in the justification of the entry, we can read:

Kalwaria Zebrzydowska is a unique monument of culture, in which the cultural landscape serves as a framework for the symbolic representation of the Passion of Christ in the form of chapels and alleys. Thus, it is a cultural landscape of great beauty and great spiritual value in which the elements of nature and those of human creation beautifully harmonise. Counter-reformation at the end of the 16th century led to creating many such designs in Europe. Kalwaria Zebrzydowska is a unique example of this type of landscape on a large scale; it integrates natural beauty, spiritual goals and the concept of an ideal Baroque park⁵.

This entry was a sign of an idea emerging in UNESCO of an integrated approach to heritage protection. Taking into consideration the religious practices performed in this place as an intangible element and linking it with material heritage, it indicates a desirable direction for thinking about landscape as a type of cultural space that is complemented by elements of intangible heritage.

A further sub-system of protection of cultural heritage in Poland that is strengthening the conditions for the protection of the intangible cultural heritage comprises of the activities of libraries and archives, understood as institutions of remembrance in accordance with *UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Preservation of, and Access to, Documentary Heritage Including in Digital Form*, which was adopted during the 38th session of UNESCO General Conference (Paris, 3–18 November 2015). Documentary heritage resources provide the means for understanding social, political, collective as well as personal history and culture. The activity of libraries and archives can, therefore, strengthen intergenerational transmission.

Ensuring the effective protection of the intangible heritage in Poland is a significant challenge, and in its nature, it is a problem of changing the philosophy of protection than of significant legislative changes. In fact, it is necessary to change the approach to the duties related to protection, which requires primarily an understanding of the specifics of intangible heritage, for which the main form of expression is, in fact, the human being. The ephemeral and elusive nature of intangible heritage is a result of this, and thus its preservation is limited by human memory. This brings the need for a continuous transmission of this heritage to succeeding communities, groups and individuals. Therefore, even though intangible heritage is inscribed in the system of protection of cultural heritage in Poland, the principles of its functioning still require change and improvement.

⁵ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/905>.

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What do we mean when we say ICH? Or does the Galičnik wedding constitute 'intangible cultural heritage'?

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Because cultural practices can sustain imagined or imaginary meanings from past generations, they – together with the authenticities they claim to carry – are always at risk of becoming redefined in the service of state ideologies and commercial interests.

Even though the political elites have recognised the significance of the 2003 Paris Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and have been prompt in having it translated and ratified, the Macedonian Law on the protection of cultural heritage¹ has still not been adapted in terms of terminology and definitions regarding intangible cultural heritage.

The debate on terminology is still ongoing and has reached the level of specific public initiatives, such as the question of expanding the definition of intangible heritage in Macedonia, or the question of what types/genres of culture(s) is/are included or excluded in this system. We have reached a certain level of maturity and awareness on the national level, but still face a number of serious challenges. We lack specific, focused policies, as well as activities and measures regarding this type of heritage, especially initiatives from five scholarly institutions which are authorised to safeguard intangible cultural heritage. Unfortunately, the community of experts is still struggling with starting-point questions, such as: what is living heritage? Or: should we safeguard the intangible culture that is somewhat hibernating in the collective memory and is not actively practised by the communities, even if there is still an awareness of its existence? What of the practices that have been already 'heritagised', such as the Galičnik wedding, or others that have been 'festivalised', professionalised, and commercialised? Although it is debatable whether the Galičnik wedding is 'living' or 'frozen', it seems that the ritual is being stewarded, albeit by the local council, in ways that support interests and ideologies of the state and corporate entities with which the state has commercial relationships.

¹ *Zakon za zaštitu na kulturnoto nasledstvo*, Služben vesnik na Republika Makedonija [Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia] no. 20, 2 April 2004.





Coca Cola in the Galičnik wedding ritual 'Sharing the pogacha (ritual bread)', 2017, © AEGEE-Skopje.

The Galičnik wedding is a commercialised village ritual that has been transformed, reconstructed, and ‘festivalised’ from an ordinary, everyday-life wedding ritual complex. It has become a singular performance through which a cultural practice has been fashioned into a national symbol. In its current iteration, it blurs the boundary between state and corporate-sponsored ritual, and between tourist festival, staged folklore, and life-cycle event. Here, I am arguing that on the one hand, the institutionalised systems of safeguarding ICH are always embedded in and affected by political processes of heritagisation and recontextualisation, but on the other hand, the ways that these processes affect the cultural practices vary greatly in degree and manner even in the same national context.

The Galičnik wedding festivity is organised every year in the village of Galičnik in the Mijak region in western Macedonia. Currently, the Macedonian Ministry of Culture and about twenty corporate entities sponsor the two-day festival. Centring on the wedding of an actual couple with family roots in Galičnik, the festival features its families, friends, and volunteers performing detailed wedding rituals and wearing traditional costumes and traditional items passed down from relatives or other families from Galičnik. Hundreds of visitors, mostly Macedonians (but some foreigners as well), attend the wedding each year. The public and most Macedonians view it as an ‘authentic’ and nationally important practice of rural Macedonian folk culture.

The Galičnik wedding became a state-sponsored reconstruction of the traditional wedding that emphasised the distinct ethnic Macedonian heritage in the period of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia. It was launched as a reenactment in 1974 by the local council (*mesna zaednica*) of the village of Galičnik. This organisation remains responsible for acquiring funds for the wedding and its annual organisation. The changing nature of the festival became apparent during the 1980s and 1990s. A hotel built in 1980 on the western edge of the village also supported and confirmed its status as a tourist destination.

In 1991, a competition was held to select a young couple to be married at the event and has been organised annually since then. The competition transformed the wedding from a complete re-enactment to the marriage of an actual couple – with the primary (if not the only) change being the introduction of the wedding ceremony performed in the church. The wedding had thus been subject to state-supported processes of heritagisation and festivalisation for several decades. This demonstrates how earlier processes of recontextualisation have resulted in a reconstruction of the local tradition as a symbol of national identity in the form of a tourist festival, sustained by a local council of part-time residents in partnership with an event-planning firm. For purposes of tourism,





the Galičnik Wedding is constructed as 'intangible culture', though it fails to meet the UNESCO definitions of ICH. We argue that the state and commercial sponsors are in a way 'safeguarding' the Galičnik wedding by ensuring its continuation every year through this state sponsored ritual. This commodification effect is clear in the case of the Galičnik wedding, as Macedonian tourists come to the village to consume a musical and ritual experience of their national identity, an experience that is often visceral and emotional. I am not suggesting that the Galičnik wedding is not meaningful, important, or significant to its participants. On the contrary, its significance to Macedonians serves not only as a vehicle for representing historical understandings of oppressed Macedonian people but is also often experienced as a symbolic expression of the process of safeguarding ICH in Macedonia. Past and present political and economic processes connected to ICH should always be carefully considered, especially when they are not as clear as in the case of the Galičnik wedding. Because these cultural practices can sustain imagined or imaginary meanings from past generations, they – together with the authenticities they claim to carry – are always at risk of becoming redefined in the service of state ideologies and commercial interests. Therefore we, as scholars engaging in ICH from all possible perspectives, in the face of such consequences need to claim the ethical and moral responsibility to continue asking which elements of ICH are to be safeguarded and why.



‘World is sacred’ worldview as an element of intangible cultural heritage in the modern world

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... the bearers preserve not only a great number of local songs, dances, stories, customs, but also – which is crucial – the principles of the relation between the human and the world...

We, the people, endanger ourselves and the world: consumption, exploitation of natural sources, a variety of conflicts – it all leads to a deadlock.

In the search for ways to survive and remain positive, the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) can contribute to modern environmentalist and ecological movements by encouraging people to care about their surroundings and avoid consumerism by engaging in sustainable development practices and exploring their cultural heritage (literature, art, theatre, cinema, etc.).

All manifestations of ICH are important. However, in today's world, it is perhaps the most crucial to distinguish them and join efforts to develop the essence of every tradition – together with its worldview and outlook towards life. The core viewpoint of traditional cultures is the dimension of sacredness, which constitutes the world and existence. Everything that exists – both the visible and the invisible, including human beings and their presence – is sacred.

Perhaps it is a risky topic, however, in my opinion, anyone who had carefully studied their own and other people's cultural heritage has experienced the concept of the sacredness of this world.

There are many academic and scientific publications that analyse the notion of sacredness (*sacre*, *sacrum*, *sanctum*, etc.) from the perspective of religious studies, ethnology, mythology, psychology, and other related fields, including the analysis of the detachment of *sacrum* and its manifestations (hierophanies) from the everyday phenomena that constitute the sphere of *profanum*; or vice versa – the claim that the division between the *sacrum* and *profanum* is absent; or other various approaches to nature of *sacrum* and its irrational character, experiencing *sacrum*, or answering the question whether it is feasible to describe the experience using language (Beresnevičius 2004a, 2004b, 2004c,





Vida Šatkuskienė, with Professor Cai Hua during the Forum, October 2016. Photo by Paweł Kobek,
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2004d, 2004e, 2005a, 2005b; Daujotytė 2016; Eliade 1996, 1997; Otto 1923; Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė 1997; Vaitkevičius 2009, 2016). There is no need to develop a theoretical discourse here – it is more important to point out some aspects that attempt to tackle the problem at hand.

First of all, when we consider the experience of field research, it should be noted that the personal contacts with the bearers of traditions that the ICH field researchers engage in frequently result in a realisation that the cultural artefacts and the immaterial links that tie the generations of people with their environment through traditions are in fact living phenomena, or at least they are remembered as such. We can also observe that the bearers preserve not only a great number of local songs, dances, stories, customs (that in turn preserve beliefs, mythical notions, remains of ritual practices, etc.), but also – which is crucial – the principles of the relation between the human and the world, and respectively, human behaviour.¹

Through years of various activities with my colleagues at the Lithuanian National Culture Centre (Lietuvos nacionalinis kultūros centras, or LNCC)² and preparations for my weekly radio programmes *Ryto rasa krito* (The morning dew fell),³ I have been exploring the essential matters of the traditional outlook and worldview and discovering that the world, together with even its tiniest elements, contains the primal cosmos – a harmonious model of the human being, home, nature; the micro- and macro-cosmos alike; and all aspects of being – including the past and the present – are linked by mental, symbolic, and mythical connections; finally, that a human being is an organic part of the world. I would like to stress that holiness manifests in many ways: as the beginning of life, spirit, interchanging life and death – here and beyond; the revelation of the eternity and the universe; as power; the gods' and ancestors' participation in everyday life, etc.



¹ A villager's relation with his environment was discussed during seminars held in 2012 by the Institute of Inherent Culture (Prigimtinės kultūros institutas) in Lithuania: 'Vietos ir žmonės' ('Places and people', prigimtine.lt/lt/seminarai/ii-seminaras/programa) on 3–4 March and 'Vieta ir erdvė: suvokti, įsibūti, komunikuoti' ('Place and space: comprehending, getting familiar and communicating', prigimtine.lt/lt/seminarai/iii-seminaras/programa) on 29 June – 2 July. It was also analysed by other scholars in their papers: Vykintas Vaitkevičius (2012), Viktorija Daujotytė-Pakerienė (Daujotytė 2012, 2013), and Daiva Vaitkevičienė (2012).

² In 1998, the LNCC initiated interdisciplinary conference cycles 'Gimtis. Būtis. Mirtis. Pasaulėjūros ir pasaulėjautos aspektai' ('Birth. Existence. Death. Aspects of attitude and worldview') and held conferences: 'Gimties samprata tradicinėje kultūroje' (The concept of birth from perspectives of traditional culture) in 1998, 'Lyčių samprata tradicinėje kultūroje' (Gender conceptions in traditional culture) in 1999, 'Žmogaus samprata tradicinėje kultūroje' (The concept of a human being in traditional culture) in 2000, 'Žmogus ir gyvenamoji aplinka' (A human being and his cultural environment) in 2006. From 1996 onwards LNCC has held annual themed theoretical and practical seminars for Lithuanian ethnic culture specialists. It also publishes the ethnic culture journal „Liudvės kultūra" (Folk culture), and many series of books, DVDs, CDs, and electronic books Gyvoji tradicija (Living tradition), etc.

³ The radio can be accessed online via the mediatheque of the Lithuanian National Radio and Television (Lietuvos nacionalinis radijas ir televizija): www.lrt.lt/mediateka/irasai#/content/ryto%20rasa%20krito.

In many places and cultural spaces such as Lithuania, there are rivers, lakes, mountains, stones, and other objects of nature and landscape that are considered sacred.⁴ It is said that the earth is sacred,⁵ the fire is holy,⁶ and that the notion of the mother is sacred.⁷ There is also a sacred time when people find themselves in a transformative point in their lives; it can be a year, a month, or a day and night (time is believed to hold various powers depending on the sun's position in the sky or the phase of the moon).

These are the most common examples, yet it seems that in every phenomenon, we can find these manifestations of holiness. For example, even a drop of dew (I personally like this symbol very much) reflects the primal essence of light and darkness; of life and destruction, since it contains both the features of the sun and the night (Šatkauskienė 2009). The flora and fauna are believed to speak in the name of the eternity as prophets, e.g. cuckoos and wolves⁸ (Racénaitė 2011, 315); as teachers (bees⁹); as guardians; as incarnations of the ancestors, gods and spirits; as messengers and habitats (Beresnevičius 1990, 214). Moreover, let us consider the stone – a symbol of the

⁴ 'Holy' in Lithuanian is *šventas*. Many names of places contain the full word or its root *švent-*, for example, Šventežeris (holy lake) in Lazdijai region, Šventkalnis (holy mountain) in Šilalė region, Šventragis (holy headland) – a village in Marijampolė region, Šventas akmuo (holy stone) in Pugainiai village in the Vilnius region, the river Šventoji in East Lithuania – the biggest tributary of the Neris, Šventupis (holy river) in Šiauliai region, and many others.

⁵ The holiness of the Earth is a constant feature of the agricultural life. This notion prevails in various Lithuanian sayings, e.g. 'How can the holy ground still carry you!' (*Kaip da tave šventą žemelę nešioja!*; it is used while addressing a bad person); riddles, where the answer is the Earth or the Ground, e.g. 'It has always been and will be holy, but it has never been and will never be in heaven' (*Šventa buvo ir bus, bet danguje nebuvę ir nebus*). The examples are taken from the Dictionary of the Lithuanian Language (Lietuvių kalbos institutas 2005). One of the most significant expressions of the respectful relationship with the Earth is kissing the ground before or after work, or before or instead of prayers, e.g. 'Whether you kiss the ground or the body of Christ, the Church festival will be good' (*Ar žemę pabučiuos, ar mükele, tai lygūs bus atlaidai!*); 'After the prayer one [should] kiss the ground and bow, then touch the ground with the forehead three times' (*Po maldos [reikia] žemutę pabučiuot ir pasikloniot, kaktą prie žemės triskart priglaust!*); 'The Earth is sacred – it feeds us and carries us' (*Žemutė šventa – mumis peni ir nešioja*). The examples are cited from the Database of the Heritage of Lithuanistics (Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos institutas, Lietuvių kalbos institutas, Lietuvos istorijos institutas, and Matematikos ir informatikos institutas 2003).

⁶ There are remaining Lithuanian beliefs: 'Children should not be allowed to spit into fire: the fire is sacred' (Negalima leisti vaikams spjaudyti į ugnį: ugnis šventa); 'It is not allowed to urinate into the fire: it is sacred and it can get angry' (Negalima šlapintis į ugnį: ji šventa ir gali užpykti); prayers against blaze: 'Saint Gabija, be one of us' (*Šventa Gabija, būk sava; Gabija is the goddess of fire*); 'Before sleep, rake the fire, make the cross sign and say: "Saint Gabija, be peaceful in this place". If you do this, the fire will not escape' (*Einant gulti, reik užkarstyti ugnele, peržegnoti ir sakyti: „Šventa Gabija, būk rami ant vietas.“ Jei teip padarysi, tai ugnelė neišeis*). The examples are cited from the Database of the Heritage of Lithuanistics (Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos institutas, Lietuvių kalbos institutas, Lietuvos istorijos institutas, and Matematikos ir informatikos institutas 2003).

⁷ A Lithuanian legend says that if a person gets lost in the forest and if the devil is misleading him, he should pronounce his mother's name, because it is sacred and will scare away the devil; the story was told by Sandra Zakarienė at the Competition of Lithuanian Storytellers 'Žodzis žodži gena' in 2016.

⁸ In Lithuania, there are widespread beliefs that cuckoos and owls can announce the near future of a person by cuckooing and hooting: rich and happy year, marriage, death, the birth of a baby; the birds symbolically embody the deities of destiny and happiness. Other animals can also unveil the signs of the destiny: stork, pigeon, cat, squirrel, wolf, etc.

⁹ As Gintaras Beresnevičius (1995, 106) states in his book *Balty religinės formos*, it is believed that the legendary Prussian king Vaidevutis used the metaphor of a bee during his speeches to the people and taught them about a model of society that resembles a colony of bees. He also advised his people to elect a king in the way bees do. In fact, bees communicate by

inanimate nature which can express the essence of life: it is believed that it can suffer, move, even bleed; not to mention that it is believed that it remembers the beginning of the world and keeps in itself the footprints of gods.¹⁰ And the celestial bodies, in the same way as people, are believed to form a family: in Lithuania, the sun is the mother, the moon – the father, and the Earth and the stars are their children. Moreover, it is believed that humans can be a part of this family, for example, when an orphan gets married, she is believed to be given away by her celestial family.¹¹

As it was mentioned, the Earth used to be considered sacred and called 'mother', or 'feeder'. It bears fruit and accepts after death, therefore, farming was considered a sacred act (Laurinkienė 2013; Ūsaitytė 2000, 2002, 2003) through human work, which is carried out as a ritual of establishing the relationship with earth. Consequently, craftsmanship as an act of creation is believed to charge spiritual power and cosmic order into an object (Eliade 1997, 21–39; Marcinkevičienė 2007, 25–30, 141–54, 155–66); time was also organised in relation to the cosmic order of work and celebration, songs, and music. The sutartinės also have ritual roots (Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė 1995, 2015).

There are undoubtedly plenty of other similar examples concerning nature, human life, time, rituals, creative processes, work, and of the organisation of various other activities. Sacredness is thus not just an object of theoretical insights – it can be experienced through the modes of unity, harmony, peace, elevation, or even through a glow.

ICH helps us to comprehend that we have been linked with the entirety of life since the beginning of the world and that we share a bond with all of the world's phenomena.

With regard to the approach to ICH not only as a set of individual items but also as a kind of expression of worldview and outlook towards life, it can be stated that ICH is the ultimate collection of inherited cultural forms (including contemporary manifestations). Therefore, there



expressive combinations of flying trajectories and spins to show that they found nectar. It is called the bee dance; also birds and their mating rituals inspired people during the formation of dance culture. For example, one of the oldest and prominent Lithuanian dance Suktinis shows a bee carrying honey. Moreover, bees are frequently considered to be sacred creatures.

¹⁰ The statements are based on the motives from Lithuanian legends. For example, the stone named Mokas and his family [sic] was crossing the river when his wife turned back and drowned. He then stayed on the shore to grieve. There are also stories of stone-turned people, usually newly-wed couples. In some stories concerning Mokas, if the stone is attempted to be split open, the blood spills out from it.

In Lithuania, the stories about the origins of stones that are hollow are popular: they say that the hollow voids are the footprints of God, the devil, the witch, Virgin Mary, etc.

Lithuanian etiological legends say that in the beginning of time, when God was creating the world, the enemy – the evil giant Spjudas – tried to interfere: he would sow stone seeds or spit on the ground – this is how stones appeared on earth.

The stories and motives are from the following sources: Vėlius 1995, 47–59; Sauka 1962, 424–25; Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos institutas, Lietuvių kalbos institutas, Lietuvos istorijos institutas, and Matematikos ir informatikos institutas 2003.

¹¹ It refers to the type of popular Lithuanian songs about an orphan girl, in which the sun collects the dowry for her, the father moon decides on the part of the dowry for her, the sisters Stars make the wreath, and the brother constellation walks her through the fields (Kazlauskienė 1976, song type V 811).

is an emerging need to learn how to grasp that connection: not only philosophically, but also scientifically, scholarly; in fact, there is plenty of material for academic research. However, the development of human sensitivity to the environment and the ability to experience it – the ability to perceive the vibrations of one's own soul from the early years – is the most important.

In Lithuania, the core principles regarding worldview are attempted to be installed in several schools that provide lessons on traditional culture. What is more, the informal activities of ICH researchers increase and intensify – this movement is identified as a research of innate culture.¹² The union 'Romuva' based on the ancient Baltic culture and religion aims to revive the said principles in everyday life and festivities,¹³ as well as through organising Lithuanian Song Celebration Folklore Day programmes. They are created with a focus on customs, songs and dances, and other ICH features; notions of traditional worldview.

However, ICH bearers and specialists (working in culture, education, science) encounter the remaining difficulty – the unsettling question of how to pass on the traditional knowledge and worldview to the modern society so that people would comprehend and accept the traditional values. After all, an educated contemporary human with a broad scope of interests will not willingly accept and live by traditions of his natural environment. He is not interested in the traditional behaviour or ways of thought, since the more important aspect is the reason why the mentioned behaviour or thought occurred, and especially why he should follow the same model of actions, why they should be important to him, how it is useful not only for himself but also for the society and the entire humanity.

Hence, on the one hand, in order to understand and verify traditions, he demands not only the knowledge from the past but also proof based on modern academic and scientific research. On the other hand, he needs to feel the impact; to experience all the modes of the world with all of his five senses – maybe even with six. Therefore, it is better if the knowledge and experience complement each other.

For example, since the publications on the neuro-linguistic programming and the theories of the biology of belief (Andreas and Andreas 2013, 300; Lipton 2011, 221), the information concerning the power of words and thoughts (for example, about wishes, prayer-type texts, spells against illnesses, etc.) has received adequate consideration. It is worth mentioning that a great number of young Lithuanian parents follow the works of ICH researchers who scientifically proved that tradi-

¹² The website of the Institute of Inherent Culture is www.prigimtine.lt.

¹³ The website of the movement is www.romuva.lt.

tional children sleep routines, swinging and singing lullabies as means of soothing and providing safety¹⁴ are of great importance to their upbringing.

The other important example is the academic activities of Prof. Dr Daiva Vyčinienė – the researcher of sutartinės and a professor of Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (Lietuvos muzikos ir teatro akademija). Her methods are twofold – she attempts to show both the results of the academic research and the universal qualities of sutartinės (Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė 2010); she introduces their origins – bird voices, providing living examples and proving that culture started existing in the natural harmony of humans and nature; she also illustrates the meditative essence of sutartinės that in fact can lead to entering a state of trance, which impresses not only the admirers of eastern cultures but also significant amounts of open-minded people (Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė 2005, 2015). The researcher shows that a singer of sutartinės becomes relieved of tiredness and headache, and overwhelmed with feelings of lightness and peace (Daiva Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė, pers. comm.).

Modern Lithuanian and worldwide ICH researchers who practice traditions and the bearers in general embody the positive principles of human existence in the world as well as the traditional values: the coherence (darna, harmony with oneself and the world, feeling as its integral part) and prosperity (skalska, a person wants only as much as he really needs).¹⁵ This is consistent with the concept of sustainable development, thus it could become one of the ways to educate society on how to stop consumption, endless exploitation of natural resources and the resulting climate



¹⁴ One of the important driving factors to develop the child upbringing traditions in the contemporary society was a theoretical and practical conference 'The concept of birth from perspectives of traditional culture' from the series 'Birth. Existence. Death. Aspects of attitude and worldview' in 1998, as well as the bearer Emilia Brailinskienė's material which she thoroughly provided in papers (1997a, 1997b); the research and practices of Jūratė Šemetaitė, Jurgas Sadauskienė, Lina Vilienė, and Audronė Daraškevičienė (activities in ethnic culture centres, communities, patient treatment facilities, etc.) also receive the interest of young parents; the Center for Attachment Parenting (Prieraišiosios tévystés centras) shares the said information (www.prieraisiojitevyste.lt/node/42) as well as other communities that provide infant and children education services (e.g. www.mamudainos.lt/muzikos-pamokeles-kudikiams.html).

¹⁵ The notion of coherence as well as denoting harmony and the unity of versatility, together with the ability to live in peace with others has been most widely promoted and developed by the ethnologist, philosopher, and a supporter of the ancient Baltic culture Jonas Trinkūnas (e.g. 2010), ethnocosmology researcher Jonas Vaiškūnas (e.g. 1992, 2014), and Daiva Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė (2003), who interpreted coherence based on *sutartinės* (the word stems from *sutarti*, which means 'to be in accord', 'to understand each other').

Daiva Vaitkevičienė has analysed the notion of prosperity in her article *Namų laimė* (2002). According to her, it is a mythical self-nourishment process that prevents the goods from exhaustion (2002, 11). 'Let us prosper, God' (*Skalsink, Dieve*) – a Lithuanian etiquette formula and greeting used when a guest finds a family eating its meal; it means expressing a wish that the goods, such as bread and food in general would never run out and people would be full even if the amount of food is not big. There are similar greetings for workers (e.g. *Skalsu – dangun balsu!*, 'If it is prosperous – the heavens know'), for bathing in sauna (e.g. *Skalsq šilimai!*, *Skalsq garu!*, *Skalsi beržo lapienė!*, 'Let the warmth prosper!', 'Let the steam prosper!', 'Prosper birch leaves!'), etc. (Jasiūnaitė 1999, 2000).

Jonas Vaiškūnas (2016), in Nijolė Jačenienė's show *Baltų genas: mes ir senovės lietuvių mitai, legendos, simboliai* (Baltic genes: we and ancient Lithuanian myths, legends, symbols), juxtaposed the principles of coherence and prosperity as the crucial matters of faith and human existence. According to him, these are not the rules for behaviour, but on the contrary, they are the values that should always be witnessed in one's life.

change, and other alarming disasters. I hope that increasingly more people start caring about these issues and take responsibility for the future of our planet.

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Safeguarding and transmission of intangible cultural heritage – the case of Surova in a museum context

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The diverse ways of interpreting and contextualising collections and the production of multidimensional exhibitions have proven to benefit both the museums and the ICH bearers. They also serve as models for sustainable relationships between representing the tradition and safeguarding the ICH.

As examples of 'living culture', intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and museums share a strong bond, one that goes beyond spreading the knowledge about folk traditions, interpreting collections, researching artefacts and 'inventorying cultural expressions' (Adell et al. 2015, 9). The 'participatory museums' (Simon 2010) provide interactive experiences to the public and serve as a bridge between the tangible and intangible (Golinelli 2015, 31); between the past, present, and future (Harrison 2015). The fluidity of time within the museum space also reinforces the safeguarding and transmission (Pels, Hetherington, and Vandenbergh 2002) of those cultural values and identities that the public and the ICH bearers share. In this context, we examine the Surova folk feast in Pernik as an ICH practice, together with its presentation to the museum public in Europe organised by the Bulgarian National Ethnographic Museum (Nacionalen etnografski muzej, NEM).

This text will trace the role of several exhibitions for the safeguarding and transmission of Surova traditions and rituals curated by the NEM, inscribed in 2015 on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.



Introduction

Over the past 15 years, most scholars have agreed that the borders between tangible and intangible (Alivizatou 2006, 2012), and between the cultural and natural heritage (Harrison 2015) are blurring, and the museums reign not only over the past but also over the future of culture and iden-



Survashkars from village of Leskovets, 2012. Photo by Iglika Mishkova.



Participants of the masquerade carrying torches in the village of Chepintsi, 13 January 2012. Photo by Iglika Mishkova.

tity transmission (Harrison 2015). Furthermore, the museum itself becomes intangible in the virtual and augmented reality, and its functions transform beyond the ICOM definition, and its relationship with ICH blends together institutionalisation with de-institutionalisation (Smith 2006; Smith and Akagawa 2008; Vukov 2016), and museification with de-museification (Hartog 2005; Ballacchino 2014; Vukov 2015b). Because of the multidisciplinary approach to the connection between exhibitions and intangible cultural heritage and its relationship with museums, the theoretical framework falls short while examining it only within the museological, ethnographic, and cultural-anthropological contexts. Despite the importance of several factors influencing the analysis of the ICH safeguarding and transmission practices through museum activities, this text omits some very important issues, such as the role of tourism as a catalyst of economic sustainability both for museums and ICH, and the debates on the objectification of heritage. For the purpose of this article, the author assumes that there is a need for blending together the functions of exhibitions, performance, interaction and interpretations with the intrinsic functions of the ethnographic museum – researching, inventorying, safeguarding and promoting intangible cultural heritage and museum representations, with the common aim to transmit these living traditions to future generations.



About Surova feast

On 2 December 2015, the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the 'Surova folk feast in Pernik region' on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The element is concentrated in the region of Pernik, with its administrative centre in the town of Pernik, located in Central Western Bulgaria, near the capital city of Sofia. The folk feast Surova represents traditional masquerade games as a live practice in more than 36 villages and towns in the area, the bearers of the element.

The Surova folk feast in the Pernik region takes place every year on 13 and 14 January – the New Year according to the old calendar.¹ For local communities, it is nowadays their favourite feast. The core of the element is the masquerade ritualism, which has served for many generations as a positive transition from the old to the new year. The immediate participants of these ancient – but still alive – new year rites are the survakari masquerade groups, playing and going around the villages.

¹ Bulgaria adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1916; that is why in the Orthodox Church the Julian calendar used previously is called 'old calendar'.



Greeting between leaders of two groups, village of Chepintsi, 2012.



The group of *survakari* from the village of Banishte visiting the neighbouring village of Razhavets, 2012.
Photo by Iglika Mishkova.

All participants wear masks; some of them perform special masquerade roles, e.g. 'the leader', 'the newlyweds', 'the priest, or 'the bear with the bear-leaders'.

In the evening of 13 January, the *survakarigo* to the village centre, light bonfires and play around them, and tease the surrounding spectators. They also visit other neighbouring villages and meet other masquerade groups. All *survakari* play the ring dance *horo* and have fun. Early in the morning of 14 January, the masked men gather together again to walk around the village and proceed to visit every house. In all houses, they ritually 'marry the young couple', and the bear figure 'mauls for good health'. The hosts wait for them with a ritually set table, treat them to a good meal and give them presents. The visit of the masked men to each house is a must.

Participants of the practice

By the beginning of the 20th century, only the young single men from the community masked themselves, because the practice performed functions directly related to men's initiation and marriage. Other inhabitants of the villages (women, children, and married men) were not permitted to take part in the masquerade games. Nowadays, not only men of all ages, but also women and children participate equally and actively in them, which can be observed by everyone present at the feast.

The bearers of the Surova feast are ordinary people. The participants in the *survakari* masquerade games are not professional performers and do not have institutional obligations concerning its organisation. They go out and play spontaneously, by tradition, in the same way their predecessors did.

Each group establishes its own organisation and includes all inhabitants of the village. The *survakari* choose their leader and distribute among themselves the 'roles' – special characters that each one will represent. During the feast, the leader is listened to and obeyed unconditionally.

After the feast, the *survakari* hold a special meeting and decide on the use of the collected donations, depending on the problems and needs in their villages. Most frequently, they cover the needs of community centres (*chitalishte*), or general village necessities. The local authorities take their decisions into consideration.

The *survakari* masquerade tradition in the communities of the Pernik region is passed down from generation to generation, from the old to young, as it has always been in traditional societies.



A continuous form of communication among people from different social, professional, and age groups is achieved through the element's implementation, based on handing down, assimilating, and expressing traditional knowledge and skills. Thus, spread by the integration of certain, recognised ways of thinking and feeling, approved by the ICH bearers, this tradition guarantees itself a continuity in time and space.

The viability of Surova is ensured by its function as a cultural resource and creativity expression for the young generation. Its continuity is also guaranteed by the consolidating role it plays for local people of different age and social status. It is not only permanent village residents who take part in the practices but also many people living in urban environments. For one's family, it is a matter of great prestige to have its members participating in the survakari group. It is also not an exaggeration to say that in the region of Pernik, every house keeps memories about traditional Surova – in the form of vivid reminiscences, masks, and photographs hanging on walls. Also at schools and community cultural centres all activities related to the feast are continuously encouraged.

The relationship between the Surova feast and the Festival of masquerade games

In order to maintain the Surova feast, the Municipality of Pernik established the Festival na Maskaradnite Igri (Festival of masquerade games) in 1966.² The relationship between the feast and the festival has already continued for almost half of a century and has not brought any negative consequences on the viability of Surova as an ICH element (Vukov 2015a). On the contrary, the festival has contributed to raising awareness about the Surova feast and has facilitated the efforts for maintaining its vitality. Over the past fifty years of the festival's existence, no negative influences have been observed. The ongoing expectation is that the positive relationship between the Surova feast and the Festival of masquerade games will continue in the future, and that has been the reason for not outlining the possible risks and the lack of need of undertaking any measures in this regard.

² Nowadays it takes place at the end of January every year – two weeks after it is held in the villages. From the very beginning, although announced as 'regional', the festival has incorporated masquerade game groups from the whole country and has thus acquired a national character. In this way, the festival in Pernik stimulates the revival of the masquerade games in a number of villages and the appearance of other festival events in urban environment. In 1985 its statute became international under the title of International Festival of Masquerade Games 'Surva'. Nowadays, more than 100 groups with more than 6000 masked performers take part in this festival, together with international participants.

For the Pernik region communities, there is a clear distinction between the Surova feast in the villages and the Festival of masquerade games in the town. The festival is a part of urban culture, showcasing in a modern way the Surova folk tradition, which has been transmitted for many generations and has been maintained vital in the villages of the Pernik region (Vukov 2015a). At the Surova feast, there are more people present from the local community than there are at the festival, which is international by status and includes performing groups from various parts of the country and abroad. In fact, some of the local groups and bearers from the Pernik area do not attend the festival but dance only in the villages during the Surova feast. From such a perspective, the inscription of the Surova feast in the Representative List plays an important role in paying special attention to the living tradition and in encouraging the bearers in their efforts to safeguard their heritage within their rural environment.

Until now, there have not been any indications of any negative impact of the festival on the customs in the villages. On the contrary, it has played a positive role for the masking games in the entire country. During the communist period, when masquerade games were categorised as religious traditions, the establishment of the festival in the 1960s helped to justify the performance of masquerade festivities in different parts of the country. Throughout the years of its existence, there has been a positive collaboration between the organisers of the festival, the local communities, and also the bearers in Pernik area, who sometimes take part in the juries of the international event. An example of the positive impact is that the nation-wide and international interest in the festival motivates the bearers of the Surova feast to safeguard and transmit the element further. And they eagerly do, which is proven by their mass participation in the festivities.



Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum

The role of the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum (Institut za etnologiya i folkloristika s Etnografski muzey, IEFSEM) – the NEM is actually an administrative unit within it – it has been vital for researching, promoting, and safeguarding intangible cultural heritage over the past 110 years. Even before the ratification of the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, IEFSEM played a crucial role in the creation of the national database of ICH elements within the programme of Living Human Treasures.



Village Banishte, 2012. Photo by Iglika Mishkova.

‘Surova feast in the Pernik region’ was inscribed as an element on the National Inventory of ICH by an expert team from the IEFSEM, with the participation of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria (Ministerstvo na kulturata), coordinated by the regional administrative structures in the field of culture, including the national network of the Bulgarian community centres.

As a key institution within the ICH safeguarding system, IEFSEM also stores and maintains the documentation related to ICH. The National Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage (Natsionalen tsentral za nematerialno kulturno nasledstvo) preserves and ensures access to audio and video files, written records concerning elements’ status, and their nominations. Furthermore, the Ethnographic Archive is one of the oldest Bulgarian archives; it preserves the photographs of masquerades from the Pernik area taken between 1906 and 1947. At the same time, the NEM has a small collection of masks and other objects related to the element. As a work of folk art, the *survakari* masks are unique products of human creativity. The recognition and provision of their visibility on the international level is clearly contributing to the acknowledgement of the element as a part of world cultural heritage, and it is also a great source of inspiration to modern artists.

Intangible heritage suggests a holistic understanding of what cultural heritage is by acknowledging the significance and value of oral and living practices, and expressions that are related to objects, monuments, and cultural spaces. In addition to the definition provided by the UNESCO 2003 Convention, ICH has been further analysed in the context of museums.



Museum collections

Intangible heritage reveals the cultural significance and value of museum collections. It places objects in the context of their production and use. The NEM has been collecting masks from the area of Pernik since 1906, thus making it the first museum exhibition that has ever exhibited Bulgarian culture. Unfortunately, due to poor conservation experiences in the past, and due to the nature of the specific material that the masks are made from, the NEM had lost its old collection. In the years after the Second World War, the Museum started a new process of documenting the masquerade. A few members of the Museum staff who are painters visited the villages and made paintings of the masks and the practice. Afterwards, the museum enriched its collection with authentic artefacts from the region.



Village Elov dol, 2012. Photo by Iglika Mishkova.

Every year, starting from the year 2000 until today, the Museum has held fieldwork in the villages and collected pictures and videos in the Archive. The fieldwork on this topic presents a number of methodological challenges. It entails extensive involvement and active participation of communities who are the bearers of living culture. When researching intangible heritage, museum professionals are engaging with local communities, trying to understand the history and meaning of their cultural expressions. The representatives of IEFSEM actively participate in scientific conferences on ICH-related topics.

Museum presentations

Exhibition-making is one of the main aspects of museum practice. In the 19th and 20th centuries, museums exhibited objects taxonomically in glass cases, which appealed only to the sense of sight. At the beginning of the 20th century, the NEM followed the same practice when exhibiting the masked people from the area of Pernik. The contemporary museum practice, however, witnesses exhibition models featuring live music, special lighting effects, and dance performances. After the publications about New Museology and 'post-museum' or 'modernist museum', the responsibility of the museum towards education and enjoyment of the audience was emphasised instead. As a result, display practices have evolved, and considerable attempts have been made towards a more holistic interpretation of museum artefacts. The museum does not only exhibit objects but also hosts socio-cultural programmes to sustain and promote the creativity of indigenous communities (Bortolotto 2007).

Intangible heritage is by definition people-oriented rather than object-centred. At its core, implementation of the new initiative will transform the relationships between museums and their audiences and stakeholders. Among the results will be requests by people from diverse backgrounds to participate in substantive dialogues about their intangible heritage, and to share authority in defining and curating a museum's interpretation of their heritage. The outcome of these efforts will be a paradigm shift of exceptional magnitude (Boylan 2006, 63).

In the process of curating intangible heritage, museums must thus know how to establish equal partnerships with culture bearers and develop mechanisms for sharing authority and decision-making about museum activities and representations.

In the period between 2005 and 2016, the NEM presented four different exhibitions about masks and masquerades: *Magicheskata maska* (The magic mask, 2005), two international exhibi-



tions as a part of the project *Carnival King of Europe* (2009, 2012),³ and *Surova* (2016). All of those exhibitions focused their attention on the masks; ethnographic objects – ‘fragments’ (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998) – and the people who produce and use these objects. The masks from the Pernik area were exhibited both as artistic objects with distinct technical and aesthetic characteristics, as well as means of introducing symbolic expressions tied to their original use to the audience. Thus, the notion of intangible heritage in museums enables a wider and deeper interpretation and contextualisation of artefacts.

In terms of exhibition-making, the concept of intangible heritage is relevant to the contextualisation of objects. It unravels their cultural significance and symbolic value that extend beyond their technical and artistic features by placing them ‘into wider circles of meaning’ (Garton Smith 2000, 58). This can be achieved in several interpretive ways that help to trigger different associations and connections, such as storytelling, narrations, music, or what Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1991, 389–390) described as ‘in context’ installations. Among others, they include multimedia applications, headphones, charts, panels and labels; and help to facilitate the production of different levels of meaning (Alivizatou 2006).

That is the reason why the last exhibition about *Surova* in the NEM was an installation with masks (received from the bearers) and other objects, showcased in video and audio format, along with the voices of the participants of *Surova*. The aim of the exhibition was to establish a dialogue between the Museum and the communities. Unlike traditional cultural heritage however, objectified in artefacts for observation and already existing in the museum vaults, in these exhibitions, the bearers of intangible cultural heritage were involved in the preparation of their own culture representations; they explained their idea of adding the element to the List and the significance of *Surova* for the local communities on the provided screens.

On the one side thus, the presentation is concentrated under *Surova* in a perspective-integrating manner, playing a role in the construction of a ‘bridge between the generations’. The attractiveness of the masquerade holiday experience appeals to the youth and raises their self-esteem as continuers of the tradition and interpreters of the cultural originality of their village communities. In the preparation of *Surova* feast, the participants in the masquerade always create their best masks and costumes to distinguish them from those of the neighbouring village. Nowadays, practising of this element also constitutes an unusual form of informal education in tolerance and respect to other

³ For details, see the project’s website: www.carnivalkingofeurope.it/activities/exhibition.php.

cultures, religions, and ethnicities. The Roma people, also masked and disguised often participate in the masquerade games, directly and equally taking part in the feast, participating in the inter-village gaiety. Foreigners and the students living in this region are also interested and take part in the masquerade, which is very positively regarded by the local community.

On the other side, the presentation stresses the framework of 'togetherness' of the community life. The *survakari* groups in the different villages are free and open formations which maintain a community life; all of them collectively make and implement decisions concerning not only the feast but also the sustainable development of the village. And although they compete in making original masks for differentiating their village, they also exchange resources and materials for the successful running of the feast and thus form new, mutually beneficent friendships and connections.

The role of the museum as a mediator does not stop at these positive experiences. It also serves as a platform to voice the problems incurred in the process of safeguarding and transmitting the intangible cultural heritage. The presentation of the movies with interviews held with the bearers of the practice clearly demonstrates the problem with decreasing population in the Pernik region, which poses a threat to its continuity. They explain how preserving the tradition could solve this issue: 'if every day was Surova, the villages would be full of people'.

The role of the IEFSEM for safeguarding the Surova feast as ICH is visible also in the nomination for the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The nomination stresses that some of the measures taken on regional and municipal levels to prevent this process of population decline – particularly those related to the promotion of local traditions – are also a resource for local and sustainable development. Certainly, the decreasing population poses a potential threat to maintaining the viability of Surova, but this threat is minimal because of the enormous popularity that this traditional practice enjoys among the communities in the area, and because of the large number of young people who take part in the feast who are willing to transmit it (Vukov 2015a). Not least, the feast is a focal point of gathering for people who were born in the area, live elsewhere, but come back especially for the festivities and participate in maintaining this tradition.

Depopulation is a problem in the entire country. It depends on the state's social and economic policies, job opportunities, and overall possibilities for social, cultural and economic development offered in rural areas. The Surova feast and ICH alone cannot solve this problem on their own. However, on 13–14 January, when the festivities take place, a lot of people come back to their





villages for the celebrations, to participate in the preparations of masks and costumes, and to see the live performance in the masquerade games. The custom plays an important role in attracting migrants, gathering tourists, and enlivening the villages in the days of Surova feast. The inscription of the element in UNESCO's Representative List enhances the bearers' self-esteem in transmitting their cultural traditions. As noted in the nomination file, the wide popularisation and acknowledgement on the international level would stimulate the governmental institutions to a resourceful support of the communities in the depopulated and declining villages of the region. This would, in turn, increase the potential for cultural tourism in the area and contribute to its sustainable development in the long-term perspective.

Beyond the crucial role that the IEFSEM has played in the nomination and inscription of the element in UNESCO's Representative List, the NEM supports the safeguarding and transmission of Surova traditions thanks to the interpretation and contextualisation of the organised events. Exhibitions, performances, and overall parallel festivities in the museum enable audiences to think beyond the displayed objects and gain new and profound insights into the ICH themes. Such events include craft demonstrations, performances, talks, and study days. Initiatives of this kind reveal the effort of museums to introduce elements of living culture into their practice, and the importance of educational programmes that use the tradition bearers – masters of the masks – for promoting the continuity of ICH.

Conclusion

The concept of intangible heritage safeguarding and transmission through museum activities has proven its feasibility and effectiveness with the Surova feast and the related IEFSEM and NEM actions. The diverse ways of interpreting and contextualising collections and the production of multidimensional exhibitions have proven to benefit both the museums and the ICH bearers. They also serve as models for sustainable relationships between representing the tradition and safeguarding the ICH. The creation of multi-layered events dedicated to Surova at the NEM is also an opportunity to empower the voices of the local communities through museum presentations that promote the transmission of the tradition and can serve as a good example for ICH-related practices.

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The Association of Folk Artists and its activities for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in Poland



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The Association of Folk Artists occupies an exceptional position in the universe of the Polish non-governmental organisations engaged in the protection of intangible cultural heritage. As the oldest institution which brings together verified folk artists – heritage bearers – it is predestined to protect both the tradition and folk artists themselves.

The Association of Folk Artists (Stowarzyszenie Twórców Ludowych – STL) is an organisation with nearly 50 years of achievements, dedicated to the protection of the tangible and intangible heritage of folk culture. It was established in 1968 at the initiative of artists themselves. The main statutory objective of the Association is to cultivate folk traditions in the field of art, folklore and folk literature, to popularise its most precious manifestations and to provide extensive patronage for folk artists. The Association of Folk Artists has over 2000 full members – folk artists verified in terms of their ethnographic relevance that represent all areas of plastic art and folklore, i.e. performance of songs and dance, folk music and all sorts of staged folk theatrical forms, customs, rituals, as well as oral and written literature. The Executive Board of the Association has its registered office at No. 14 Grodzka Street in Lublin. As regards its organisational structure, the Association has 22 branch offices all over Poland.¹ It also has an advisory body – the Scientific Council, appointed by the National Congress of the Association of Folk Artists. The Scientific Council reviews the programme and orientations of the Association, contributes to the attainment of its statutory goals and verifies candidates for membership. The Scientific Council consists of four Sections: Literature Section, Art Section, Folklore Section, and Social and Programme Council. As a general rule, Sections hold their meetings once a year to verify candidates for membership in the Association (compare 'Sprawozdanie Rady...' 2014).



¹ For information on the objectives, the number of members and the structure of the Association, see 'Sprawozdanie Zarządu...' 2014.



Toy making traditions in Żywiec and Sucha Beskidzka presented during the Forum, October 2016.
Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.



Perebory – weaving traditions in the Bug river region presented during the Forum, October 2016.
Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

It should be emphasised that the Association of Folk Artists is the only organisation in Poland which identifies a folk creator in an expert way, by means of a verification process carried out by specialists from its Scientific Council. Every year, more than 100 people undergo this procedure, 50% of whom obtain the status of a folk artist and are accepted as full members of the Association. It is meant to confirm that their works are ethnographically authentic and consistent with the tradition of the home region of a given artist or craftsman. Over time, the terms of admission to the Association of Folk Artists have been reviewed and modified in response to cultural transformations. Nonetheless, they have always been intended to sustain the traditional art and to bring together tradition and modernity in a harmonious way. For this reason – as it has been stated in the *Terms and Conditions for Admission to the Association of Folk Artists* – the commission of a given Section of the Scientific Council checks if at least half of the works submitted for evaluation are consistent with regional traditions. For example, in the case of folk artists who wish to become members of the Association, at least five out of ten works must satisfy the above-mentioned condition; in the case of writers of folk literature – thirty out of sixty poems or ten out of twenty pieces of prose must satisfy that condition. According to another strictly obeyed rule, 'the candidate may not have specialist education and his or her creative output should be connected with a rural environment' (Stowarzyszenie Twórców Ludowych 2017b).

When Poland ratified the 2003 UNESCO Convention, the Association of Folk Artists sought to align its activities with the provisions of the Convention. It was found then that a large number of statutory activities of the Association, especially those associated with documenting, archiving, non-formal education and dissemination of all manifestations of folk creativity, successfully implement the UNESCO's recommendations concerning the protection of intangible heritage, which is understood as 'identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission' of various aspects of such heritage (Article 2 paragraph 3 of the Convention).² Since then, the Association of Folk Artists has emphasised and confirmed this aspect in its official documents and in its activities promoting the ideas of the Convention.

The following part of this paper focuses on the tasks performed by the Association of Folk Artists, which are closely aligned with the 2003 Convention: documentation, archiving, promotion, education and publication.



² Konwencja UNESCO w sprawie ochrony niematerialnego dziedzictwa kulturowego, sporządzona w Paryżu dnia 17 października 2003 r., Dziennik Ustaw [Journal of Laws] 2011, no. 172, item 1018.

Documentation and archival activity

1. Work associated with national databases with data on folk artists and artistic groups from rural areas

Every year, the databases are maintained by being continually verified, updated and supplemented. New data are verified and retrieved by means of distribution of questionnaires, on-site interviews, correspondence with creators and participation in folklore events. The resulting materials provide a basis for analysing contemporary transformations that take place in contemporary culture. This, in turn, makes it possible to register phenomena evidencing the evolution and directions of the development of art and handicraft in rural areas. At present, the databases contain over 12,000 records. Each record describes one creator, craftsman, ensemble or a folk band. The base covers such fields of art, handicraft and craftsmanship as: weaving, lace making, embroidering, pottery-making, painting, sculpturing, braiding, blacksmithing, woodcarving, toy-making, paper and tissue decorating, ritual arts, constructing folk musical instruments, as well as arts represented by only a few artists: amber crafting, horn crafting, silverware-making, production of sieves, tile-making, saddle-making and bell-founding. As regards folklore, they cover singing groups, ritual, theatrical and satirical groups, song and dance ensembles and bands. Another category includes folk poets, prose writers and playwrights.

Data are collected not only for documentation and archiving purposes but also with the aim to stimulate interest and restore disappearing skills in the regions and to disseminate information about folklore among all those who are interested. The databases are created and made available³ in order to foster knowledge about regional culture, its characteristic products and specific artists – masters of their areas of artistic specialisation.

2. Documentation of achievements of contemporary folk art

Documentation is produced continuously and all year round:

- by capturing photographic and video footage of artistic activity of creators who cultivate folk art and folklore, including works of art, performances, presentations, shows and workshops, exhibitions, memoirs, accounts, etc.;
- by documenting the results of folklore events organised in various regions of the country, mostly events in which members of the Association of Folk Artists are involved;

³ The bases are made available to interested institutions and individual persons by the employees of the Executive Board of the Association of Folk Artists.

- by sourcing materials which evidence the activities of individual artists, such as catalogues, literary works and leaflets documenting individual artistic pursuits and dissemination activities, as well as publications, surveys, personal files, press releases and minutes, obtained directly from creators and animators of regional culture.

3. The Archives of the Association of Folk Artists

All obtained materials are archived in accordance with the procedure of the Archives of the Association of Folk Artists, operating since 1968. In total, about 150 types of items are archived every year, including source documents and manuscripts, surveys, personal files, literary works, publications, leaflets, press cut-outs, catalogues, scripts of shows, rules of procedure and minutes, as well as 1,5000 photographs. All interested persons can access the Archives of the Association of Folk Artists after being permitted to do so by the Executive Board of the Association of Folk Artists.

Dissemination and educational activities

1. The Folk Art Fair in Kazimierz Dolny (the 50th edition of the Fair was held in 2017)

The Fair, taking place as part of the Ogólnopolski Festiwal Kapel i Śpiewaków Ludowych (Festival of Polish folk ensembles and folk singers) (with its 51st edition held in 2017), is one of the oldest and most prestigious national festivals that present the contemporary folk art in Poland. It brings together more than 100 artists representing particular regions of Poland and different areas of artistic pursuit: sculpting, painting, pottery-making, blacksmithing, braiding, wood and chip product-making, weaving, embroidering, lace-making, decorative and ritual arts, toy-making, constructing musical instruments, etc. The most outstanding folk artists and craftsmen, masters of artistic workmanship, laureates of prestigious competitions, as well as young folk-art practitioners whose works directly relate to the traditional design and craftsmanship present their works there.

The Fair does not only show and promote folk art but also creates a unique atmosphere that helps to establish a direct contact between artists and recipients, for example, during shows and handicraft workshops. An inseparable element of the Fair is also a competition for the best works presented on stalls. The competition has a noticeable positive effect on the quality of presented items; it encourages artists to respect the ethnographic canon and to prepare





Basketry traditions presented by Serfenta (NGO) members during the Forum, October 2016.
Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

their exhibitions with more care and enhance their visual attractiveness. For many years, the participants of the Folk Art Fair have consistently had to satisfy high artistic requirements. The Association of Folk Artists strives to make sure that presented works are authentic. In this way, it prevents folk art from becoming uniform and impoverished in terms of its authenticity.⁴

2. Web portal *KulturaLudowa.pl*

The Association of Folk Artists administers and edits the web portal *KulturaLudowa.pl. The tradition in contemporary times* (kulturaludowa.pl), created as a central, web-based source of continually updated and critically reviewed information about folk culture and its heritage in a broader sense. The portal serves as a multi-media tool and an information base for animators of culture, regionalists, researchers, ethnologists, pupils, students and for anyone interested in traditional culture. The main purpose of the portal is to popularise traditional folk culture, to enhance the sense of regional identity and its values, to broaden and strengthen the image of old and modern folk art and to demonstrate its significance for national culture. Another important focus of the web portal includes the issues associated with safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage and its specific uses, in line with the UNESCO Convention (see, for example, Kultura Ludowa 2015, 2017a). The patronage for the web portal is provided by the National Heritage Board of Poland (Narodowy Instytut Dziedzictwa).

The tasks associated with administering and editing the web portal include constant and systematic verification of information services by updating the database and publishing the latest news items, stories, reviews and presentations.

3. The Academy of Folk Art

The Academy of Folk Art (with its 8th edition in 2017) was inaugurated in 2010 as an educational project, taking the form of a series of workshops. The workshops take place at the Gallery of the Association of Folk Artists in Lublin. They are conducted by folk artists and members of the Association – masters from all over Poland, who present their skills and knowledge of native traditions. Every year, the project workshops are organised around five topics comprising various traditional creative disciplines. Until now, the workshops have been attended by about 90 organised groups (approximately 1,500 people). The workshops are accompanied by thematic exhibitions which present traditional products of artistic craftsmanship. The meetings with the tradition at the Academy of Folk Art are an excellent way to popularise practices and customs

⁴ For stories from the next edition of the Fair, together with a selection of photographs and minutes of the competition, see for example '47th Fair...' 2014; Onochin 2015, 2016.





that are still alive, and as such they are extremely important in the process of implementing the objectives of the *UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, focusing on direct transmission of skills and knowledge. The tangible and material results of this task include the works of the project participants, produced during the workshops. Moreover, the workshops enable artists to confront and exchange ideas, while their participants have an opportunity to become familiar with the traditions of many regions (Kraczoń 2015).

4. The Scene of Tradition

Another project carried out by the Association of Folk Artists with the aim to popularise and disseminate folklore is the 'Scene of Tradition'. The project consists of music sessions for children, entitled 'Grow Music', and of music sessions for adults.

The 'Grow Music' project has been designed as a series of activities focusing on musical traditions. They take the form of mini-concerts and music workshops for the youngest children (from nursery schools and primary schools). During these sessions, traditional songs, dances and elements of children's folklore are presented, together with the most interesting elements of the cultures of minorities and ethnic groups living in Poland. There are also presentations of folk instruments and traditional old games, with live music accompaniment (see, for example, Kultura Ludowa 2016).

Music sessions for adults take the form of workshops, presentations, concerts and dances, which are intended to demonstrate and promote selected aspects of traditional music. The events take place in different types of locations in Lublin (restaurants, clubs, cultural centres, non-governmental institutions). They include meetings with musicians and interesting people from rural areas who are involved in preserving folk music, as well as multi-media presentations (with old photographs and archival films), stories about music and its contexts and contemporary functions. All these events provide participants from different backgrounds with an opportunity to exchange skills and musical experience. Other activities include concerts and dances performed by the best bands and folk groups from Poland. The 'Scene of Tradition' enables performers of the older and younger generation and the laureates of numerous festivals and awards to meet and perform together. It is a lively presentation of the musical cultural heritage (for example Kultura Ludowa 2017b).

5. The Jan Pocek Literary Contest

The Jan Pocek Literary Contest (45th edition in 2017) is the most prestigious national Polish competition for folk writers, poets, prose writers and storytellers from different age groups,

organised annually since 1972 (see, for example, 'Z historii...' 2006). It enables folk literary artists to present their artistic works and to compare them with those of other artists. The contest is open both to members and non-members of the Association of Folk Artists. Every year, about 100 writers take part in the contest. It builds and strengthens ties between folk artists, provides them with artistic inspirations and ideas and stimulates their creativity. It also helps to identify and document the phenomena taking place in folk literature and to study its development trends.

Publishing activities

1. The 'Heritage' Library of the Association of Folk Artists

Publishing activities are an extremely important and long-lasting element of the work of the Association of Folk Artists. On the one hand, they present the academic and research achievements and pursuits associated with folk culture. On the other hand, they show the achievements of the creators themselves. Since 1976, the Association of Folk Artists has been publishing collections of works of particular authors and anthologies of folklore literature from its 'Heritage' Library Series (Niewiadomski 2012). It is the only entity in Poland which publishes such works systematically and in line with the criteria of philological editing.

2. 'Twórczość Ludowa. Kwartalnik Stowarzyszenia Twórców Ludowych' (Folk creativity. A quarterly magazine of the Association of Folk Artists)

'Twórczość Ludowa' (published for the 32nd year in 2017) (Adamowski and Orlik 2013) is the only Polish magazine with a countrywide circulation that is entirely devoted to contemporary folk art and its achievements and problems. It is addressed to folk artists, animators of cultural life, instructors, employees of cultural institutions and all readers interested in folk art. It discusses issues which are essential for the community of folk artists, showing the complexity and unique beauty of the Polish folk culture heritage and popularising that heritage in all its manifestations. Authors who publish their texts there include outstanding Polish academics, ethnographers, sociologists, culture experts, Polish philologists, musicologists, folklorists, regionalists, folk artists, employees of regional cultural institutions, as well as enthusiasts and other people interested in folk culture. For 32 years the magazine has gained numerous readers and supporters, functioning as a bridge between creators of folk culture and the community





Cross-cultural encounter. Żukowo school of the Kashubian embroidery bearers talking with the ICH expert from Romania, Adina Hulubaş, October 2016. Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

of researchers and animators of culture. Two issues of the magazine are usually published every year (Stowarzyszenie Twórców Ludowych 2017a).

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The Association of Folk Artists occupies an exceptional position in the universe of the Polish non-governmental organisations engaged in the protection of intangible cultural heritage. As the oldest institution which brings together verified folk artists – heritage bearers – it is predestined to protect both the tradition and folk artists themselves. The Association of Folk Artists fulfils its predestined function in many ways, for example, as has recently been the case, by presenting its opinions on new legal acts that are needed to fill the gaps in the Polish legislation. Relying on Articles 5 and 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2 April 1997⁵ that define the obligations of the State connected with the maintenance of the cultural heritage as a significant source of the nation's identity, the Association of Folk Artists has for many years emphasised the need to start work on a new act on the protection of the cultural heritage that would take into account, in a harmonious way, both the tangible and intangible heritage (Majcher and Onochin 2015; Majcher 2015). In 2017, the postulates connected with the intangible heritage are beginning to be fulfilled – at the initiative of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage, the work has been started to amend the current Act of 25 October 1991 on organising and conducting cultural activities⁶ and to adopt a new Act that will regulate the organisation and conduct of artistic activities. Within the framework of the National Culture Conference, encompassing a range of activities expected to bring new statutory solutions, operated by the Frederic Chopin National Institute (Narodowy Instytut Fryderyka Chopina) (with Mr. Artur Szkleiner as its Director) – work is under way on five modules, including one devoted to folk artists and folk art. The voice of the Association of Folk Artists has played a significant role in the preliminary stage of this work, i.e. non-public and public consultations in particular communities. It is an expert voice which cannot be ignored in the lawmaking and legislative process; after all, the Association of Folk Artists not only represents artists, animators of culture, educators and leaders of local communities, but it also has extensive resources, including its rich and varied experience in the protection of the intangible cultural heritage.



⁵ Dziennik Ustaw 1997 no. 78 item 483.

⁶ Dziennik Ustaw 1991 no. 114 item 493.

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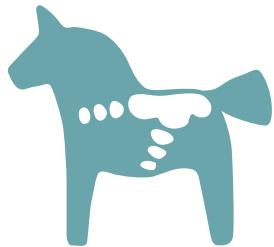
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PART 4.
ICH AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

Lists of intangible cultural heritage: the beginning or the end of sustainability?

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Every year, the experience with the implementation of the Convention teaches us new things. We can already see that the lists will not help in providing the intangible cultural heritage with sustainability. They will, however, help to institutionalise it and highlight its existence, perhaps attract new bearers. But will the lists ever help to secure its undisturbed and natural development?

Everyone wants to be on the list! The Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity has become a phenomenon. The 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage as well as the concept of listing intangible cultural heritage are young and we still do not know the entire impact and the consequences that are going to follow their implementation and development, although the discussions about potential risks and weaknesses have accompanied the Convention since its very creation (Kurin 2004). The 2003 Convention proposed a multi-layered system of safeguarding instruments, which, if combined and used properly, would enhance the practice and viability of traditional culture.¹ This vision was formed in a long process of naming and defining problems, terms, and possible solutions, which started already in the 1970s.² The extreme complexity of the whole concept of intangible cultural heritage makes many aspects of the Convention problematic. Nowadays, increasingly more attention is paid to sustainable development and this subject resonates also in our area of interest. In the following lines, I want to analyse some issues which arise in relation to the listing of intangible cultural heritage and sustainability of traditional culture. The lists seem to be the central point to which the eyes of many communities and politicians turn when they think about the Convention. However, when reading the Convention, we realise that inventorying intangible cultural heritage



¹ For the purpose of this article, I will use the term 'traditional culture' for the set of values and living traditions which create the cultural space of a community, and which the community identifies with. The term 'intangible cultural heritage' will be used as defined by the Convention and exclusively in relation to it. At the same time, I understand intangible cultural heritage as something consciously highlighted or protected by a community or the institutional environment.

² For more information about the history of the Convention, see Aikawa 2004.



Eva Románková-Kuminková during the Forum, with Skirmantė Ramoškaitė, Vida Šatkauškienė and Cai Hua on her right side and with Matteo Rosati (UNESCO Venice Office) and Albena Georgieva on the left, October 2016. Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

is only one of many components of a multi-faceted system of safeguarding, and that it is actually not at the core of preventing traditions from disappearing. It is the viability of traditional culture that matters the most.

Every inscription on an intangible cultural heritage list means a change or even a breakpoint in the existence of the inscribed element (hereinafter referred to as element), in the way how its bearers perceive it, and how their sense of belonging develops. This article aims to present several examples explaining how the very existence of the lists and the act of inscription influence the inscribed elements and their bearers, as well as the elements and bearers which are only aspiring to enter a list. The popularity and awareness of the lists of intangible cultural heritage have been growing together with the desire of communities and individuals to have 'their' elements made visible through the inscription. Still, it has to be noted that not all processes described below are complete novelties. Institutional influence on the development of traditional culture has been present in Europe since the second half of the 19th century (cf. Románková 2016). However, the existence of the lists significantly intensified its effects.

Before starting a discussion about the lists, let us review the main goals of the Convention. It was created in order to protect, safeguard, transmit, and promote values of intangible culture which are currently jeopardised by conflicts, globalisation, ecological catastrophes, and the change of lifestyles. There are plenty of actions needed to secure the future viability of traditional culture. They start with identification; next steps include awareness raising, education, capacity building, documentation and research, and the most important process of all: active transmission. Inclusion on a list of intangible cultural heritage is only the imaginary 'cherry on the cake'. However, many people confuse the inscription with the actual safeguarding and expect that the list will provide automatic protection for the element. This observation can be applied to national inventories as well. The lists have become a showcase of the Convention, and many people consider them to be the only tangible results of the work of UNESCO in relation to intangible cultural heritage, which is far from the truth.

There are three lists maintained by UNESCO in the field of intangible cultural heritage. The one that is the most known and used is the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. By December 2016, there had been 365 elements inscribed on it. Higher priority is given to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (Urgent Safeguarding List), with 47 inscriptions so far. The least popular list in terms of the number of nominations is the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices, which includes 17 inscriptions. The numbers are worry-



ingly disproportionate when we consider the goals and priorities of each list. The reports of the Convention's Secretariat and advisory bodies³ suggest that since 2012, when the Operational Directives were amended,⁴ the disproportion between nominations to the Representative List (indicated as prioritised) and nominations to other Convention mechanisms (including requests for international assistance greater than \$25,000) has grown.⁵

Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

Let us focus on the most popular of the lists – the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity – as the effects of the inscriptions on it are the most visible. The aim of both the list and its predecessor, the Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, was to become showcases which would contain 'the best of' world intangible culture. The Representative List is supposed to highlight positive values created by human society, and bear witness to cultural diversity and richness built by humanity over millennia. The list, just like the Convention itself, points out that cultural heritage serves individuals as a source of identity and provides them with a sense of belonging, and thus helps them to define and anchor themselves within the rapidly changing globalised society.

An inscription on the Representative List is a highly prestigious matter and the States Parties of the Convention approach it accordingly. It means that political motives can very easily push away

³ See the records from the Intergovernmental Committee meetings (UNESCO 2017c).

⁴ The Operational Directives were amended by the General Assembly in June 2012. The paragraph 34 reads: 'The Committee shall endeavour to examine to the extent possible at least one file per submitting State, within the limit of this overall ceiling, giving priority to:

- i. files from States having no elements inscribed, best safeguarding practices selected or requests for International Assistance greater than US\$100,000 approved, and nominations to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
- ii. multi-national files; and
- iii. files from States with the fewest elements inscribed, best safeguarding practices selected or requests for International Assistance greater than US\$100,000 approved, in comparison with other submitting States during the same cycle.

In case they submit several files during the same cycle, submitting States shall indicate **the order of priority** [emphasis mine – E.R.] in which they wish their files to be examined and are invited to give priority to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding' (UNESCO 2017d).

⁵ In 2011, before the Operational Directives were amended, nominations to the Representative List examined by the Subsidiary Body constituted 54% of the total number of nominations to all four Convention mechanisms. In 2015, this number rose even to 78%. The average number of nominations submitted to the Representative List compared to the sum of nominations submitted to all other mechanisms between the years 2012–2016 reaches 76%. Cf. the reports of the Consultative Body, Subsidiary Body and Evaluation Body from the years 2012–2016 available at www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/events.

any ideals and well-intentioned wishes of experts to provide responsible international protection. Michael Dylan Foster (2011) even sees the list as a normative construct which can be used as a political tool of privilege or exclusion. Thus on the one hand, the Representative List promotes the goals and ideals of the Convention, and on the other hand it creates space for political and institutional manipulation. A visible evidence of the prestige aspect and the desire for visibility is the fact that the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in many cases does not respect the recommendations of its advisory bodies – formerly the Subsidiary and Consultative Bodies, currently the Evaluation Body. While the Committee practically never doubts positive recommendations, it regularly reverses negative evaluations by experts from the fields of ethnology and anthropology, and inscribes elements which according to a consensus of 12 independent experts do not meet one or more criteria for inscription. This process usually follows the recommendations to refer a nomination, but it also applies to the recommendations not to inscribe an element.⁶ A popular argument justifying this act is that the nominating communities will be disappointed. That certainly is true. However, without an examination process and clear rules of acceptance, the maintenance of the list would be impossible, the idea of a showcase would be lost, and the list, as well as the Convention, would be discredited.

One of the touchstones according to which nominations are evaluated is 'representativeness'. But how should we decide which element is representative? Following our own subjective opinion, our erudition, or should we select the elements which are attractive from the perspective of foreign countries? And who is entitled to decide which element is more representative than another, and according to which criteria? What role do the communities and tradition bearers play in the selection process? Are they able to collaborate and nominate their representatives? International experience proves that although many examples of good practice exist, it is not always possible, and the



⁶ For example, see the case of the Ukrainian nomination of 'Petrykivka decorative painting as a phenomenon of the Ukrainian ornamental folk art' examined by the Intergovernmental Committee in 2013. It was the first nomination submitted by Ukraine. The Subsidiary Body identified two criteria as not met. After very strong diplomatic pressure exerted on members of the Committee, the element was inscribed on the list. Cf. the recommendation of the Subsidiary Body and the decision of the Committee (UNESCO 2013a; 2013b).

In 2016, the Intergovernmental Committee went even further. The expert Evaluation Body, which examined the nominations to the Representative List, advised the committee to refer 19 nominations because the files did not prove that all criteria for inscription were satisfied. The Intergovernmental Committee however did not respect the thorough expert evaluation and decided to inscribe 15 of these elements. In two cases, 4 (!) criteria were not met. It was not the technical details that were at stake, but the very question whether the element does or does not constitute intangible cultural heritage as defined by the Convention, whether the community was involved in the nomination process, and whether adequate safeguarding measures were proposed. Cf. the report of the Evaluation Body and the Decisions by the Intergovernmental Committee (UNESCO 2016a; 2016b).



inscriptions often become the bone of contention among bearers of the same or similar elements, let alone cultural heritage shared across national borders. As an example, let us imagine a situation when a particular type of embroidery from one particular village or region is selected as representative, and it is nominated to the list. How will the other communities of embroiderers react? Will they be satisfied that a representative of their craft was chosen on their behalf, or will they believe that embroidery they produce is comparably or maybe even more valuable and representative, and should have been chosen instead? Both situations can happen and many similar ones have already been dealt with. Valdimar Tr. Hafstein argued already in 2004 that the principle of this kind of selection copies the very nature of intangible heritage:

The system of heritage ... is structured on exclusion: it gives value to certain things rather than others with reference to an assortment of criteria that can only ever be indeterminate. In this respect, heritage and lists are not unlike one another: both depend on selection, both decontextualize their objects from their immediate surroundings and recontextualize them with reference to other things designated or listed. It is hardly surprising, then, that listing seems constantly to accompany heritage making (Hafstein 2009).

Another brain teaser is the problem of multinational nominations. This category was created in a spirit of cooperation between nations. Indeed, countries and nations share elements of intangible culture. In some countries, collaboration works well and the elements at stake are genuinely historically shared. We can mention puppetry in Slovakia and Czechia inscribed in 2016, or technology of blueprinting textiles which is being prepared for nomination by several Central European countries, namely Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Germany. The technology is invariable, while the patterns differ depending on the provenience of the products. For other nations however, mutual collaboration within a common cultural space is often an insolvable problem, as we can see for example in the Caucasus region. There is a group of multinational inscriptions of elements which have common foundations but seem to have very different expressions in each nominating country. The most peculiar case is falconry. It has been nominated by 18 countries so far, while almost every year new countries join the nomination (UNESCO 2017a). These countries include United Arab Emirates, Austria, Belgium, Czechia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Morocco, Pakistan, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, and the Syrian Arab Republic. UNESCO uses this nomination as an example of good practice in international collaboration, which it certainly is. However, the expressions of the living tradition of falconry, their historical and contemporary cultural and social meanings in the mentioned countries are incomparable. Another interesting example of a multinational inscription, where its subject can be clearly

defined only with difficulties and it rather embraces a wide range of national, regional, and local traditions, is the Mediterranean diet, stretching from Greece and Cyprus to Spain and Morocco (UNESCO 2017b).

A complication of the whole system shows that unlike the heritage sites inscribed on the World Heritage List under the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, elements of intangible culture are examined by experts who cannot physically visit the communities of bearers and become personally acquainted with the elements and their environment. They are obliged to evaluate only the information included in the nomination form, 10 photographs, and a 5 to 10-minute video. The mechanism has very clear rules and once they learn the philosophy and language of the Convention, they are able to examine and evaluate any nomination, from carpet weaving in central Asia, ship building in the Middle East, African rites of passage or European beer culture, to East-Asian calligraphy. The nomination form contains very precise instructions on how each section should be filled and what kind of information examiners seek. The Secretariat regularly updates the nomination forms to make the work of the proposers easier. However, many writers are not able to follow these instructions, whereas others know exactly how to formulate their argumentation. Thus, the success of a nomination often depends on the rhetoric and writing skills of its authors.⁷



National inventories

Intangible cultural heritage lists have their analogies in the national inventories. According to the Operational Directives of the Convention each state, in order to ensure identification of its intangible cultural heritage with the aim to safeguard it, should 'draw up, in a manner geared to its own situation, one or more inventories of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory. These inventories [should] be regularly updated' (UNESCO 2017e). Each country fulfils this obligation in a different manner. In some countries, there is only one inventory divided into several sections according to the domains of intangible culture. In other countries, there are more lists – a representative list, a list of elements requiring urgent safeguarding, as well as a list of best safeguarding

⁷ The work of the Intergovernmental Committee and the procedure of inscription was discussed and analysed by Lubica Volanská and Juraj Hamar – Slovak representatives in the General Assembly and regular observers in the Intergovernmental Committee meetings – in 2015 (Hamar and Volanská 2015).



practices. The rules for inscription and the degree of institutional involvement (of research centres, museums, etc.) vary. In some countries, a bottom-up approach that inspires communities to be the main initiators of nominations and safeguarding is strictly preferred. Universal conditions for maintaining a national inventory also include regular updating and the participation of communities of tradition bearers; an inscription in the national inventory is a necessary prerequisite for a nomination to any of the UNESCO lists.

The Czech Republic maintains the List of Intangible Elements of Traditional Folk Culture of the Czech Republic (Seznam nemateriálních statků tradiční lidové kultury České republiky). This list is modelled according to the UNESCO Representative List, with the option of designating an already inscribed element as endangered or extinct based on the results of the periodic revision of the element by the National Institute of Folk Culture (Národní ústav lidové kultury). This option has not been used so far. An inscription of an element on the national list is furthermore conditioned by its inclusion on the regional list of intangible cultural heritage. These lists are mainly modelled on the national inventory and they are also representative. The question is whether the regional and national lists should be conceived as 'the best of selections' – with the criterion of representativeness as a central idea – or rather as inventories that witness the cultural richness of the country and respect individual regional and local variants of the same elements.

Although UNESCO always strives to create space for different interpretations, it still applies the same methodology and terminology on the global level. Let us look more closely at one of the challenges brought about by these unifications and in particular, at the way in which the Czech Republic deals with it. The fundamental issue is terminology. The term intangible cultural heritage is replaced by the phrase 'traditional folk culture'. The definition of this term can be found in the *Methodological Guidelines for Maintaining the 'List of Intangible Elements of Traditional Folk Culture of the Czech Republic'* (Ministerstvo kultury 2012) and in other governmental and legal documents. It fully corresponds with the definition of intangible cultural heritage as stated in the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. However, although both definitions are identical, the connotation of the Czech term in the minds of Czech people, including some experts, does not necessarily correspond with the global perception of the concept of intangible cultural heritage. Primarily, because of the word 'folk', which somehow narrows the boundaries of intangible cultural heritage to only folklore and traditional culture, mainly that of rural and working class environment. This perception has its roots in Central-European historical experience, and it is influenced by its ethnographic approach towards traditional and folk culture. According

to UNESCO, intangible cultural heritage also includes elements which are not considered as part of folk culture in the Central European sense of the word, but instead are understood as a source of cultural and social identity: as cultural elements taught in academia, or highly specialised crafts. Calligraphy, coffee or beer culture, classical horsemanship, martial arts or yoga are only a few examples. That is why the experts in the National Council for Traditional Folk Culture (Národní rada pro tradiční lidovou kulturu) have to face many challenges with the nominations to the national inventory. Some nominated elements do comply with the definition of intangible cultural heritage; however, they do not unambiguously belong to the category of 'folk', which causes confusion and stirs discussions. Nevertheless, each such ambiguity so far has been positively resolved, and thus such elements have been inscribed.

Being on the list...

After explaining the basic facts about the Representative List and national inventories, let us look at the life of the elements after their listing. We have been able to observe the impact of the inscriptions merely for one decade, since 2008 to be precise. This period of time does not seem long enough for their objective assessment. Yet, for some of them, one can already be provided. General observations below are complemented by concrete examples from the Czech Republic.

Firstly, positive effects of inscriptions include an increase of the visibility of intangible cultural heritage and, in particular, of the elements inscribed. This helps communities to appreciate their cultural heritage and inspires others to search for their own cultural roots. The inscription can be compared to winning a prize. Tradition bearers and their governments feel awarded, and perceive that their culture is valued by the rest of the world. This notion strengthens their feeling of belongingness and consolidates their connection with local tradition and other members of their community. Inscriptions are very rich sources of pride for the tradition bearers. Another asset of the whole mechanism is the fact that it stirs discussion about intangible cultural heritage on different levels, including government and the media.

What is more, one inscription can inspire another, and one community can set a positive example which is followed by other communities. Moreover, highlighting the element itself allows for a whole range of associated details to become visible as well, e.g. embroidery, or rituals which are accompanied by the inscribed folklore expressions. This multiplying effect has been witnessed





Ride of the Kings at Navalis festival in Prague, 2015. Photo by Martin Divíšek, Pražský deník.

in many countries, including the Czech Republic. In 2005, 'Slovácko verbuňk, recruit dance' was proclaimed a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. In 2008, this proclamation was transformed into an inscription on the Representative List. *Verbuňk* dance is a male solo dance practiced in the southeast of the Czech Republic in the ethnographic region called Slovácko. In the neighbouring region of Wallachia, men practice another solo dance: *odzemek*, which is related to different historical and ethnographic circumstances and has a different character. Thus, the inscription of *verbuňk* activated the *odzemek* dancers, who were convinced that their dance deserved the same attention and tributes. They addressed the Wallachian Open-Air Museum, which has been providing space for the presentation of *odzemek* since its foundation in 1925 and started a bottom-up safeguarding process with the aim to achieve the inscription on the Representative List. The safeguarding measures included the foundation of a specialised dedicated documentation centre within the museum, collection of all kinds of documentation such as photographs, articles, and systematic video records of all events related to the dance. It also included organising seminars for the dancers and most importantly, establishing the annual School of Young *Odzemek* Dancers. Every year, the course produces new dancers who continue to develop their newly acquired dancing skills in their local folk dance groups. The director of the Wallachian Open-Air Museum established the Council for Wallachian *Odzemek* Dance (Rada pro valašský *odzemek*), an advisory board which consists of dancers, former dancers, masters, and teachers of *odzemek*, as well as organisers of folklore events and ethnologists. *Odzemek* dancers regularly perform the dance in the museum during different public events, and since the 1980s the museum hosts a dance competition in it. *Odzemek* dance was inscribed on the List of Intangible Elements of Traditional Folk Culture of the Czech Republic in 2012. The Ministry of Culture (Ministerstvo kultury České republiky) made the nomination to the Representative List conditional on collaboration with other Carpathian countries sharing the element (Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine and Romania). So far, however, *odzemek* has not been nominated to the UNESCO List.

Another move that the nomination process provokes is the commitment of the state and the bearers to safeguard the element. From the moment of inscription, letting the element deteriorate or come to an end changes from a natural process of abandoning something that is obsolete to the local community to jeopardizing the viability of general intangible cultural heritage.

The inscriptions, however, have their shortcomings. First of all, once an element is inscribed, the attention of the state, media, academic and other documentary institutions – especially museums – is turned towards it. Thus, the 'living conditions' of the element change. It ceases to belong





exclusively to the community; instead, a range of stakeholders become responsible for different areas of its safeguarding. The care and attention themselves naturally are positive values, but under certain conditions, they can bring damage and irreversible consequences. First of all, any act of prior, natural transmission or safeguarding of the element may become conscious and artificial, determined by the safeguarding plan. There are various levels of institutional interference under different circumstances; for example, researchers and experts visit the localities in order to document and monitor the elements much more frequently than before, and advisory boards and expert groups 'helping' the communities to safeguard their elements are created. Depending on the individual conditions in a country or on the character of the inscribed element⁸, certain elements may register hardly any change as a result, but others can fully succumb to the demands of external subjects.

Furthermore, interventions by expert institutions aimed at living traditions and discussions provoked by experts gradually change the self-reflection of the bearers. As a result, the status of cultural heritage changes the living tradition, giving it a different rank. Cultural heritage becomes suddenly accentuated by the community and consciously protected; thus in a way losing the spontaneous quality of transmission; it becomes canonised or even formalised.⁹ The sociologist Anthony Giddens (1999) defines cultural heritage as 'severed from the lifeblood of tradition', that implies 'the experience of everyday life'. Variability is one of the basic qualities of traditional culture. Every performer contributes to the fundamental outline with his or her own expression. Traditional culture also changes across time and space in reaction to the needs and preferences of its bearers, as well as social, political and economic conditions. However, the higher the level of protection (via regional, national, or world lists), the higher the risk of a loss of spontaneity and natural variability. This is demonstrated, among other things, by the search for the 'right' forms. We have seen many cases of elements inscribed on the Representative List, whose bearers have disputes about the 'right versions' of their customs, dances, or folklore expressions. Thus, instead of uniting communities who share common heritage, the inscriptions often cause arguments and quarrels.

In the case of the 'Ride of the Kings in the south-east of the Czech Republic',¹⁰ the inscription of the element helped to unite together inhabitants of four villages, who in some cases used to

⁸ While for rituals external attention and involvement of strangers can be fatal, for crafts it can mean desirable promotion. However, in their case the benefits have limits as well.

⁹ Formalisation is generally feared by the UNESCO, whose staff and experts are aware of the risks. This aspect is studied very closely during the process of evaluation of nominations. However, it can never be fully foreseen.

¹⁰ The element was inscribed in 2011.

be traditional rivals. Immediately after the inscription, the National Institute of Folk Culture established an advisory council composed of tradition bearers, representatives of the communities, and experts from regional museums and other people involved in the organisation of the festival. This step led to the creation of a platform where all four communities would meet and plan common events related to the tradition but not necessarily its counterparts.¹¹ However, the council has also witnessed a division and argument over the ownership of the element and over its proper presentation. This happened when a supporter of a certain village accused tradition bearers from another village of not keeping the ritual in complete conformity with the tradition.¹² He suggested that this particular village should be removed from the list, although the nomination did not state the need for uniformity of the tradition and respected local differences.

Another example is the *verbuňk* recruit dance. An advisory board consisting of tradition bearers, experts, and folk dance group leaders was established in the National Institute of Folk Culture for the same reason as the board of the Ride of the Kings. As *verbuňk* becomes more and more popular, it is adopted in villages and regions where it had died out decades ago or even where it had never existed. New dancers want to participate in the national competition which, however, has well-formulated rules including the right dress code and compulsory choice of a regional variant which has to be performed in the right way.¹³ Thus, the dancers who come from a region where no specific and known variant of *verbuňk* can be traced have to choose a variant from another region. The advisory board then discusses issues such as whether the dancers in such cases can wear the costume from their own locality or whether they should borrow a costume from the region whose variant they choose to dance. Therefore, on the one hand, experts and selected groups of tradition bearers watch over the 'purity' of the dance, on the other hand, however, acting as external powers, they directly affect the spontaneous development of the tradition and limit the self-expression of tradition bearers. Expert institutions are thus no longer mere observers and researchers; they directly participate in the formation of the tradition.



¹¹ For example, the presentation of the Ride of the Kings at the international folklore festival organised by the National Institute of Folk Culture (2012) or a mass held in a local pilgrimage church for the purpose of blessing the riders and the rides in all four villages (2014).

¹² Particularly he objected, in accordance with his own personal conviction and experience from one particular village, that the riders participate in the ritual more than once in their lives, some of them are thirty years old and even older, and that the date of the festival has shifted from May to September. The ritual in each of the four villages has developed in line with the historical circumstances and with the needs of tradition bearers – just like the Convention expects. The period of socialism in Czechoslovakia (1948–1989) brought profound changes in all areas of life and folk culture had to respond to these changes and evolve.

¹³ Since 1986, the national competition has been annually organised by the National Institute of Folk Culture.



Another well-described impact of the inscription of any element – material or intangible – is excessive tourism. Lists of cultural heritage work like magnets. Again, it has its advantages as well as downsides. Awareness-raising is one of the main goals of the lists and it works very well. Unfortunately, if it turns an element into a sensation, the demand of tourists can become unbearable and can lead to the destruction of the most valuable aspects of the tradition, and turn it into a mere attraction that is devoid of its meanings. It depends on the tolerance of the tradition bearers in allowing this to happen, but often they simply cannot prevent it as the reputation of their intangible element begins to live its own life.

Although it is rather rare, some communities do not submit to general enthusiasm about the lists and decide to protect their traditions by leaving them hidden from the public attention. In 2012, a community of approximately ten villages in the east of the Czech Republic was addressed by the National Institute of Folk Culture with the suggestion of preparing a nomination of St. Nicolas masked processions to the national inventory (not to the UNESCO list!). The processions are among the best-preserved and most archaic rituals in the region of Wallachia. However, the mayors and representatives of these villages almost unanimously rejected the idea and expressed their wish to be left alone in order to conduct and protect their traditions in the manner of their own choice. According to them, the inscription was perceived as a risk rather than as an advantage. The main argument included the fear of excessive attention of experts and any kind of interference that could be exercised by external authorities and could prevent the communities from conducting the tradition at their own discretion. However, this kind of understanding is rare. Nevertheless, the desire to have an element inscribed can be governed by different motivations: the honest belief in the visions of the system or the exceptionality of the local, regional, or national tradition. The motives can also include raising the visibility of the country, attracting tourists, or include political and diplomatic reasons.

The aspect of tourism and exploitation for the purpose of public entertainment has another form – transmission of inscribed elements from their natural environment to another location based on the demand of external subjects. The chapter by Adina Hulubaş and her description of the changes to the *Căluş* ritual is a perfect example of this process.¹⁴ Presentation of inscribed elements outside of their natural contexts can also be initiated by organisations responsible for

¹⁴ See the chapter 'Securing the future of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Romania in a sustainable way. Benefits and subsequent risks' by Adina Hulubaş, in this volume.

the safeguarding themselves, for example, ministries of culture.¹⁵ This usually happens in order to introduce the elements to the wider public, raise awareness about them, or promote the process of inscription. As the elements become well-known and popular, their attraction potential increases and the bearers receive offers and invitations to perform their dances, music, and rituals outside their localities, traditional venues, and dates. This can be occasional, but it can also become a rule, which in extreme cases might lead to a complete decontextualisation of the tradition.

In the Czech Republic, such situation emerged in 2015, when the organisers of the St. John of Nepomuk's festival Navalis held annually in Prague invited the bearers of the Ride of the Kings to participate in their procession.¹⁶ Villagers and riders from three villages inscribed on the Representative List joined the religious procession which was subsequently blessed by Cardinal Dominik Duka and greeted by the mayor of Prague, members of parliament and senators. The Ride of the Kings was an unusual spectacle for the visitors and natives of Prague. After learning about the promise of its members to take up the offer, the Ministry of Culture immediately reacted and urged the communities not to do it. It argued that taking the element out of its natural environment and original context means a violation of the commitments given to the UNESCO by the act of nomination and inscription. However, the bearers disagreed. The Ride of the Kings had been presented in Prague already in 1895 during the Czechoslovak Ethnographic Exhibition and several times in the first half of the 20th century, in front of the political elites of that time. For the tradition bearers, performing the ride in the capital city meant an exception accepted out of pride and the wish to show their cultural heritage elsewhere, as well as to experience an adventure which would be remembered by the community for a long time. When they were making the decision, they drew on their ancestors' decisions and experience. If we thus look at the situation from the point of view of our argument, the question at stake is: who has the right to decide how the inscribed elements should be presented? Is it the ministry and expert institutions? They take on the responsibility for conservation of the element in the state that is described in the nomination documentation. Thus, should they decide on such matters? And is it correct at all to watch elements carefully and make sure that the community does not deliberately present it or change it in a manner that

¹⁵ Right after the inscription of the Ride of the Kings, the horse procession was performed at the international folklore festival in Strážnice. The festival is organised by the National Institute of Folk Culture and the event was planned as a celebration of the inscription on the Representative List as well as a promotion of the element.

¹⁶ The initiators of the idea were tradition bearers from one of the villages, who offered their participation during a coincidental meeting with the festival organiser. The organiser became interested in the idea and the negotiations ended up in an agreement that riders from three out of four villages stated in the nomination as communities of bearers would present the Ride of the Kings at Navalis.



suits it? Respectively, are the bearers still entitled to handle their elements as they wish even in situations which may seem to jeopardize the complexity of the element? In this particular case, observed from the perspective of the Convention, the standpoints of both sides seem to be legitimate on their own terms.

We have posed many questions and described situations for which we still do not have acceptable answers and solutions. Our experience still remains limited. Every year, however, the experience with the implementation of the Convention teaches us new things. We can already see that the lists will not help in providing the intangible cultural heritage with sustainability. They will, however, help to institutionalise it and highlight its existence, perhaps attract new bearers. But will the lists ever help to secure its undisturbed and natural development? It does not seem so. The process of elaborating the text of the Convention and its Operational Directives was laborious. It took several decades, hundreds of hours of discussions, and numerous documents filled with draft ideas. Thus, similar effort should be devoted to analysing how the implementation of the Convention affects intangible cultural heritage and – as we treat it as a separate phenomenon in this paper – what impact it exerts on traditional culture. This analysis should result in proposals that would lead to a reassessment of the whole system and offer solutions drawing us closer to the fulfilment of the visions which inspired the creation of the Convention.

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Intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development: case study of Suti cultural space in Latvia

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The Suti nomination and safeguarding plan demonstrate clearly the necessary links between cultural, educational, and regional development policies and the importance of having a conceivably holistic view in safeguarding cultural spaces.

The Suti is a community of around 2000 persons of Suti ancestry, characterised by distinct cultural traditions and Catholic religion, inhabiting the Western part of Latvia near the Baltic Sea (UNESCO 2016d). It had expressed interest in the UNESCO framework for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage even before a national policy and ICH inventory were developed in Latvia. After adopting a national law on the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in November 2004, Latvia deposited its instrument of acceptance in January 2005, becoming the 8th country to join the Convention. When the national policy documents were gradually prepared and discussed, the Suti community leaders, most significantly Grigorijs Rozentāls, took the initiative to learn the experiences of other communities involved in UNESCO ICH programmes, starting with the closest neighbours: the 'Kihnu cultural space' in Estonia that had been proclaimed Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2003 (UNESCO 2016b).¹ A joint visit was organised in October 2007 that involved community members and representatives from the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia (Latvijas Republikas Kultūras ministrija), as well as Latvian National Commission for UNESCO (UNESCO Latvijas Nacionālā komisija).² Soon after, the preparation of 'Suti cultural space' nomination was initiated and received financial assistance from the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for a video necessary for the nomination. At the time, the community had a clear idea that the nomination needs to be submitted to the UNESCO



¹ For the ICH elements originally proclaimed masterpieces, no nomination files are published on UNESCO website.

² At that time, fulfilling responsibilities as the culture, communication, and information sector director at the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO, I had a possibility to join this trip to the Kihnu island.

List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, and this conviction has not changed since that time (Vaivade 2015, 137).

The 'Suiti cultural space' nomination was inscribed in 2009, and this initiative of the Suiti community continues to be of tremendous importance as a reference for other communities in Latvia that consider possible nominations for UNESCO ICH lists. 'Suiti cultural space' is one of two nominations by Latvia to the UNESCO ICH lists, along with the 'Baltic song and dance celebrations' nominated jointly with Estonia and Lithuania, recognised in 2003 as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity and subsequently inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008 (UNESCO 2016a).

Safeguarding Suiti cultural space as inscribed on UNESCO's Urgent Safeguarding List was a community driven initiative. Thus, all the subsequent standpoints that concerned the community development needs and challenges were based primarily on community members' perceptions and convictions. These are extensively witnessed by a number of major documents: 'Suiti cultural space' nomination (2009), a proposition of a safeguarding plan; memorandums of cooperation among partners involved at the national level (2010 and 2016); and the state report of Latvia on the element inscribed (2013).³ Further exploration of sustainable development concerns in regard to the safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space is to a large extent based on these documents, and on the personal experience of the involvement in nomination drafting and reporting processes, as well as on the participant observation of various community events organised for the purpose of ICH safeguarding.

Prospects for development – safeguarding plan

The safeguarding plan elaborated as a part of the 'Suiti cultural space' nomination has become the primary reference for further steps concerning various activities, carried out mainly on the national level, for safeguarding Suiti cultural traditions. While the nomination explores the diversity of characteristics of the cultural space, the nomination text clearly states that 'depopulation of this rural area today is the major risk for the long-term sustainability of the Suiti cultural space'. In other words, the motivation of community members to continue living in the

³ Nomination and state report of Latvia are available online, see UNESCO 2016d.

area was identified as a major challenge that demands policy measures that exceed the scope of cultural policy.

The Suti nomination and safeguarding plan therefore demonstrate clearly the necessary links between cultural, educational, and regional development policies and the importance of having a conceivably holistic view in safeguarding cultural spaces. The plan includes five major parts, namely: education (local history in school curricula, learning of traditional music instruments and local dialect); revitalisation of disappearing elements (wedding traditions, bagpipe playing, traditional costumes; research and publicity (local crafts, drone singing festival); cultural environment (restoration of the local medieval castle and municipal centres); and finally, 'long-term sustainability' (state-developed programme for a sustainable development of the Suti cultural space, assistance for transport infrastructure, and restoration of religious buildings).

Although neither the Ministry of Culture nor any state institutions have established a national policy programme designated specifically for the Suti, the State Culture Capital Fund (Valsts Kultūrkapitāla fonds) and other funding sources support the Suti community projects. Meanwhile, national partnerships have been strengthened for the purposes of safeguarding the Suti cultural space. In this regard, the respective cooperation memorandums should be mentioned in particular.



National and international partnerships – memorandums

The major actors in implementing the Suti cultural space safeguarding activities are local non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Associations that have been of particular importance include the Ethnic Culture Centre 'Suti' (Etniskās kultūras centrs "Suti") and foundation 'Sutu novads'.⁴ Since the inscription of the nomination other NGOs have been founded, which shows the growing activity aimed at elaborating common safeguarding initiatives. The scope of activities of local NGOs includes education, community driven research projects, restoration of religious buildings and objects,⁵ establishment of local collections of historic handicrafts, raising the visibility of local craftsmen and other actions. Part of these activities

⁴ See www.sutunovads.lv/en.

⁵ A collection of historical catholic liturgical vestments, gradually assembled, restored, and preserved with personal commitment of priest Andris Vasiļevskis has been inscribed on the Latvian national inventory of movable cultural monuments.



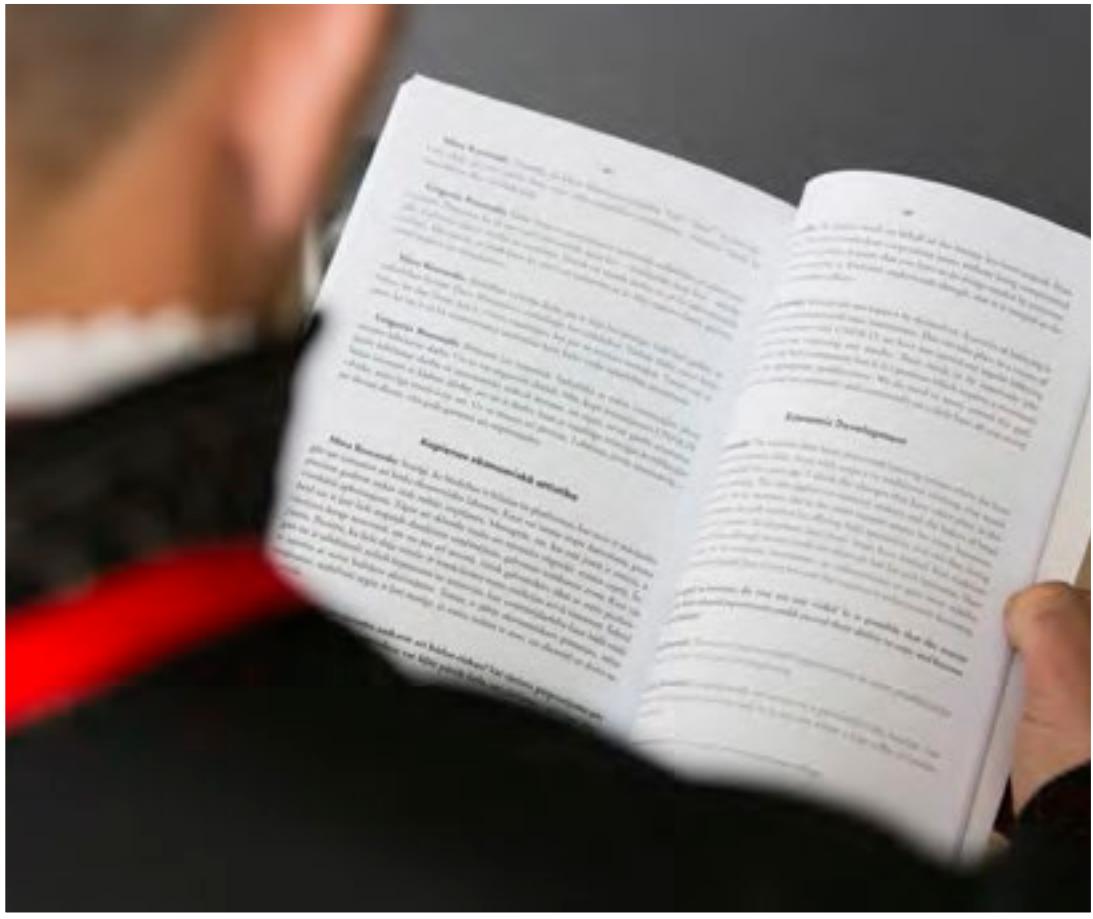
Suiti community representatives, Riga, National Library of Latvia, 17 August 2016, © Reinis Oliņš / Latvian National Centre for Culture.

was designed to involve various generations in the common undertakings and fostering local economic activities.

The Suti community is situated on the territory of three municipalities in the Kurzeme region in Latvia and has valuable experience in reinforcing cooperation among municipalities in terms of cultural life and the overall wellbeing of the community. Municipalities are indeed the closest partners for NGOs to carry out various ICH safeguarding activities, and also the ones taking direct responsibility for community development in social, economic, environmental, and other terms. In order to strengthen the partnerships between NGOs and municipalities, as well as with some state institutions, there have been two consecutive memorandums of cooperation signed in 2010 and 2016 since the inscription of 'Suti cultural space' on the Urgent Safeguarding List. The partners involved were the Ethnic Culture Centre 'Suti' NGO representing the Suti community, Ministry of Culture, Latvian National Centre for Culture (Latvijas Nacionālais kultūras centrs), three local municipalities – Alsunga, Kuldīga, and Ventspils – and the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO. The memorandums have been based on the Suti cultural space safeguarding plan, and mainly express the good will of all parties to contribute, as well as to fundraise the activities envisaged to safeguard and develop Suti cultural space, including its overall sustainability. Neither the Ministry of Education and Science (Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija), nor the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (Vides aizsardzības un reģionālās attīstības ministrija) have participated in signing these memorandums, which shows that in the fields of education and regional development there is still a certain distance of policy-makers towards the domain of ICH safeguarding. No financial sources are directly connected to these memorandums; nevertheless, they serve as a reference for concrete cooperation activities and applications for further assistance within existing funding schemes.

Apart from the established national cooperation modes, the international partnerships have been of significant importance, particularly the learning experiences of the communities in neighbouring Estonia. Over the years, the interest that initiated with Kihnu cultural space has grown towards extensive and well-thought cooperation with the Seto community in Southern Estonia (UNESCO 2016c; Estonia–Latvia Programme 2014).





Publication *Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: Latvian Experiences*, Riga, National Library of Latvia, 17 August 2016, © Reinis Oliņš / Latvian National Centre for Culture.

Community perspectives and challenges – state report

State report on the safeguarding of the Suti cultural space was prepared four years after the inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List and was submitted in December 2013. The report was elaborated on the basis of numerous group discussions and interviews with the Suti community members, and with their continuous involvement and concluding consent. Thus, it was intended to reflect as closely as possible the esteem of the community towards the safeguarding of their cultural heritage, together with its perspectives and challenges. For an assessment of the viability and current risks, three major aspects connected to sustainable development concerns have been highlighted by the community members:

1. Demography and practitioners. The community members raised a major concern over the reducing number of inhabitants, as well as over the issue of selling land that could provoke a twofold effect – arrival of newcomers that are not concerned with the safeguarding of Suti cultural traditions, or on the contrary, people who may become passionate about Suti culture and contribute to its safeguarding.
2. Transmission modes. According to the observations of the community, Suti cultural traditions are substantially less transmitted within families, and more within schools, which explains the role of educational institutions in the transmission. At the same time, the challenges of integrating new methods of education have been identified, including a response to the development of information technologies, which is the necessary framework for addressing younger audiences.
3. Socio-economic factors. Economic development of the area inhabited by the Suti has been highlighted as a fundamental issue that is decisive for the sustainability of the Suti community and its cultural space. Also, unreliable and insufficient funding was mentioned by the community concerned with the safeguarding activities. They are mainly project-based and compete with other cultural projects – either on the regional or national level.

Considering the possible connections between the experience of the Suti community and the newly adopted Chapter VI of the Operational Directives for the Implementation of the 2003 Convention ('Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development at the national level'), it is possible to observe that 'inclusive social development' and 'inclusive economic development' are today the pillars which are of primary concern in the case of Suti.



Concluding references – national law

At present, new perspectives at the national level are opening for further work on the connections between ICH and sustainable development. In September 2016, the Latvian Parliament Saeima adopted the Intangible Cultural Heritage Law.⁶ Among other issues, it states the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture to develop a national ICH safeguarding plan involving communities and other partners (i.e. other ministries). The law also grants certain community rights for the safeguarding of ICH. To mention some: the right to participate in legal, technical, organisational, administrative, and financial measures created and implemented by state administration, including local government institutions (i.e. on educational programmes); the right to the name of the element of ICH, and a reference to it, if used for economic or other purposes; as well as the right to information on community's own element of ICH.

There is another interesting aspect in this regard, and it is the community's right to refuse to participate in the measures for safeguarding ICH that are prepared and implemented by other persons (including the measures organised by the state administration or local government institutions). This means the protection of the community's freedom to decide in their best interest to participate or not in the safeguarding activities that are proposed. It serves to reinforce the core idea that the community should be able to decide on their own interests and ways of safeguarding their cultural traditions. The national law entered into force in December 2016, and its interpretation and implementation are still awaited and hoped to become a useful framework for defending the interests and rights of the Suti community.

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Vernacular religion as an element of intangible heritage in terms of sustainable development

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... one can easily see a renewed interest in the nature of things, with religion and religious practices regaining their potential to organise the world around us and once again considered as a factor that legitimises the prevailing order. Order, on the other hand, is a sine qua non condition to achieve balance and harmony in the development of society.

The concept of vernacular religion and sustainable development: anthropocentrism

When speaking of folk religion¹ in the context of sustainable development and the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, I propose that the term 'vernacular religion' should be used – a concept which I believe offers a substantial scope for interpretation, despite the fact that it has not attained the status of a scientific term just yet. By using this term I refer to the works of Piotr Kowalski (2002, 2003, 2004). Kowalski starts with the assumption that

One of the most significant domains of vernacular thought must surely be religion, which not only encompasses the catechetical perception of God, transcendence and eschatology, but also the beliefs which serve as a confirmation of the view of the world as well as of the manner in which one experiences the world around him and of the prevailing social and ethical order, etc.

He further states that 'in the societies of the centuries gone by, it was religion that served as the sole and final guarantee of cultural order' (Kowalski 2004, 105). He expresses the hope that even today, religion continues to perform the function of 'legitimising the existing order' (Kowalski 2004, 105), which, in the spirit of the UNESCO Convention, may be construed as a precondition in the process of sustainable cultural and social development (Jasiewicz 2013, 52; Ratajski 2013, 22; Janikowski 2009).



¹ Polish ethnologists have been using the term 'folk religion' for the purposes of describing and interpreting religious phenomena ever since the 1930; this term, founded upon the research of traditional rural communities, continued to form the basis of all the anthropological interpretations of folk religion and devotional practices in Poland despite being rather imprecise. For more information please refer to the classic works on the subjects such as Czarnowski 2005, Tomicki 1981 and Stomma 1986, as well as numerous later works such as Niedzwiedź 2006, Bukraba-Rylska 2008, 510–32.



Professor Katarzyna Smyk's speech on the Forum, October 2016. Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

Kowalski construes the term 'vernacular religion' as a category which characterises 'the living standards of a statistical, religious Pole', which should be placed

among the most crucial conceptions and motifs inherent to all men. One may even go as far as saying that the vernacular religious conceptions reflect the cultural patterns which prove to be effective due to their reliance on simple 'safe' ... solutions (Kowalski 2004, 106).

Kowalski uses the term 'simple solutions' to denote situations wherein a man is free 'from the risk and burden of individual decision-making', which inevitably entails 'the hardships inherent in the reflections on the meaning of life and the structure of values' (Kowalski 2004, 106). In the end, Kowalski concludes bitterly that

The difficulty inherent in the participation in symbolic order is never on the consumer's mind, for the consumer does not even notice the profound erosion of the symbolic interpretation of the world, despite the constant presence of long-standing signs which have now been reduced to attractive gadgetry (Kowalski 2004, 106–07).

In such situations, 'the significance of persuasion – effected both on an institutional and on a mass basis and manifesting itself in the course of everyday life – keeps on increasing' (Kowalski 2004, 106).

I am referring to the concept of vernacular religion with reference to the UNESCO 2003 Convention for two reasons. First, I am referring this term to the positive understanding of the term 'vernacular' as an anthropological and cultural category, one which may also be expressed using the word 'popular', i.e. common, practised by the average participants of the given culture. This is because, insofar as used by logicians, philosophers, sociologists and experts in cultural studies, the term 'vernacular' denotes a specific manner of experiencing the world around us as well as a specific attitude towards it, one that may be equated with naturalism; a natural attitude towards the world and a natural perception thereof (Kwaśnica 1991, 33; Anusiewicz 1992, 9). Vernacular knowledge, in turn, may be considered to be the same as collective knowledge, acquired and transmitted between generations through socially established frames of reference. For the above reason, the examination of such knowledge will necessarily be closely linked with the principles of the philosophy of common sense – a common sense that is equated with vernacular thinking – as well as with an anti-scientific strand of humanistic thought (Anusiewicz 1992, 9–10; Hołówka 1986, 173), even though many scholars refuse to consider vernacularity as being antithetical to the scientific approach to reality (Kwaśnica 1991, 34; Anusiewicz 1991, 17–18; Maćkiewicz 2000; Krąpiec 1985, 9; Hołówka 1986, 91–172).





Secondly, the concept of vernacular religion serves to apply an additional filter – a subjective one – to the phenomena of folk religious and devotional practices. As a result, the elements relevant to culture bearers – or heritage depositaries, as they are referred to in the UNESCO Convention – are transferred from the universal category of religious practices into the specific category of vernacular religion. The 2003 Convention promotes heritage elements ‘that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage’,² believing that they form an important factor of their cultural identity. This provision reflects the concept of sustainable development, which assumes that ‘the overriding purpose of development is the satisfaction of human needs on a lasting basis’ (Janikowski 2009, 26), with the principle of anthropocentrism being considered as the first among the principles of the pillar of ethics: ‘people are – and should be – in the centre of attention in the development process’ (Janikowski 2009, 26), along with the inalienable – it must be said – right to freely choose and practice one’s religion³ and the respect for the traditional forms of expression of one’s faith (Kongregacja ds. Kultu Bożego i Dyscypliny Sakramentów 2003, 8–25; Stępnik 2010).

In conclusion, both the UNESCO 2003 Convention and the concept of vernacular religion refer to the *emic* perspective (the perspective of an insider of the given culture) as well as to the category of vernacularity founded on a subjective, anthropocentric world view.

At this stage, I wish to pose an issue which may be summarised in the form of three questions. What are the provisions of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage concerning the phenomena which comprise vernacular religion? How does this relate to the traditional Polish system of values? To what extent can the activities performed in a manner consistent with the Convention – which may be considered to have an institutional persuasive value – reinforce religious practices and prevent the erosion or trivialisation of the symbolic interpretation of the world, thereby making a positive impact on sustainable development?

² *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Paris, 17 October 2003*, art. 2 (available online: www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/convention).

³ See art. 53 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland: ‘Art. 53. 1. Freedom of conscience and religion shall be ensured to everyone. 2. Freedom of religion shall include the freedom to profess or to accept a religion by personal choice as well as to manifest such religion, either individually or collectively, publicly or privately, by worshipping, praying, participating in ceremonies, performing of rites or teaching. Freedom of religion shall also include possession of sanctuaries and other places of worship for the satisfaction of the needs of believers as well as the right of individuals, wherever they may be, to benefit from religious services’ (*Konstytucja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 2 kwietnia 1997 r.*, Dziennik Ustaw [Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland] no. 78 item 437, 2 April 1997). One must also state at this stage that this need remains interminable in the present times as well, as proved by numerous works by various sociologists specialising in religion as well as specialists in the field of cultural studies (e.g. Mariański 2004; Libiszowska-Żółkowska 2007; Kupiński 2015).

Religion under the UNESCO 2003 Convention

In order to define the place of religion in the context of the UNESCO 2003 Convention, I have conducted a review of a set of documents which may be considered as having a standard-setting value as they contain the guidelines in the field of protection of intangible heritage. These include:

1. UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage – an act of international law;
2. *Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Adopted by the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention*⁴ – a document having the status of secondary law;
3. The publication entitled *Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2011) – a communication on intangible cultural heritage issued under the supervision of UNESCO; popular publication;
4. *Zarządzanie światowym dziedzictwem kulturowym* (UNESCO 2015), a Polish translation of the UNESCO publication *Managing Cultural World Heritage*, part of the *World Heritage Resource Manual* series, published in 2013 – popular publication in the form of a guidebook;
5. Application for inscription of a phenomenon on the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (along with the regulations, form, commentary and guidelines; National Heritage Board of Poland, February 2013);⁵
6. *Niematerialne dziedzictwo kulturowe w Polsce* (Intangible cultural heritage in Poland; Narodowy Instytut Dziedzictwa n.d.) – popular publication concerning intangible cultural heritage in Poland.



Trans-national level

The UNESCO 2003 Convention does not contain the term 'religiousness', 'religion' or any similar terms, which remains consistent with the intention of the architects of the Convention itself. It has been stated in the UNESCO (2011, 48) publication that during the first intergovernmental expert

⁴ *Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Adopted by the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention at its second session* (UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 16 to 19 June 2008), amended at its third session (UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 22 to 24 June 2010), its fourth session (UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 4 to 8 June 2012) and its fifth session (UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 2 to 4 June 2014), available online: ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ICH-Operational_Directives-5.GA-PDF-EN.pdf [accessed: 21.03.2016].

⁵ „Krajowa lista niematerialnego dziedzictwa kulturowego: formularz wniosku zgłoszeniowego [National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage: nomination application form]”, available online: niematerialne.nid.pl/Dziedzictwo_niematerialne/Krajowa_inwentaryzacja/Krajowa_lista_NDK [accessed: 7.05.2017].



Corpus Christi celebrations in Łowicz. Photo by Michał Zalewski, © National Heritage Board of Poland.



Celebrations in honour of St Roch with the blessing of animals in Mikstat. Photo Archiwum Diecezjalne Sanktuarium św. Rocha w Mikstacie, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

session concerning the draft convention for the safeguarding of intangible heritage held in Paris in September 2002, 'A consensus ... has been reached as to the non-inclusion of any references to religion in the field of "social practices, rituals and festive events"'. This attitude was put on a more formal footing in the *Operational Directives*, where, in art. 102, it is stated that 'All parties are encouraged to take particular care to ensure that awareness-raising actions will not: ... (c) contribute to justifying any form of political, social, ethnic, religious, linguistic or gender-based discrimination'.⁶ For the above reason, the UNESCO brochure, designed in a manner reminiscent of an advertising brochure and designed to promote the idea of ICH and the 2003 Convention, emphasises that 'Although religions confer a sense of identity and cultural consistency upon communities, they are not covered by the Convention in their own right. However, the Convention applies to religiously inspired cultural practices and means of expression' (UNESCO 2011, 55). It is suggested later on that the 'social practices, rituals and festive events' section will encompass religious practices.

The term 'religion' has also appeared in the same publication, in the sections elaborating the concepts of performing arts ('religious dances' – UNESCO 2011, 78) and of identification and inventory of ICH ('religious ceremonies and pilgrimages', 'religious practices' – UNESCO 2011, 67); descriptions of selected elements of world ICH also feature the use of the term ('religious rituals' – UNESCO 2011, 6). 'The increasing significance of the greatest world religions' is at the same time mentioned as one of the threats to intangible cultural heritage, having an impact on the customs, rituals and festive events, drawing more and more participants away from such practices and thereby depleting the pool of depositaries (UNESCO 2011, 83).

In the publication entitled *Managing Cultural World Heritage* (focusing, one must note, mostly on tangible heritage), released in Paris in 2013 under the auspices and supervision of UNESCO and forming part of the *World Heritage Resource Manual* series, the following terms were used: 'religious heritage' (UNESCO 2015, 30), 'management of religious properties', 'World Heritage properties of religious significance' and 'heritage forming the subject of religious interest' (UNESCO 2015, 50). This fact seems to suggest that it is ultimately rather difficult to speak of cultural heritage without using the term 'religion' or 'religious', for religion remains one of those areas of culture in the absence of which mankind would have been unable to attain a harmonious and complete existence (Krąpiec 2008, 91).



⁶ *Operational Directives*....

The Polish experience

In Poland, intangible heritage is defined using the concept of religious values, which is evidenced by the words of deputy minister Piotr Żuchowski in the preface to the publication entitled *Niematerialne dziedzictwo kulturowe w Polsce*: 'Cultural heritage accumulates and maintains a variety of values: intellectual, moral, social, religious or aesthetic' (Narodowy Instytut Dziedzictwa n.d., 5). One can see, therefore, that the integrity of religion and ICH is legitimised by the authorities and promoted on an institutional basis, with the emphasis being placed on the significance of religion for national culture and for the sustainable development of the Republic of Poland.

The final source which was subjected to analysis for the purposes of the present work and which performs a standard-setting function in Poland are the commentaries formulated by the Council for Intangible Cultural Heritage (Rada ds. niematerialnego dziedzictwa kulturowego), appointed by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage (Minister Kultury i Dziedzictwa Narodowego). In the course of preparations of the sample application for the inscription of an element of heritage on the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (Krajowa lista niematerialnego dziedzictwa kulturowego), a number of documents have been created which constitute binding guidelines for us today. The description of the areas in which intangible cultural heritage may manifest itself features the literal use of the term 'religious performances' as an example of the phenomena comprising the domain known as 'performing arts and music traditions'. Nevertheless, there are more terms used therein which denote religious practices. In accordance with the suggestion of the UNESCO (see UNESCO 2011, 55), an increasing number of examples which pertain to religious life can now be found in domain c) 'customs, rituals and festive events', known as 'socio-cultural practices' in the nomination regulations.⁷ These include, among others, funerary lamentations; annual, family or occasional rituals; customs and practices such as christenings, weddings, funerals; customs related to parish indulgence fairs and pilgrimages; festive customs and other types of behaviour which form examples of folk religious practices.

Vernacular devotional practices on the Polish list of intangible heritage

The Polish National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage⁸ includes two types of phenomena related

⁷ „Krajowa lista...”, p. 3–4.

⁸ Condition as of 1 November 2016. Source of all materials pertaining to the Polish list – see the website entitled *Krajowa lista niematerialnego dziedzictwa kulturowego* (Narodowy Instytut Dziedzictwa 2017). The review of the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and the analysis of the entries made on that list will form the subject of further analyses and studies. With time, one may also contemplate the extension of the Polish analytical material, as the number of entries on the National List of ICH continues to increase.

to Christian religious practices: phenomena related primarily to Christian liturgy, and phenomena which contain secondary references to Catholic religion or liturgy. The former consist of:

- celebrations in honour of St Roch with the blessing of animals in Mikstat;
- the Corpus Christi celebrations in Łowicz: a Catholic festival dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament.

The phenomena which contain secondary references to Catholic religion or liturgy can be divided into the following groups:

a) annual customs or ceremonies:

- the so-called *przywołówki dyngusowe* in Szymborze (Inowrocław) – a form of celebration held on Easter Sunday evening, forming a kind of introduction to the *Wet Monday or Dyngus Day* – the customary throwing of water on girls on Easter Monday, the primary function of which, however, is related to coquetry rather than religion;
- the Nativity scene (*szopka*) tradition in Kraków – a traditional craft which culminates each year during the Christmas period; the nativity scenes comprise a portrayal of the stable in Bethlehem as well as the key characters of Christianity such as Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary and Joseph;
- the Lajkonik procession – a procession which takes place on the octave of Corpus Christi, with the date of the procession always being linked to the liturgical calendar; the origins of the custom itself are non-religious in nature, stemming from the tradition of singing spring carols in the company of a wooden hobby horse;

b) local and community ceremonies containing references to the Catholic liturgy:

- the rafting traditions of Ulanów – a salute cannon of the local raftsmen known as the *beka wiwatówka* 'is used during major church ceremonies' (Narodowy Instytut Dziedzictwa 2017);
- the traditional bronze work technique used by the Felczyński family for producing bells in Taciszów – the bells are usually handed over 'for installation in a church bell tower. As the bells are handed over, a special blessing of the church bells takes place at the parish, in accordance with the relevant guidelines of the Holy See' (Narodowy Instytut Dziedzictwa 2017).

Which manifestations of vernacular religion are significant to the depositaries that submit the relevant elements of their heritage for the inscription on the National List? In order to answer this question, I have analysed the official descriptions of the phenomena inscribed on the List, specified and described on the website of the National Heritage Board of Poland in the *National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage* tab (Narodowy Instytut Dziedzictwa 2017). I have focused on the phenomena that are related strictly to liturgy: the celebrations in honour of St Roch with



the blessing of animals in Mikstat (M) and the Corpus Christi celebrations in Łowicz (Ł). In terms of quantity, this material may not be particularly impressive, yet it allows to demonstrate certain tendencies in the area in question.

The manifestations of vernacular religion in the context of the implementation of the provisions of the UNESCO 2003 Convention in Poland may be subdivided into several groups.

1. Liturgy-centred practices

The intangible cultural heritage manifests itself through the participation in a complex of religious services. For example, in Mikstat, 'the indulgence festivities are preceded by a 9-day novena and begin with a holy mass dedicated to the sick, which takes place on the Sunday preceding the indulgence itself'; a procession with the Blessed Sacrament and the relics of St Roch is held twice. In addition, the celebrations also include an all-night adoration and a shepherds' mass at midnight; at 11 am there is a solemn high mass, followed by an evening mass on the same day etc. (M).

2. Religious sensualism and ritualism

Religious sensualism and ritualism are the features of folk religious practices defined by Stefan Czarnowski and further elaborated by successive generations of ethnologists. The essence of sensualism is that it equates sanctity with the manifestation thereof, allowing it to be experienced through human senses and facilitating the coming together of 'spiritual reality and the reality of everyday life, of personal and collective existence' (Czarnowski 2005, 116–20; Stomma 1986, 215–19). Ritualism, on the other hand, is understood as the standardisation and unification of religious practices and the organisation of collective life around ritual schemes and ceremonial principles (Czarnowski 2005, 123–27; Stomma 1986, 206–09). Our inclusion of these concepts stems from the observation that sensualism and ritualism are prominent features of the religious practices of the bearers of ICH. They believe that the traditional cult of the Saints remains of great importance. For example, indulgence celebrations are a sign of gratitude towards St Roch for protecting the people against the plague; they are commonly referred to as the 'patron saint's name day', with the legend of St Roch being continuously cultivated among the faithful. The festivities also tend to be accompanied by exhibitions dedicated to St Roch (M). There are also numerous traditional festive attributes, such as special clothing, the construction of altarpieces, which are erected by the members of the same members of the local communities in the same locations every year, as well the tradition whereby banners, figures and

paintings of saints are carried along by those who walk in processions. Other customs include throwing flowers during the procession (Ł) or decorating various animals that walk alongside it (M). It is also crucial that the processions adhere to a traditional order, e.g. that all animals led by their owners towards the altar walk according to a strictly defined arrangement, while 'the blessing ceremony itself follows a clearly defined order. The riders on horseback lead the way, followed by horse-drawn carts, cows and, finally, larger carts loaded with sheep' (M). This description points towards the presence of elements of well-established traditions of vernacular religion which have existed for centuries.

3. Unusual elements

When describing their intangible heritage related to religious practices, the depositaries tend to point towards features which, while typical for the given practice, nevertheless set it apart in the liturgical calendar. This may be a space which is unusual for liturgies, such as a cemetery or 'a wooden church of St Roch located on the hill currently referred to as the Cemetery Hill or St Roch's Hill' (M). Other factors include unusual participants, such as the extraordinarily large number of 'parishioners, pilgrims and tourists' (M) or the participation of a municipal brass band composed of firefighters (Ł). Another variation on the theme of extraordinary participants is the presence of animals in sacred space (M). From the point of view of the depositaries of heritage, the unique atmosphere is also of immense importance, as evidenced by the following words: 'unique customs as well as the extraordinary, unforgettable atmosphere which accompanies ... the festivities', 'an outstanding spectacle' (M); 'an immensely important celebration', 'the vibrant procession, with its unique atmosphere, leaves the onlookers in a state of awe' (Ł). One can, therefore, conclude that the practices of vernacular religion also include elements of exoticism which have been acclimatised over the years – elements which reinforce the emotional bond of the depositaries with the given heritage phenomenon.

4. Local character

Piotr Kowalski (2004, 110) notes that '... the very nature of vernacular thinking results, inter alia, in the apparent ease with which one connects emotionally potent religious experiences, the manifestations of religious feelings and equally powerful emotions of a patriotic nature'. It is true that in the descriptions of the elements included on the Polish list of ICH, the references to patriotism are also clearly evident, with the very phenomenon of intangible heritage forming an opportunity to demonstrate one's attachment to the Local Homeland. For example, 'Staying in Łowicz during Corpus Christi and participation in the holy mass and procession in regional



Łowicz outfits ... is a significant determinant of Łowicz residents' distinctiveness', while the procession itself '... remains a symbol of the Łowicz region' (Ł).

5. The commercialisation of religion

Piotr Kowalski (2004, 117–22) refers to the phenomenon of the commercialisation of religion, existing in the sphere of the sacred, as one of the manifestations of vernacular religion, with market stalls, souvenirs, devotional articles, plastic copies of sacred images as well as products originating from other spheres which are cleverly adapted in order to attract churchgoers (e.g. silver heart-shaped balloons with an image of St John Paul II, the Virgin Mary of Częstochowa, etc.) serving as its icons. In this sense, the commercialisation of religion turns out to be an inseparable part of religious practices in which intangible heritage manifests itself – hence the presence of such mercantile elements as the stalls on parish indulgence fairs: 'A fair known as the "*budy*" (the shanties) among Mikstat residents, which takes place in the street below the sanctuary, is an attraction for children and others. On this occasion, children obtain the so-called indulgence money from their parents and grandparents' (M). Another element which becomes clearly apparent at this stage is religious tourism: '... even where the indulgence festivities take place during the week, they attract large numbers of parishioners, pilgrims and tourists, which make advance arrangements in order to ensure that they are free on that day' (M).

6. Continuity – identity – values

The depositaries remain well aware of the fact that religious practices ensure the transmission of traditions, which allows for the continuity of identity to be maintained. They tend to use exalted phrases when referring to the heritage elements that are to be inscribed on the list, such as

It is not only the result of the fact that they remain deeply anchored in this community – it also proves the adherence to the faith of our ancestors and to the traditions which are passed down through generations. The depositaries have emphasised that the persons from Mikstat often travel back to their home town to participate in indulgence festivities together with their children (M).

The traditions related to Corpus Christi processions are passed on from generation to generation and families become involved in decorating altars, carrying parish banners, figures and paintings depicting saints as well as carrying flags, pillows and throwing flowers. ... Staying in Łowicz during Corpus Christi and participating in the holy mass and the procession in regional Łowicz outfits constitute an important factor for building individual identity (Ł).



This participation is also linked to social prestige: 'carrying parish banners is considered to be ... a great honour and distinction', which is why some people have performed these prestigious functions continuously for decades (Ł).

Another value which the depositaries of heritage place a particular emphasis on is the integration of the former and present parishioners: 'Everyone who has ever lived in this parish do their best to participate in the St Roch indulgence', 'the mass is celebrated by the priests originating from the parish', while traditions related to St Roch himself 'remain a factor which creates a bond between those who still live here and those who have lived here in the past' (M). 'The Corpus Christi celebrations in Łowicz bring families and generations together. Great attachment shown by Łowicz residents to this tradition makes them return from far-away regions of Poland, or even from abroad, to their family homes to take part in this unique celebration each year' (Ł). Even the dead are considered to form part of the community that is brought back together during these festivities:

Garlanded graves and burning votive candles remain a symbol of the unique community which includes both those who had once worshipped St Roch and those who continue to do so today. In a way, this is a meeting of generations, a homage to those who allowed this tradition to survive into the modern times (M).

The application form for the inscription on the Polish list does not require information of this sort to be given; nevertheless, the depositaries tend to provide it anyway, which means that these matters are of great importance to them and should, therefore, be seen as significant from the point of view of vernacular religion.



Summary

Piotr Kowalski relates the concept of vernacular religion to kitsch as a cultural and ethical category (as opposed to an aesthetic or artistic one – cf. eg. Broch 1998; Hendrykowski 1997), concluding that:

The attitudes towards the world, the manners of perception thereof and the way in which we tend to systematise and conceptualise the reality around us all tend to find expression in the form of myriad varieties of kitsch which have been encroaching upon religious life for a long time now. Today, the situation is perhaps even more difficult than it had once been, for the average modern inhabitant of our world can easily find access to every corner thereof, every element, thus frequently choosing to ignore everything that demands



an interpretative effort or existential inconvenience. And so everything becomes mixed together so that the resulting indistinctiveness paralyses any effort to organise the world around us (Kowalski 2004, 141–42).

However, the inclusion of part 6. *Continuity – identity – values* in the above analysis proves that the tendency which characterises the mentality of the members of the mentioned communities is exactly the opposite, as these people face the task of identification of their intangible heritage, forced to determine which elements comprise their true cultural identity. In this process, one can easily see a renewed interest in the nature of things, with religion and religious practices regaining their potential to organise the world around us and once again considered as a factor that legitimises the prevailing order. Order, on the other hand, is a *sine qua non* condition to achieve balance and harmony in the development of society. The depositaries, in fact, when applying for the given phenomenon to be inscribed on the National List of intangible cultural heritage, make an ‘interpretative effort’ mentioned by Kowalski, one that has long been abandoned in our mass culture. By doing so, they provide proof of their reflections on their own cultural identity, leaving the comfort zone which remains the hallmark of kitsch.⁹ As a result, the depositary – acting as a participant of cultural life (a culture insider) – looks beyond the *emic* perspective, thus expanding his or her view of the world, stepping into the shoes of an outsider. From this perspective – one that may to some extent be referred to as *etic* – the depositary may assess the uniqueness, complexity and depth of the content of his or her culture, which makes it possible to decide where to direct his or her work and efforts in order to ensure the sustainable development of the community. The UNESCO 2003 Convention may serve as a useful tool in this process since it imposes an obligation to involve the depositaries in every stage of preparation of an application for inscription on the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage as well as to ensure the protection of such heritage in accordance with the plan attached to the application. The aim of the Convention is ‘to raise awareness ... of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage and the protection thereof’.¹⁰

Could the UNESCO 2003 Convention become one of the instruments for the ‘management’ of vernacular religion? When will the Convention attain an influence that would make it possible to ‘manage’ the vernacular conception of the world, for example by ushering religious practices beyond the domain of kitsch and trivialisation and towards the enlightening consciousness of their essence and significance? Can it influence the process of shaping the consciousness of the depositaries of heritage, change their attitude towards religious practices as a value which is worthy

⁹ Kitsch is characterised, among other things, by an attitude which emphasises the ease of acceptance and the need for comfort (Moles 1978, 76–80).

¹⁰ *Convention for the Safeguarding...*

of both protection and UNESCO branding? These issues, viewed from the Polish perspective, will form the subject of further analysis.

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Importance of inter-institutional cooperation for ICH safeguarding and sustainable development.

The case of dry stone building

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The exploitation of natural resources might be accordingly diminished by giving more importance to traditional ways of their use, and by including the old technique into the management of certain geographical areas, including valuable cultural and natural landscapes.

Introduction

Sustainable development in the context of cultural heritage safeguarding has many facets (Albert 2015, 17). This paper will mention only some of the issues arising from the topic of the Forum on the connection between intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development. Working on ICH safeguarding in Croatia as an expert and state official in the Ministry of Culture (Ministarstvo kulture), I have encountered multiple dilemmas when considering the inclusion of ICH into the current social mainstream to secure its viability. In this sense, sustainable development has proved to be one of the main aspects of ICH safeguarding goals as envisioned by the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.¹ I will consider here the economic use of ICH, the broader social impact of ICH safeguarding, and intellectual property rights on ICH, basing my insights on a number of cases in Croatia.

To broaden the context, it should be mentioned that Croatia has been influenced by numerous international efforts on the safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage, and in recent several decades has tried to implement the general guidelines via the national legislation and planned activities (Domijan 2004). What is more, in recent years in Croatia, the preservation of nature has received increased attention due to the issues raised on the need for industrial development and exploitation of natural resources. Moreover, already in 1979, one of the most important Croatian national nature parks, the Plitvice Lakes, and one of the most important cultural-historical cities, the Old Town of Dubrovnik were inscribed onto the UNESCO World Heritage List. Following the 1990s



¹ On the connection of ICH and sustainable element in the spirit of the 2003 Convention, see UNESCO online publication *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development* (UNESCO 2015).



wars in ex-Yugoslavia (in Croatia referred to as the 1990s Homeland War), the inscriptions of tangible heritage have further emphasised the need to take care of valuable cultural and natural heritage in Croatia, especially after war damages that the monuments and nature had suffered (Goldstein 1999). However, the evaluation of the war damages to cultural heritage in Croatia focused more attention on the material rather than the intangible cultural heritage.² The ICH, however, has also significantly suffered due to the forced displacement of people and the discontinuation of traditional expressions. Fortunately, it was in most cases (but not all) renewed soon after the return of refugees to their homes, and proved that the know-how and the knowledge possessed by bearers provides a solid basis for the continuation of traditions, even after such difficult times of war and population resettlement. One such case is the Festivity of Saint Blaise³ that takes place every year since the 10th century in the town of Dubrovnik, an event which was brought back immediately after the war had stopped. As the main part of the festivity takes place on the main street of Dubrovnik, Stradun, as soon as the conditions had become safe, the festivity restarted, even before the renovation of all town buildings was finished. This proved once again how closely ICH is connected to the environment in which it is shaped and performed. Today, unfortunately, the festivity is becoming increasingly more endangered due to mass tourism, which causes a rapid depopulation of the town. At the moment, action is planned to control the number of tourists in order to stop the negative effects on the town.⁴ A very good example of bringing together tourism and ICH while ensuring long-term sustainability is also the Batana Ecomuseum Project,⁵ which aims at several goals: safeguarding ICH, conservation of objects and buildings, inclusion of bearers into planning, control of tourism by the bearers themselves, placement of traditional food on the market and its use in tourism as well as its use in every-day life, educational programmes, direct transmission of know-how, international cooperation, etc. Those are all important qualities of this project, in which the stakeholders make decisions, but the main role belongs to the bearers themselves and the local community, who are supported by the local authorities and expert institutions. Due to its successful implementation, the project is inscribed into the UNESCO Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.

The war events and mass tourism are not the only conditions that influence the cultural heritage in Croatia and its viability. For almost 100 years, there has been continual conservation care for cultural

² As intangible heritage has only recently begun to be systematically safeguarded in the world, inspired by the 2003 Convention, it was not only Croatia that was focusing for a long time primarily on tangible rather than intangible heritage (see more in Bouchenaki 2004).

³ 'The Festivity of Saint Blaise' is inscribed in the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

⁴ On the relationship between traditional heritage and tourism, see Jelinić 2006.

⁵ On the Batana Project, see www.batana.org.

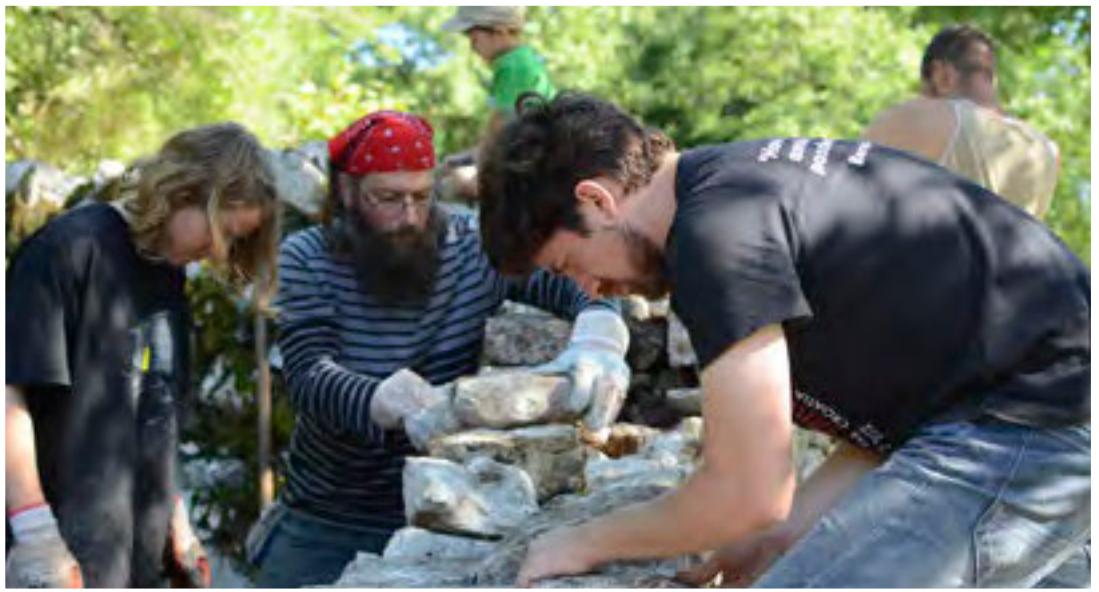
heritage in Croatia (Deranja Crnokić 2015), with the inscriptions into the National Registry of Cultural Goods kept by the Ministry of Culture (Registar kulturnih dobara Republike Hrvatske), listing a total of around 5000 elements of immovable, movable and natural heritage.⁶ The inscriptions of intangible cultural heritage into the National Registry started around the year 2000, counting 150 ICH elements in the Registry, and 15 elements on the UNESCO's ICH lists until 2017. Such large number of the inscribed ICH elements in only 10 years is a result of good cooperation between the Ministry of Culture, the experts, and the bearers; it has enabled the fast gathering of documentation, which is in a way a continuation of the previous good conservation practice in Croatia, and its adaptation to ICH as a specific category of cultural heritage (Hrovatin 2016). At the same time, I consider the fast inscriptions also to be a reflection of a long-term process spanning over the last several decades in Croatia and in the world: the growing awareness of the local communities and various other local stakeholders (including museums, companies, tourist boards) about the value of the local cultural and national heritage, as well as ICH, which is considered by the public to be in danger of disappearing if not well documented and passed on. Not only the bearers and local communities have been increasingly engaged in implementing various programmes on ICH safeguarding; they have also been making sure that their heritage is adequately presented to the public, and that they are actively involved in all the phases of various processes such as researching, documenting, developing their own safeguarding projects, incorporating them into tourism, asking for financial support, which subsequently results in inscriptions into the Registry. These activities in Croatia have been to some extent made possible due to more factors: development of global communications, recuperation after the 1990s wars, continuous presence of ethnologists and cultural anthropologists in some communities, increased activities of museums aimed at local communities, influence of tourism on the need for presentation of local heritage, overall development of the country resulting in opening of the local communities to international and regional cooperation, and other factors.



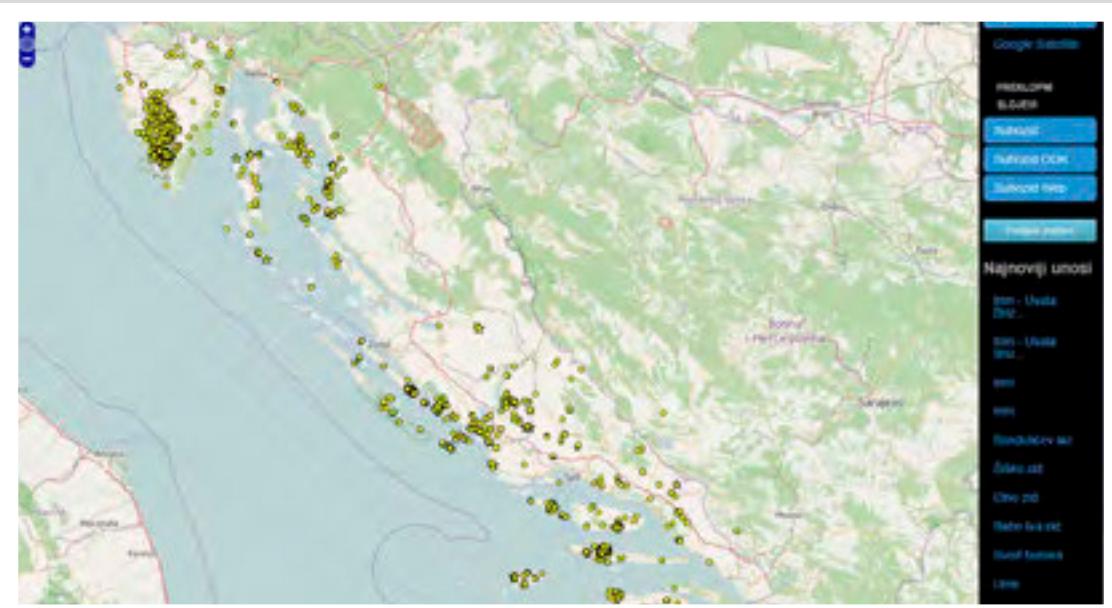
The case of dry stone building

Although Croatia has established a good legislative basis for developing a high-level preservation of natural and cultural heritage, there are more issues that still need to be tackled and that are becoming more difficult to resolve, especially regarding ICH. Such is the issue of the reconciliation

⁶ The Registry is public and can be accessed via the website of the Ministry of Culture: www.min-kulture.hr/default.aspx?id=6212.



Petrebišća: Building and renewal of dry-stone walls, 2014. Photo by Nevena Kereša, © Association 4 grada Dragodid.



Dry wall online interactive mapping of sites and objects with the participation of experts and bearers, <http://suhozid.geof.unizg.hr> [accessed: 28 October 2016].

of new agricultural and economic demands with the preservation of landscapes and traditional ways of land use that would ensure the adjustments to new social needs. Let us here consider the example of dry stone building techniques as an ICH element that is inscribed in the Registry, but still has to resolve many of the issues concerning its future viability. On the one hand, there are the bearers that keep and use the traditional know-how but on the other hand, they are too dispersed to have a bigger influence on the wider community and on the economic-market stakeholders who could include them into new projects. An NGO Dragodid,⁷ which is dedicated solely to the safeguarding of this ICH and its future, has been very active in the attempts to bridge the gap between the traditional needs for building with stone and in the new economic and developmental demands of the society as a whole.

Most of the Adriatic landscape is made of karst (limestone and dolomite rocks), and there is little land that can be used for growing crops. Therefore, in the past, the traditional way of securing fields involved removing stones from them and using those stones for building small and long walls to prevent the land from being washed away by water and the wind, and to protect it from animals. This knowledge goes back a long way – to pre-historic times – and it remains in use today. However, it has slowly started to disappear as sea tourism appropriated most of the economy of the Adriatic during the 20th century, and led people to turn to easier income from tourism. Thus, today, even if some of the farmers still use and cultivate the land in the karst area, they usually do not use the services of the people who know how to build a traditional stone wall without using mortar but instead build them using concrete or some other, newer materials. In this way they do not only devastate the visual and historical values of the cultural landscape they are using, but also indirectly endanger the intangible heritage that lies behind this type of ancient construction. The change should thus be made not only on the local level but more so on the state level; in a way that secures the current economic needs of the masters of this skill. However, the Ministry of Culture cannot ensure the safeguarding of this type of ICH without the help of other institutions, such as the Ministry of Economy (Ministarstvo gospodarstva), Regional Development (regionalnog razvoja), Tourism (turizma), Agriculture (poljoprivrede), Environment (zaštite okoliša), and others. Moreover, the active involvement of other organisations such as the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts (Hrvatska obrtnička komora) could also help in securing the visibility and the new use of traditional knowledge. For now, there is little joint dialogue on the matters of ICH and its sustainability that should be supported institutionally from different sectors.

⁷ On the activities and mission of the NGO, see www.dragodid.org.





Rovinj: Workshop in making wooden *batana* boat, including the use of multimedia, 2015.
Photo by Kosjenka Brajdić Petek, © Ecomuseum Batana.

One example showing how the traditional knowledge of dry stone building could be used is the Starigrad Plain on the island of Hvar, inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Its main value rests upon the old planning of the agricultural fields that has been continued from Antiquity until today. There is a great need for preservation of its ancient appearance and land use, especially today when it is recognised as an invaluable cultural heritage site. Thus, there have been projects drafted and developed for its sustainable management.⁸ The experts agree that in its maintenance, a big role should be given to the traditional masters of dry stone building. But even if the future management agents employ these masters, they will not have the legal means to include them in the renewal of dry stone walls on the Plain. The main obstacle is the fact that the individual traditional masters still have no opportunities to get the required professional licences (as for example architects do) because they have no proof of their professional training in this skill as prescribed by the regular procedure. Instead of organised school, they have been acquiring their knowledge through direct transmission from their family members (mostly men, but also women) and neighbours. The inscription into the Registry of this ICH element has thus opened possibilities for getting special restoration and conservation licences for such traditional skills. These licences would enable the bearers to enter the current economic market and raise their overall cultural value among the public as keepers of traditional knowledge and skills.

Besides dry stone walls, there are many other old stone buildings and objects in need of renovation all over Adriatic, for which the old technique could be useful. Thus hiring traditional masters would be more suitable than using licensed firms which specialise only in construction and architecture. What is more, once these traditional skills lead to securing future employment, this measure would motivate younger generations to learn and master them. In that sense, providing the masters with official education or apprenticeship degrees within licensed schools or programmes would be a considerable step forward in securing the sustainability of this ICH element. However, for now, the only measures aimed at education are the temporary workshops that the NGO arduously organises and implements with the help of local bearers and authorities along the Adriatic coast. They result in raising the awareness of the need to preserve this heritage in the local environment. Furthermore, if this skill could be introduced into regular educational programmes, it might ensure long-term results in terms of qualitative transmission and keep new apprentices in the local communities, as they are already largely affected by depopulation in recent decades on the Adriatic coast, especially the islands.

⁸ Information from the expert meetings on the preparation of the multinational file on dry stone building in the Ministry of Culture, Croatia.



The current market demand for stone building is another area where this old know-how could be successfully employed. Many people decorate their houses and backyards in the old Mediterranean style to attract tourists that look for authentic places. Unfortunately, many house owners use low-quality, ready-made products such as concrete blocks that only imitate dry stone building. They are probably unaware of the damage they inflict to the aesthetics of the space, but also to intangible heritage in general. The awareness of the value of this ICH and its inclusion into current trends and needs of the economic market and society as a whole should, therefore, be continually increased. What is more, the communities and families could appreciate this kind of ICH and possibilities of its use by actively involving wider social circles and economic-market stakeholders.

Intellectual property rights and ICH

One of the issues that have been raised alongside the inscriptions of ICH into the Registry and UNESCO Lists is the competition for the intellectual rights on ICH between local communities (Nikočević et al. 2012). The issue of intellectual property (IP) was actually one of the main reasons why the 2003 Convention had not been drafted and introduced earlier.⁹ The influence of Western cultures and the new global trends of authorship right protection in all the spheres of production and creativity today are visible also in Croatia. The issue of IP has also been raised for some time now, and in the case of ICH, it usually comes into view when the bearers want to use the material aspect of their ICH. Indeed, this is yet another issue connected to the sustainability of ICH today. So, who has the right to ICH? Who can use the know-how and turn it into their personal benefit? Who can sell the products originating from the traditional technique? At first, these questions might seem simple, and the answer could merely be based on forwarding this issue to intellectual rights institutions. In Croatia, there is, in fact, adequate legislation that covers this issue, namely the Copyright and Related Rights Act.¹⁰ Furthermore, the State Intellectual Property Office (Državni zavod za intelektualno vlasništvo)¹¹ provides services for those who want to protect their intellectual property. For example, the Office gives a special Designation of Origin to a number of traditional

⁹ According to the information on the UNESCO website about the history of the 2003 Convention (UNESCO 2016).

¹⁰ *Zakon o autorskom pravu i srodnim pravima*, Narodne Novine [National Newspaper] 167/2003, 22 October 2003, available in English at: www.dziv.hr/files/File/eng/zakon_autor_ENG.pdf.

¹¹ For more information about the State IP Office, see www.dziv.hr.

products, such as traditional embroidery, i.e. lace. In practice, this designation gives the groups, NGOs, and individual persons an official permission to sell their products on the market under their traditional name (e.g. Lepoglava Lace, Pag Lace, etc.). What is more, it is all well-defined within the legal framework of the state. However, in several communities the manipulation of information about the reality of the ICH element has caused a situation in which the permission is given only to those who apply for this right, leaving aside others who either do not know about their rights or were not informed about them. Also, those who are somehow disconnected from the individual, group, or even an NGO that applies for the permission remain aside and thus become deprived of their rights. Who can protect the ones that are left without the possibility to claim and use their rights to their tradition? They have the right to complain or to apply for the certificate that proves they can use the traditional name for their products, however, there might be difficulties in proving the know-how before the qualified NGO or the individual who judges them on whether they make the product in the 'proper', traditional way or not. In this sense, the individual is vulnerable to manipulation from a stronger group or an individual within the community. Those power relations are indeed issues that might be tackled with public discussions, the active involvement of experts, additional scientific research, and a public display of research results, as well as the inclusion of local authorities into mitigating such social inequalities (assuming that the authorities do not support the stronger group). No examples are mentioned here, as the Ministry of Culture has tried to adequately name all the bearers as much as possible in the texts that form the basis for the inscription of an ICH into the National Registry. Some individuals that had been left out contacted the Ministry after the inscription and thus have been subsequently included in the new, revised lists of bearers. These lists are also sent to the first bearers that were listed so that they are also informed about the new bearers. Whenever possible, the experts from the Ministry and expert institutions raise awareness about this issue, and about the understanding of ICH as part of the culture that belongs to the broader community, not only to individuals. This way assures the right place of all the bearers in connection to their ICH.

Besides embroidery, a lot of proposals on the first inscriptions into the National Registry were focused on particular types of traditional Croatian food; various groups and individuals wanted to protect their recipes and know-how in preparing their traditional meals, cakes, and other dishes. It was obvious that it was the easiest way for the bearers to officially confirm that they could somehow exercise their rights to their tradition and sell their products that base on it. The importance of traditional food and many proposals of this type of ICH have resulted also from the lack





of any other preserved ICH elements in certain local communities. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Culture has remained detached from official expressions of any kind of support to any of the groups or individuals and has recognised the traditional types of food only as specific to some wider geographical areas; extending them to more than one individual or one group of people. This caused the lack of interest for further proposals for inscription of traditional food-making into the Registry and diverted the bearers' attention towards the Ministry of Agriculture, which gives special official marks of origin for traditional food.¹² It might seem that in the cases where the Ministry of Agriculture gives such marks, there are also some groups, firms, or NGOs that control the rights to the production of traditional food. However, when such parties want to join the market and sell their products under the name that is protected by the Ministry of Agriculture, they have to go through the whole procedure, in which the group or firm that holds the rights decides whether this new party properly follows tradition. This type of control creates significant space for manipulation and restriction of the placement of products on the market that can jeopardise the production and income of those who hold the rights. However, the attempts to safeguard and control the placement of the products that might be called 'traditional' is the right of the bearers themselves and their associations; it is up to them to protect their traditional heritage and to fend off any misuse of their ICH and prevent harm that might be inflicted upon them if the market is left unguarded.

Cultural anthropologists are perhaps more sensitive to the questions of intellectual property rights due to the history of this scientific discipline; such is also the case in Croatia. However, when met with specific situations in Croatia, they do not know how to respond to the questions of IP, either because they think that – being experts that often get already deeply involved in all the phases of these processes [of intangible heritage safeguarding – editorial note] – it is not their task, or because they believe other institutions and experts should address these problems. A more systematic field research of the cases in Croatia could contribute to making some general guidelines on how to deal with these issues. This might help cultural anthropologists in their future work with local communities and in planning the inclusion of ICH into the current market.

¹² All the other types of traditional products and know-how are under the jurisdiction of the State Intellectual Property Office. On the Ministry of Agriculture and designations of origin for food, see www.mps.hr/default.aspx?id=10.

Conclusion

It might be concluded that the planning of any introduction of ICH into a more intensive economic use, tourism, a new use, or any other current trend should not only involve bearers but also many different stakeholders on various levels, including the local, state, expert, private, and other ones. Humanities experts and scientists, especially cultural anthropologists, are very important in bridging the gap between the overuse of ICH and its viability, as they are more sensitive to the needs of individuals and they understand different types of functioning of local communities. Thus, some overall guidelines might be made on the expert and state levels to ensure the sustainability of ICH that is used in new ways and for new purposes, considering the commercialisation of only some of its aspects and the awareness-raising of the less obvious social role of ICH for the local community and broader society. However, not all the solutions can be reached for all types of ICH on the theoretical or universal levels. Thus, the more local and specific approach to ICH, the better.

Through history, until today, it has always been the broader social and economic value and demand that influenced the safeguarding and continuation of many ICH elements such as those mentioned in this paper. There are still more challenges and dilemmas to be tackled than concrete results and answers in Croatia, but in this respect, the NGOs make great efforts in raising awareness and insisting on the protection and preservation of cultural and natural values and resources. With many cultural, heritage, and ecological associations, activities and citizen initiatives, there has been significant progress so far, but still not enough for the wider public to realise the need to involve ICH in the new demands connected to development and to secure the sustainability of certain areas. Educational programmes, both formal and informal, could significantly help in preparing new generations to use ICH as an invaluable resource for the future management of local areas. Although today school programmes cover some of these issues, not enough attention is given to connecting old and new ways of using nature and its resources. In some cases, the transmission of the know-how to the younger generations could be successfully secured by continual education rather than just by transmission within the families – as seen in the example of dry stone building, which shows how economy demands licensed masters to enter the market legally. The resulting exploitation of natural resources might be accordingly diminished by giving more importance to traditional ways of their use, and by including the old technique into the management of certain geographical areas, including valuable cultural and natural landscapes.



The issue of intellectual property rights that might be unevenly given to stakeholders with more power in local communities rather than other members in the same communities could result in the lack of motivation to continue certain traditions. These and other issues are dealt with in Croatia by different state and expert institutions, who are still not mutually connected enough to invent more adequate solutions for each ICH case and its local community. This significantly disables the implementation of the protection and safeguarding measures in specific geographical areas in the long-term. Thus, the inclusion of all the stakeholders, especially the bearers and the entire local community on all stages of planning such developmental projects – from the beginning until the end – should be ensured in order to enable long-term sustainable growth and safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage.

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Securing the future of intangible cultural heritage in Romania in a sustainable way: benefits and subsequent risks

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The steps towards a secure future may be symbolised by an image of concentric waves on water, created by an object falling in. In the centre, we have the public acknowledgement of cultural value, but then local initiatives have to be supported and protected from the pressure exerted by central standards.

It is common to admit the dynamic nature of intangible heritage and to assert that socio-economic conditions influence a selection of folk practices, beliefs, crafts, and other traditions. Even the concept of 'living heritage', often used as a synonym for intangible cultural heritage (Park 2013, 1), implies organic transformations over time, which adds to its generally accepted characteristic as active practice that has been transmitted by the elders to the youth, and continues to be perceived as a cultural identity mark by the entire community.

Evolution is hence the key to understanding traditional culture, as noted by experts. 'ICH is by definition a living entity, and its capacity to constantly adapt itself in response to the historical and social evolution of its creators and bearers represents one of its main distinguishing features' (Lenzerini 2011, 108). The best example for this internal dynamism is the Romanian custom related to childbirth practices. It is called 'the sleeves of the midwife' (*mâneclile moaște*) and it can be also encountered among Moldavians, Ukrainians, Bulgarians, and Russians. The women that were attended at birth by traditional midwives had to make a ritual gift eight days after their labour. Since the physiological process implies an impure contamination, they offered two metres of house-woven cloth to the midwives, to replace their stained sleeves. They also poured water on their hands and gave them soap to restore their initial condition.

Although women were banned from giving unattended birth at home 70 years ago, this custom remains active to this day, and it is performed on a daily basis in hospitals and clinics. Its social impact is still important, and infringements on it are believed to cause immediate misfortune, as our informants declared. The changes imposed on people did not significantly corrupt the tradi-



tional practice, and today, the presence of a midwife who performs traditional birth-attendant gestures became a mandatory ceremonial presence (Hulubaş 2011).

This spontaneous transmission is reinforced by a general belief in its magical efficiency, which makes it a cultural phenomenon that the ICH certifies. 'Such a heritage has the intrinsic capacity to modify and shape its own characteristics in parallel to the cultural evolution of the communities concerned and is therefore capable of representing their living heritage at any moment' (Lenzerini 2011, 118). Nevertheless, this process is no longer reliable as a natural selection for further transmission, as a result of exposure to other folk practices. The 2003 Convention, however, appeared on time to guide the passing of traditional knowledge to the younger generations.

It is the youth who can assure a sustainable future for ICH, but the socio-economical context about the importance of folk culture may confuse the general public. Moreover, the millennium-old process that has brought us valuable cultural manifestations is in need of maintenance, especially when craftsmen face public exposure and cultural interferences. 'Craftsmanship of Horezu ceramics', for example, was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2012; the pottery of this type is now the most frequent sight both on traditional fairs and even in multinational hypermarkets. Unfortunately, potters from other ethnographic zones react to its success in an imperilling manner. In Marginea, Suceava, black pots have been produced until eight years ago and made the village famous for their specific craftsmanship. Today, tourists entering the workshop encounter Horezu plates for sale, which are brought from 500 km away. Other potters paint the Horezu cock, a trademark image for this ceramic products, on plates whose chromatics belong to the Baia Mare region, up in the northern part of Romania.

A month after the release of the 2003 Convention, experts began to express their worries that safeguarding would, in fact, create 'an environment that only mimics nature' (Brown 2012, 95). One response raised the possibility that it might 'change the course of things' (Kurin 2012, 100).

We could let 'nature' take its course and have no such cultural intervention. But there is nothing 'natural' about the issues that beset ICH in the world today. They are the result of particular social and economic activities that characterize contemporary societies and world systems (Kurin 2007, 18).

Cash flow decides what reaches the public eye. Hence, we are confronted with a double risk: on the one hand, if experts do not intervene, traditional knowledge fades away under the pressure exerted by standardised models. On the other hand, raising awareness has to be a well-supervised process, since overrating local practices may have a similar levelling effect on other expressions. As Claude Lévi-Strauss (2007, 7) observed at the celebration of six decades of UNESCO activity,

we have 'to overcome the apparent antinomy between the oneness of human condition and the inexhaustible plurality of forms in which we apprehend it'.

The second danger comes from the loss of the initial purpose, represented by the practitioner community. Not only does the 'spontaneity' of the rite disappear (Brown 2012, 95), but also its magical utility. The 'Căluş ritual', inscribed in 2008, is the perfect illustration of this alienation. Originally proclaimed by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity (2005), this athletic dance was performed only nine days per year, starting from Whitsunday. The initiation into the rite was secret; dancers swore a still-secret vow at the borders of their village and then performed public representations meant to bring fertility to barren women and cure fearful diseases such as epilepsy. All magic implications seem to be lost now since the only knowledge that is passed on to beginners is the virtuosity of the dance (Ştiucă 2009, 20). Even more so, *Căluşari* perform at festivals all year long, at weddings, flash mobs (although their ritual number is limited to uneven sums: five, seven, nine, or eleven), and they even participate in processions intended to bless new cars in order to ward off future accidents.

Căluş resembles other rituals, such as the dance of Podhale highlanders with ciupagas. These specific hatches have an obvious apotropaic function while dancing in a circle invokes solar protection. Like the Romanian *Căluşari*, the dancers' purpose is to ward off evil intentions and bring good health and fertility into the community. Another similarity can be traced within the Polish *zbójnicki* dance, both in choreography and in the spectacular purpose of today's representations.

Moreover, on the southern side of Romania, in Ialomiţa, dancers use ritual sticks that have a horse head carved at the tip, a detail that links *Căluşari* with *Căiuţi*, played at the winter solstice, or the '*Obby 'Oss* from the United Kingdom and the Polish *Lajkonik*. Such a tremendous geographical representation of the ancient belief in the common entity of the rider and his horse should not be presented exclusively on aesthetic grounds, as a show. Transmission is conditioned by acknowledgement, and this is where new efforts have to be made in Romania.

'Most EU countries have promulgated specific educational policies and recommendations encouraging schools to sustain and promote awareness of local cultures and heritage' (Dagnino, Ott, and Pozzi 2015, 195). This strategy may be seen as part of the Sustainable Development Goal 4, called Quality Education. Being able to learn about how one's present cultural identity formed, what it means, and how similar or dissimilar it is to other traditional cultures gains capital importance for the future social behaviour. It favours 'inclusive and equitable quality education' and 'promotes lifelong learning opportunities', as stated in the Global Education Monitoring Report (UNESCO 2016).





Căluș ritual, © Romanian Peasant Museum.

In this respect, the Ministry of Education (Ministerul Educației Naționale) was officially addressed by the Iași branch of the Romanian Academy (Academia Română, Filiala Iași) in 2015. The press release had a great impact in mass-media, and positive reactions followed. The request to the authorities was the result of a one-year workshop organised by the Department of Ethnography and Folklore (Departamentul de Etnografie și Folclor), entitled 'How and why can we teach folklore'. Participants from various fields (teachers from schools and universities, craftsmen, curators, museum directors, fair organisers, radio producers, etc.) agreed that the present school curriculum is no longer adequate to the psycho-social expectations of students. The few folk texts found in manuals are complicated, explained using too many superlatives and with almost no decoding, and they are sometimes even plainly misleading. We suggested and applied for a more ethnographic method that would allow students to understand the intricate network of ICH.

Sustainability is achieved on two levels: the future generation gains knowledge of traditional values and learns to differentiate corrupted manifestations from folk ways, and their parents are involved in common activities during crafts camps, fairs, or school projects. 'Modes of transmission have become tired, static, and fail to pair with modes of learning' (Mitchenson 2015, 58); physical contact with craftsmen and with actual objects induces a more profound level of perception. In Romania, the school calendar includes a week for extracurricular activities, and during that period the students learn to decorate eggs, carve wood, mould clay, and make pots with craftsmen. 'Learning is more efficient when abstract information is tied to tangible experience' (Mitchenson 2015, 61); ICH needs this material support as an introduction that captivates the young generations and their parents. The latter belong to two different types. Some have grown up in rural zones and rediscover a familiar world which helps them to connect with their children, while others did not benefit from any traditional experience and get acquainted with it now with wonder and joy. The kinesthetic aspect of the activity is beneficial every time; craftsmen gain recognition of their effort and talent, and the ICH becomes clearer to the modern observer.

Countries that have already implemented such school projects, whether they were part of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network or not, came to the conclusion that 'one of the most efficient means of safeguarding ICH ... was its embedding with the primary and secondary curriculum'.¹ In Romania, these activities are self-funded by enthusiastic kindergartens and school teachers. An example of this is the 'Să învățăm de la bunici!' (Let's learn from our grandparents!)

¹ See Edinburgh Napier University's Research Excellence Framework impact case study (<http://impact.ref.ac.uk/casestudies2/refservice.svc/GetCaseStudyPDF/43948>).



project. It started in a kindergarten in Iași, it is now implemented in 15 districts from Romania and 25 schools of different levels. The sustainability of such initiatives stems from the great interest in ICH.

A similar broadening of the traditional world is now pursued by a multinational telecommunication company that will use TV commercials, TV shows, and Facebook live transmissions to speak about 'Undiscovered Romania' through four practitioners that have been awarded the Living Human Treasure title. As the UNESCO programme suggests, the public acknowledgement attracts the audience and it gradually raises awareness. 'The prestige, honour, recognition and attention may indeed make cultural exemplars and practitioners proud of what they do, and energise their own efforts to continue, transmit, and even extend their traditions' (Kurin 2007, 16).

The steps towards a secure future may be symbolised by an image of concentric waves on water, created by an object falling in. In the centre, we have the public acknowledgement of cultural value, but then local initiatives have to be supported and protected from the pressure exerted by central standards. What is more, regional projects raise more awareness about ICH and introduce a more intensive educational purpose, since communities benefit from the traditional knowledge, and the wider public needs to be initiated into the specific manifestation. 'The emphasis has to be as much on training a new audience as on revitalizing the form itself' (Gopalakrishnan 2016, 19).

Although the Romanian curricula do not include ICH topics, two manuals with this purpose have been published, and an internet site (edupatrimoniu.piscu.ro) provides them free of charge. Information covers the central-southern part of Romania and is destined for children starting the 3rd grade of school. The initiators have even created a network entitled *Școli pentru patrimoniu* (Schools for cultural heritage), where these manuals are used during optional courses of Romanian language, history, and counselling hours. These efforts are similar to the workshop held in Iași, in the north of the country, where another schools network trains students, teachers, and parents. Nonetheless, procedural memory has to support theoretical instruction, and craftsmen are important agents for this goal.

The fourth stage for the sustainable development of this field is, obviously, the national set of laws, regulations, and financing programmes. Unfortunately, the Romanian parliament does not acknowledge the importance of crafts law and even though such regulation was initiated in 2007 and discussed by the Senate, the act is still stuck at the Industries Commission. Meanwhile, craftsmen struggle to resist the market flooded by fake objects, often manufactured on an industrial scale in other countries.

However, the Ministry of Culture (Ministerul Culturii) has released two programmes that finance creative and cultural industries. Two books published by the National Institute for Cultural Research and Training (Institutul Național pentru Cercetare și Formare Culturală) define and establish the present status of these activities, and offer important suggestions for practitioners. As for capacity-building activities, a workshop on 'Implementing the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage at the National Level' was held on 13–17 June 2016 in Bucharest, and benefited from a partnership with the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe under the auspices of UNESCO in Sofia, Bulgaria.

These initiatives, along with the activities of the National Commission for the Safeguarding of ICH (Comisia Națională pentru Salvagardarea Patrimoniului Cultural Imaterial), gradually ripple the public awareness and aim at creating a sustainable development for ICH in Romania, involving citizens, civil societies, the business sector, and the higher authorities. The telecommunication company uses the Living Human Treasures programme for their brand campaign, which might have been an inspiration from the ceremony held at the presidential palace last year. This act of public recognition is a vivid example of the circular waves created by prestige; it has managed to involve all the above mentioned social entities.

Such approach, as well as the priority given to communities – and to their perception of self-defined manifestations and foreign influences – are altogether able to secure the process of ICH transmission by mitigating subsequent risks. 'Results can be deceptive. Unwanted results, unintended consequences and undeserved repercussions can flow from the most well-meaning of interventions' (Kurin 2007, 18). However, in a Pascalian way of thinking, the simple fact that specialists keep these dangers in mind, and realise the delicate manner they have been bestowed, the possibility to watch the cultural context as it evolves – all to the best of their knowledge – can help obtaining a safer and more sustainable transmission to the younger generations.



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Discontinuation in transmission – threats and questions. The case study of Glasoechko singing in the Republic of Macedonia

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Should the transmission be institutionalised or natural? Supervised or spontaneous? How much can/should experts interfere? What are the risks and effects of any kind of institutionalised intervention? In the case of performing arts, is it allowed for certain elements to change the environment of their performance? And if so, do they keep the tradition 'alive'? Bearers and practitioners – are they the same persons? What to do when the triad 'keeper-practitioner-transmitter' is disrupted?

Glasoechko, male two-part singing in Dolni Polog, is a traditional form of vocal music characteristic to the northwestern region of the Republic of Macedonia. Songs are sung in a polyphonic manner with the droning voice moving contrapuntally in relation to the melodic leading voice, often accompanied by a shepherd's flute and a bagpipe. *Glasoechko* is performed spontaneously in groups of two or three, at celebrations, assemblies, weddings, dinner parties and other social gatherings. Performance of this musical heritage constitutes a symbol of cultural identity for the bearers, integrated within a multi-ethnic society. Practitioners of this tradition are prominent and talented individual singers who have acquired their knowledge by imitating the techniques and skills of their predecessors. Male two-part singing in Dolni Polog faces a number of very serious threats to its viability, however. The number of individuals and groups that practice and transmit it is diminishing rapidly, mostly due to the persistent outward migration of its bearers following the civil conflict in 2001. Thus, on the one hand, younger generations' exposure to *Glasoechko* performances is extremely limited, and on the other hand, older generations believe there is insufficient interest to warrant continued transmission. There are not many recordings of *Glasoechko* songs and in its present state, the tradition seems to be on the verge of extinction.

Since its inscription on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, on the tenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage held in Windhoek in Namibia from 30 November to 4 December 2015, the proposed safeguarding measures have started to be implemented. Yet, even while working on the preparation of the nomination file, as well as after the inscription, several issues





Dr. Velika Stojkova Serafimovska during the Forum, with Ivona Opetčeska Tatarčevska on the left, October 2016.
Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

have arisen which revealed challenges and problems in implementing the measures, but also in facing the difficulties which are specific for the present situation in the concerned community and its recent political and demographic changes.

The present condition of this element presents a case study which shows that every ICH element is a story on its own, and requires concrete approach, specific measures, and mechanisms that need to be modified for specific communities.

Nowadays, the male two-part singing in Dolni Polog in Tetovo is almost extinct. Despite the presence of individuals and a few groups that remember and practice this tradition, the songs are performed increasingly less often and can only be heard on weddings (however only in restricted circles, on the margins of the celebration events), on spontaneous gatherings of the older generations in the village, and seldom at village dance events taking place once a year. Since the beginning of the preparation of the nomination file, and particularly in the last year since the inscription, several measures have been undertaken.

The attempt to revive the local festival Zvukot na Korenite (The sound of roots), which was actively prepared and held in 2006 and subsequently in 2007 by the local TV station Kiss from Tetovo. The festival, at which older authentic male and female groups of folk singers performed traditional songs, offered a higher visibility to this element and provided a place where the spontaneous and natural transmission of the element began. Yet, despite all efforts, the festival only took place twice. The festival was aimed to promote and affirm the traditional singing from the Tetovo region, but unfortunately, the audience was once again of the older generation. Problems in securing the funding were one of the most important reasons the festival ceased to exist. At the same time, the Gavrovski Trio is the only official male vocal group to still practice this type of songs in which the transfer occurs naturally: from one generation to another. The latest, youngest member of the trio, Miki Gavrovski, in all his enthusiasm, but also awareness of the profound importance of this cultural asset, has managed to present the two-part songs from Dolni Polog at the highest conceivable quality. Over the past 7 years, the Gavrovski Trio has performed at a number of local and state traditional music festivals, folklore events, but also at international festivals of traditional songs. By recording their CD, they began collaborating with other traditional music performers, aiming to promote the two-part singing from Dolni Polog and to become renowned all over the country. Unfortunately, all these initiatives have faced problems since the very beginning. The Folk group Izvor from the village of Jegunovce has also made efforts to revitalize this cultural asset, but despite all efforts, it is becoming increas-



ingly more difficult to find practitioners ready to cooperate and transfer this knowledge to the younger generations.

Threats, challenges and problems in implementing the measures proposed

Perhaps the most significant factor that facilitates the disappearance of this cultural asset is the recent change in the demographic structure of this region, which is populated by ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians. Over the past 20 years, the ethnic Macedonian population has been moving out, whereas the number of ethnic Albanian population has been increasing. This occurrence has increased significantly after the civil conflict in 2001, which first began in the Tetovo region. The number of villages that were once pure ethnic Macedonian and now are predominantly populated by ethnic Albanians is now much bigger. There are entire villages with a changed demographic structure, yet, while preparing this file, it is in exactly these villages that we encountered several ethnic Macedonian singers who practice *Glasoechko* singing. For them, this tradition represents not just singing, but also a pure symbol of cultural identity in such a multiethnic society. The singing is only practised by ethnic Macedonians; however, the ethnic Albanians always appreciate and respect these songs as cultural symbols of the region.

Another serious risk of extinction is caused by the disruption of the transmission process of this cultural asset. The younger generation has few opportunities to hear this kind of singing, and the older generation believes there is not enough interest, and thus does not even attempt to pass this cultural heritage further on; this, in turn, results in a practical abolishment of transmission. This happens most likely because of the specificity of the melodic/rhythmic features of the *glasoechki* songs. The lack of interest among the younger generations can also be justified with the specific style of singing, which the youth consider to be outdated and provincial. The complex two-part structure of the songs, the specific microtonal intervals, the tremolo of the leading voice, the contrapuntal polyphonic function of the drone: all of those hinder the process of instilling interest and transmission. The vanishing of these elements can be noticed even in the songs of the Gavrovski Trio. The youngest and the most prominent and enthusiastic singer who leads the songs does not know how to perform the microtonal melodic movements in the same way his grandfather once did. His father and his uncle, also part of the trio, know how

to sing in this 'old' manner, but they do not want to 'force' that difficult style. *Glasoechko* thus also faces changes of the old ways of singing just to be preserved.

The songs of *Glasoechko* have no media coverage whatsoever. The local and national TV and radio stations have not shown any interest or provided recorded materials playable on air. There are fewer occasions where this element could be performed. Contemporary weddings, fewer social occasions and events, their modernisation and development of the cultural processes in a completely different, modern direction: all of these factors have added to the pushing out of the old *glasoechki* songs; however, one can still seldom find smaller groups of singers who perform these songs on social or dance events, and sometimes also on modern weddings.

In the past 3 years, especially regarding the questions of intangible heritage, the UNESCO 2003 Convention, together with the Tourism, Culture and Sustainable Development Programme, as well as the institutions such as the Ministry of Culture (Ministerstvo za kultura) and the Cultural Heritage Protection Office (Upravata za zaštita na kulturnoto nasledstvo) have prepared annual calls for the financial support of the projects that are aiming to increase the level of awareness of the intangible heritage in multiethnic communities such as Tetovo. The local government of the municipality of Jegunovce has also recognised the importance of intangible traditional culture and has itself become the initiator of some of the festivals, for example, the festival of traditional songs and dances Mostovi (Bridges).

Living conditions in Dolni Polog, Tetovo, have never been changing as fast and as extensively as now. What is more, although the dynamics of cultural, social and political processes have been more encouraging than ever, the ability of the people to handle all these changes is limited both institutionally and individually. Considering the threats that this element faces and following the Convention's recommendation, safeguarding measures have been proposed with the primary objectives to: increase the visibility of the element as a culturally important one in the given region and in the State, create strong network among the practitioners, implement the national and international ICH laws in the local government legislative, provide safe and sustainable platform for transmission and safeguarding of the element, provide constant legal and financial support for the practitioners of the element, and provide suitable space for promoting the element on local and national levels.

Thus, the proposed safeguarding measures would: increase the visibility of the element in the given region; reveal the cultural and social function of the element among the regional community, which will in turn encourage the young generation to acknowledge the importance of the





element; stimulate the younger generation to learn and practice this type of singing as part of their cultural identity; stimulate the current practitioners to transmit the knowledge, skills and techniques of this type of singing; stimulate the governmental network to promote this element as part of the Macedonian intangible cultural heritage on local, national and international level; and provide a strong network between the practitioners and local government that will contribute to the future transmission and promotion of the element as important cultural heritage of the region.

In 2016, the representatives from the Ministry of Culture of Republic of Macedonia, Institute of Folklore 'Marko Cepenkov' and the Cultural Heritage Protection Office formed a team that would work with the concerned community and local bearers, as well as with the representatives from the local government. However, the process has revealed another situation in the field, which provoked problems and challenges of a mainly political nature: since the conflict in 2001 and because of the new territorial administrative division of the country in 2004, and following the last elections of the Local Government in 2005, the Municipality of Tetovo, which is the main administrative center of the Dolni Polog region, is ruled by the Albanian political party. With regard to the projects aiming to protect, foster and promote the culture in the given region, in the past years, the Mayor of Tetovo – who is ethnically Albanian – has marginalised the Macedonian proposals. This has resulted in difficulties in conducting the proposed safeguarding measures on the local level. The Macedonian population, that is the local community and bearers of the *Glasoechko* singing, have thus almost no support from the local government of Tetovo. They can only expect some support from the Municipality of Jegunovce, which is a very small and the only one Macedonian Municipality in the region, with restricted capacity to implement bigger projects. Considering this, the only financial support for the bearers can be expected from the state institutions, which makes it sometimes very complicated in following the Macedonian legislation regarding ICH. However, this is a real situation, which we were well aware of when preparing the nomination file, and which poses a serious threat to the viability of the element itself. Another internal division in the Macedonian population of this region occurred in the last two years, following the political turmoil between Macedonian political parties in the country. It resulted in the division of the Macedonian community in Dolni Polog into two Macedonian political parties. It seems that the main two singing groups and the possible local ICH agents in the regions are also divided, and according to the present situation, they have political problems and suffer from restricted communication based on politics, rather than on mutual benefits.

As a member of the team, I encountered many surprising situations in which the only problems were political ones. After several visits, we realised that in these cases, the local government will not provide support for implementing the safeguarding measures proposed. This leaves the tasks of fieldwork and implementation of the proposed measures to state institutions.

Several questions arise in this delicate metacultural process, which also question the directions of the ICH Convention themselves (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004; Grant 2010). The main bearers of the *Glasoechko* singing have a visible will to cooperate and implement the measures, yet they are finding themselves somehow pre-conditioned by their political preference toward one or another Macedonian political party (the ruling party or the opposition). We have thus realised that in order for the safeguarding measures to be implemented, they must be altered and changed in several ways. However, following the newest Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (Decision 10.COM 15.a) one can ask: Should the transmission be institutionalised or natural? Supervised or spontaneous? How much can/should experts interfere? What are the risks and effects of any kind of institutionalised intervention? In the case of performing arts, is it allowed for certain elements to change the environment of their performance? And if so, do they keep the tradition 'alive'? Bearers and practitioners – are they the same persons? What to do when the triad 'keeper–practitioner–transmitter' is disrupted?

This case study can shed light on some of the ways that traditional culture is in a dynamic relationship with social, political, and economic processes; and the ways in which safeguarding practices must consider this dynamic relationship (Stojkova Serafimovska, Wilson, and Opetčeska Tatarčevska 2016). Finally, we must remember that the traditional performing art is a living matter that constantly changes, transforms, transits, and lives as a separate entity that absorbs and records all changes to individuals, performers, communities, collectives, regions, and the peoples it originated from. It changes from personal or collective expression to public national cultural heritage; from a spiritual asset into a commercial product; from the limited artistic form and a part of the syncretic rite and everyday life into differentiated musical expressions and forms; from local rural culture into an element of urban and national culture (Pečheva 2014). Although the long-term effects, in this case, remain to be seen, it suggests that the processes of safeguarding ICH, when implemented in ways that empower local tradition-bearers, may be effective in sustaining cultural traditions even when safeguarded ICH elements are simultaneously employed for other political and ideological ends.



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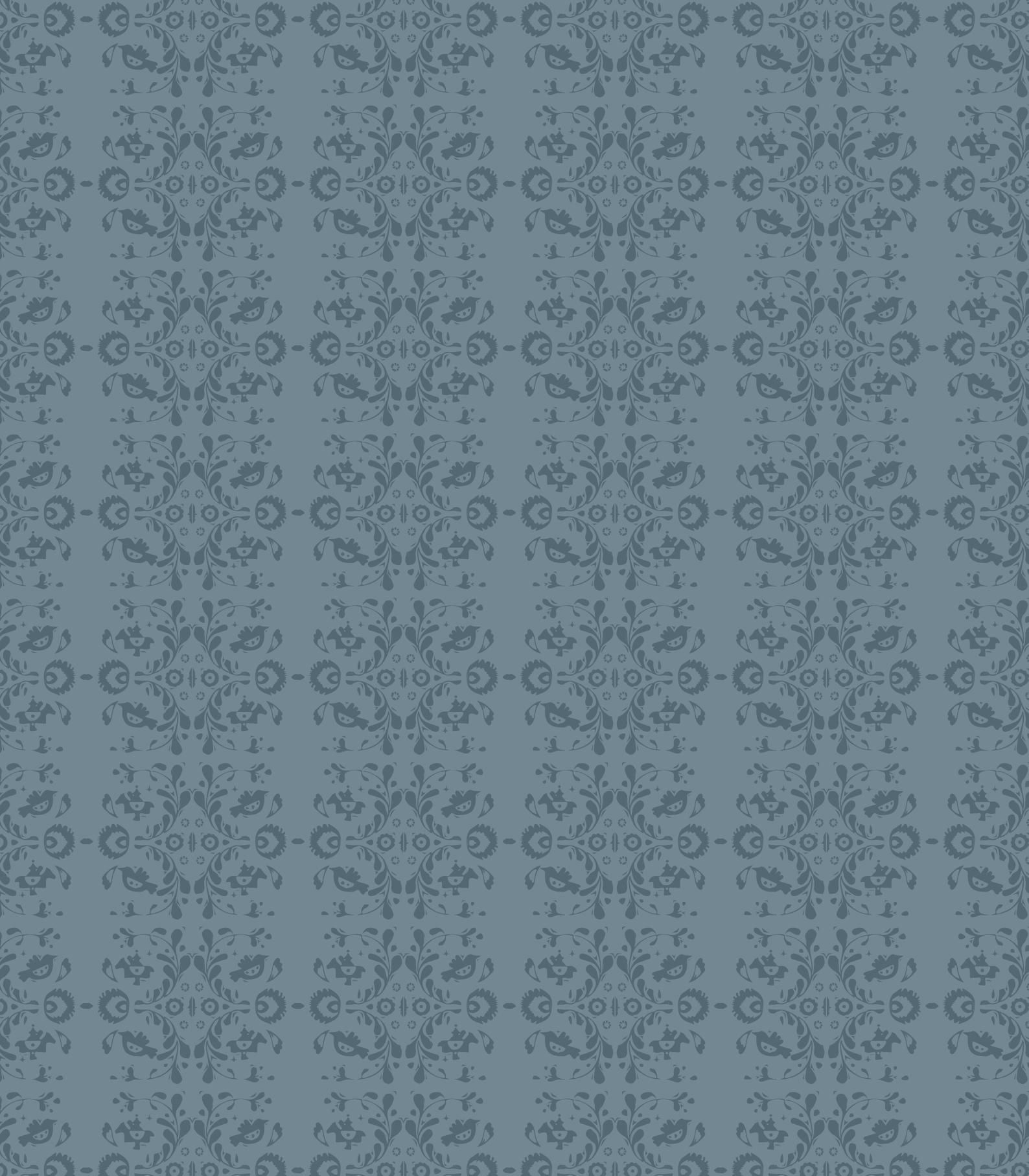
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SUMMARY



Ten remarks on the 10th anniversary of entry into force of the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

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10 remarks:

1. *The 2003 Convention has radically changed the way of thinking about and defining cultural heritage.*
2. *The 2003 Convention is a 'sister' of the 1972 and the 2005 Conventions.*
3. *The 2003 Convention is a legal, social, but also a political instrument, which in certain cases is misused and leads to 'side effects'.*
4. *The Representative List is everything. And it lives its own life.*
5. *The 2003 Convention reinforces the prestige and the soft power of the countries and UNESCO itself.*
6. *The Convention evoked new processes of patrimonialisation (heritagisation).*
7. *The 2003 Convention created new fields of power for the research about the human and culture, especially for cultural anthropology (ethnology, ethnography, folklore studies).*
8. *The 2003 Convention was the first to give voice and subjectivity to communities, groups, and individuals.*
9. *The well-thought implementation of the 2003 Convention on the local level is its most powerful advantage, which may in practice ensure the realisation of the concept of sustainable development.*
10. *The Convention is the biggest achievement of the contemporary international cultural heritage law, and at the same time it leads to its further fragmentation.*



Introduction

Writing about the 2003 Convention¹ as the greatest legislative triumph of the last decade (since its entry into force in 2006) in the field of international cultural heritage law has become somewhat obligatory; it is a kind of a chorus; a phrase which all articles on it should start with (see, for example, Blake 2009, 45; Duvelle 2014, 27). It is, however, well-justified; when we compare the speed of its ratification with other legal instruments adopted in the area of cultural heritage under UNESCO auspices, this statement becomes firmly warranted.

¹ Dziennik Ustaw [Journal of Laws] 2011 no. 172 item 1018.



Ten years after the entry into force of the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage² in 1975, it had 87 states-parties; the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property³ was ratified by 47 states (since its entry into force in April 1972); The 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict⁴ had 52 states-parties. The closest in terms of success to the 2003 Convention is currently the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions,⁵ which entered into force in March 2007 and had 144 states-parties at the end of 2016. However, it is still far behind the success of the 2003 Convention, which only after 10 years of its entry into force, in 2016, reached 172 member states.

Although the 2003 Convention still lacks more than 20 ratifications to reach the status of the most widely ratified international treaty in the world, currently held by the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer⁶ with 197 member states ('Most-ratified international treaties' 2012), the speed of ratifications suggests that in 2023, during its 20th anniversary (or in 2026, during the anniversary of its entry into force), it will come very close to this number, however, the chances of matching it are not high due to some points of dispute over, among others, the indigenous peoples or the political tradition of regulating the culture sector via legislative measures (which prevents it from being signed by some countries, such as the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Russia, or New Zealand). However, taking into consideration the six countries whose politics will probably not undergo a sudden change, the number of 190 ratifications seems very likely to be achieved long before 2023. One can thus talk about 'implementation optimism' and a real 'success story' of this instrument. It is therefore worth to attempt to formulate a number of remarks basing on the articles presented in this volume that summarise the changes that have been caused by the adoption of the 2003 Convention so that one may see if in 10 years' time they are still valid, verify what kind of unforeseen changes they will have resulted with, and assess whether they were the right answers for the identified challenges and threats.

² Dziennik Ustaw 1976 no.32 item 190.

³ Dziennik Ustaw 1974 no. 20 item 106.

⁴ Dziennik Ustaw 1957 no. 46 item 212, appendix.

⁵ Dziennik Ustaw 2007 no. 215 item 1585.

⁶ Dziennik Ustaw 1992 no. 98 item 488.

Remark 1: the 2003 Convention has radically changed the way of thinking about and defining cultural heritage.

The new definition of cultural heritage introduced by the 2003 Convention has radically altered the way of thinking and defining the entire area of heritage, including its fields that have a grounded literary output (e.g. cultural and natural heritage). This statement constitutes yet another verse of the chorus, without which the analysis of the Convention is impossible. The research, documentation, and protection of the areas that are safeguarded by the definition of the convention are not a novelty; in fact, in many countries, they have been in place for centuries, and since the 19th century they have been more organised and systematised in frameworks of the scientific disciplines emerging at that time (anthropology, ethnology, ethnography, sociology of culture), or in publication series (such as, for example, the research of Oskar Kolberg quoted by Jan Adamowski in this volume). However, as noticed by Danijela Filipović in this volume, with the adaptation of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, this issue has come under debate again and became analysed in a completely new way. This new context, emerging with the 2003 Convention, is one that blurs the previous boundaries between what is tangible and intangible, what is cultural and natural, what belongs to the future or to the past, what is subjected to the actions of communities and individuals or experts and administrators, and what brings prestige to the West and the East (see Mishkova, in this volume; Schreiber 2017). Through the 2003 Convention, the first and, arguably, the most serious renegotiation since the 18th century of what is and can be 'cultural heritage', has become a fact.



Remark 2: the 2003 Convention is a 'sister' of the 1972 and the 2005 Conventions.

The 2003 Convention was created in the period between the adoption of the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, and has a lot in common with them, including the organisational structure concept, certain procedures, and lists of heritage (apart from the 2005 Convention). However, each one of them has different goals, philosophy of culture safeguarding and the historical context of its development (see, for example, Smith



The Gala audience – the II Official Ceremony of Awarding Diplomas of Inscription into the National ICH List. Ceremony closing the Forum in Sukiennice (Cloth Hall), Kraków, October 2016. Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.



Intervention by Michał Malinowski, Storyteller Museum – MuBaBaO, member of the Polish Council for ICH, October 2016. Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

and Akagawa 2009; Skounti 2011; Smeets and Deacon 2017). Nevertheless, they are regarded as belonging to the same 'family' of UNESCO legal regulations (Duvelle 2014).

Still, the differences between them are pointed out more often than their similarities; it is the departure from the rules governing the 1972 Convention that has made the 2003 Convention so unique and was a sign of its revolutionary character: placing the communities, groups and individuals in the centre, focusing on sustaining living practices and phenomena, accepting their fragile and dynamic character and rejecting the concept of outstanding universal value. It was also meant to fulfil the hopes connected to the de-westernisation of the international heritage safeguarding regime (Meskell, Liuzza, and Brown 2015). The logic of the 2003 Convention: safeguarding the practices and communities is also different to the one of the drafters of the 2005 Convention: protection of the national culture industries against the treats of globalisation. So what makes them so related?

Marju Köivupuu (Estonia, in this volume) points out to these inspirations using the example of cross-trees, which link together the natural, tangible, and intangible heritage. She also points out to the osmosis of definitions and practical solutions taking place in Estonia due to the use of the documents adopted on the international forum, particularly UNESCO and IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature). Moreover, she highlights the influence of these solutions on the everyday life of the inhabitants of sites where all aspects and layers of heritage intertwine and link together. A place similar to the region of Võru in Estonia is described by Katarzyna Zalasińska (in this volume) – Kalwaria Zebrzydowska in Poland, and its example of landscape arrangement. She notices: 'Taking into consideration the religious practices performed in this place as an intangible element and linking it with material heritage, it indicates a desirable direction for thinking about landscape as a type of cultural space that is complemented by elements of intangible heritage'. Indeed, the category of cultural landscape emerged in 1992 in the system of the 1972 Convention and allowed taking into consideration various examples of interactions between humans and nature, including practices of religious, artistic, and cultural nature (Luengo and Rössler 2012). Such bridges that connect both Conventions include the criterion VI of the inscription on the World Heritage List: 'the cultural property should be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, ideas or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance'. The importance of this criterion as a link is reduced, however, by the fact that it can only be applied as a supplementary criterion.

Mirela Hrovatin (in this volume) finds the connections between the 1972 and 2003 Convention and heads towards a holistic treatment of heritage, describing the possibilities of employing



long-established knowledge and skills in the traditional dry-stone wall building on the Starigrad Plain in Hvar, inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The importance of this place and of the inscription generates an increased interest in preserving the intangible heritage elements present in this area, which are inseparable from cultural and natural heritage.

The ties between the 2003 and 2005 Conventions are mentioned, in turn, by the experts from Albania, who write about the new draft act on cultural heritage, which contains a special chapter devoted to ICH, reflecting the duties outlined in both Conventions (Breshani and Dollani, in this volume).

Everything thus points to the fact that the practical functioning of these three legal acts in a specific place, on one territory, and additionally bonded together strongly by the concept of sustainable development (2005 Convention Preamble and main text, Chapter VI in the Operational Directives of the 2003 Convention, adopted in 2016, and the Policy on the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the World Heritage Convention, adopted in 2015) leads to the situation in which the conceptualisation of the integrated, coherent way that heritage and the policies surrounding it should be safeguarded (e.g. those that relate to cultural industries) is becoming a crucial challenge for the next 10 years. The undertaken initiatives to reflect on these connections, such as the conference in Bergen (Norway) in 2014 – called 'International Conference on UNESCO 1972, 2003 and 2005 Conventions: Synergies for development: using natural and cultural heritage in sustainable development' – confirm that a harmoniously connected implementation of these Conventions in the future is not only necessary for the communities, groups and individuals and the civil society as a whole (article 11 of the 2005 Convention), but also from the perspective of the states and UNESCO themselves (Duvelle 2017, in print).

Remark 3: the 2003 Convention is a legal, social, but also a political instrument, which in certain cases is misused and leads to 'side effects'.

The contentment that marked adopting the Convention eventually joined with critical voices, which have nowadays become especially loud. Only a month after the publication of the 2003 Convention – as noticed by Adina Hulubaş (in this volume) – specialists began to voice their concerns that the heritage safeguarding system can lead to the emergence of a 'specific environment that only

mimics nature' (Brown 2012, 95). One of the experts argued that the new regulations might even 'change the course of things' (Kurin 2012, 100). Moreover, An Deming (in this volume) adds a critical observation to these concerns:

... a number of problems have also risen simultaneously. Among them, the central one is the paradox between the UNESCO ideal theory and the actual practice of ICH safeguarding in specific contexts. It has not only caused competition or conflict between different places in the country, and caused various countries to fight over property rights to traditional events, but has also diminished the authority and confidence of the common people as traditional bearers in expressing themselves through their own culture.

The researchers from Macedonia (Stojkova Serafimovska and Opetčeska Tatarčevska, in this volume) point out to the side effects connected to the functioning of the Convention caused by encompassing certain elements of intangible heritage into the safeguarding system, thus, at the same time, into the legal-political framework. They highlight the political nature of the Convention and its role as a pretext for strengthening the local and national identity (Stojkova Serafimovska 2014).

In the Republic of Macedonia, the establishment and development of institutional mechanisms for the safeguarding of ICH are inextricably linked to politics on the international level, particularly with regard to the contestation of the existence of the Macedonian ethnicity characterised by a distinct language and culture. ... As a consequence, the state has put significant focus on affirming and publicising the national and cultural identity, which, in turn, has spurred processes of recontextualisation and heritagisation of ICH.

What is more, even the traditional Galičnik wedding (Macedonia) that is under protection became a state-sponsored reconstruction of a traditional wedding that highlighted the ethnic distinctiveness of Macedonian heritage. At the same time, the researchers emphasise that, despite the emergence of this political dimension in the creation of the ICH safeguarding system in their country, the processes of safeguarding ICH, when implemented in ways that empower local tradition-bearers, may be effective in sustaining cultural traditions even when safeguarded ICH elements are simultaneously employed for other political or economic ends' (Stojkova Serafimovska and Opetčeska Tatarčevska, in this volume).

Thus, apart from the political dimension of the Convention, we also need to notice its powerful influence on other practices and customs that are seemingly outside of its scope. An example of such unforeseen, unintended 'side effects' resulting from the local and national implementation of the 2003 Convention, often brought up by researchers, is commercialisation of the intangible



cultural heritage phenomena. Adina Hulubaş analyses this situation basing on the Horezu ceramics, inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2012:

Unfortunately, potters from other ethnographic zones react to its success in an imperilling manner.

In Marginea, Suceava, black pots have been produced until eight years ago and made the village famous for their specific craftsmanship. Today, tourists entering the workshop encounter Horezu plates for sale, which are brought from 500 km away. Other potters paint the Horezu cock, a trademark image for these ceramic products, on plates whose chromatics belong to the Baia Mare region, up in the northern part of Romania (Hulubaş, in this volume).

Yet, the sole presence of a phenomenon on the Representative List does not guarantee its safeguarding; sometimes it might even jeopardise the heritage element as it creates a breakthrough moment in its functioning: the change occurs in the perception of the element by its depositaries, and by the local, country-wide, as well as the international environment (Romanková-Kuminková, in this volume; Turgeon 2014). It can also become the bone of contention and a source of international conflicts, which is analysed by An Deming (in this volume) and exemplified by the Gangneung Danoje and the Duanwu (also known as the Festival of Dragon Boats) festivals in Korea. The former was acclaimed as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2005. Moreover, they both occur on the same day (5 May according to the moon calendar) and they both – as signified by their names – base on the same Chinese concept of 'Duanwu'. The conflict about the 'property rights' to them has led to the worsening of mutual relations, which costs both countries a significant amount of time and effort to re-establish them.

Among many side effects, one can also mention the disappearance of previous meanings and functions tied to, on the one hand, commercialisation and increased touristic interest with a given element, and on the other hand, to the natural inclination of the bearers to earn money and increase their standard of life (see Skounti 2017). In this publication, such case of folklorisation of intangible cultural heritage is described by Adina Hulubaş, who uses the example of the 'Căluş Ritual', inscribed on the Representative List in 2008 (proclaimed as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2005). Traditionally, it was organised only nine times a year, beginning with the first day of Whit Sunday, and the participating dancers, who all had been secretly initiated into the group, travelled from village to village and carried the promise of curing the barren women and people ailed by widely fearsome diseases such as, for example, epilepsy. As noticed by Hulubaş, after the inscription on the List all the mystical elements became immediately forgotten and the only lore learned by the new adepts of this performance is related to dance



virtuosity, presented on various festivals, weddings, processions or other festivities throughout the whole year.

The issue of side effects tied to the functioning of the Convention, together with the philosophy of intangible heritage safeguarding, is perfectly summarised in a joke by Valdimar Hafstein, which points out to the common way of thinking about intangible heritage as a phenomenon (in the meaning of a problem, or an illness) that needs to be 'diagnosed' (documented, assessed, inscribed on a list) in order to decide on applying the necessary remedies.

At the doctor's office:

Patient: "What is it, doctor?"

Doctor: "There's no easy way to break this to you: you have heritage."

Patient: "Heritage? Are you serious? What kind?"

Doctor: "Intangible. I'm sorry."

Patient: "Intangible heritage ... How bad is it?"

Doctor: "It is in urgent need of safeguarding. It's already metacultural."

Patient: "What's the prognosis?"

Doctor: "Intangible heritage is chronic, I'm afraid. It is often terminal, but in your case, there is a reason to be optimistic. You can live with your heritage for a long time to come, provided we take immediate measures to safeguard it."

Patient: "Will it be painful?"

Doctor: "I won't lie to you. The treatment is not pleasant. You will have to learn to relate differently to yourself and to your heritage from here on out."

Patient: "Shouldn't we get a second opinion?"

Doctor: "I recommend contacting UNESCO. If they agree with the diagnosis, we might get you on their list."

Patient: "Would that help?"

Doctor: "If you're listed, UNESCO can help document your heritage, identify its elements, analyze the mode of transmission, raise awareness, even draw up a five-year safeguarding plan."

Patient: "Is all that really necessary?"

Doctor: "Without proper treatment, I'm afraid your heritage may lose what authenticity it has left. Worst case scenario, you might be looking at a full-blown case of fakelore."

Patient: "Wait a minute. That's what they said when our parents' generation came down with tradition. But they beat that."

Doctor: "They did, with a lot of drugs. But back in those days, tradition responded to drugs. Intangible



heritage is more serious. And it is highly communicable. We haven't found an effective way to contain it yet." (Hafstein 2015, 282)

The joke shows the problem which might accompany the introduction of external measures into the current situation of heritage, as the side effects might in some cases outweigh the expected benefits stemming from taking safeguarding measures. The reflection on this paradox reminds somewhat of the common saying that 'I had better not visit the doctor, he might find that something is wrong with me'. We know, however, that in many cases it is this approach that actually brings negative results. The Convention, thus, should be perhaps treated as a dose of aspirin: even though it seems good for everything and it is effective in treating inflammation, in certain cases it carries a risk of causing an allergic reaction – and such was the case with the Horezu ceramics and the 'Căluş Ritual'.

Remark 4: the Representative List is everything. And it lives its own life.

'World heritage is first and foremost a list' wrote Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett (2004, 57). This sentence perfectly fits to the Representative List, together with the opinion of Valdimar Hafstein (2009, 93) that 'the lists [of heritage – H.S.] frequently live a life of their own', which suggests that heritage elements – firstly decontextualised by the nomination procedure and then recontextualised by placing them on the lists – are beginning to function in a new way. The immense impact of the Representative List can be noticed in this very publication. There is no text that would not quote it at least once or would not mention it (in most cases, it is mentioned as an achievement of a country, sometimes, as a neutral fact, in some – critically, see texts by Eva Románková-Kuminková or Adina Hulubaş).

Eva Románková-Kuminková even begins her paper with the accurate statement: 'Everyone wants to be on the list!'. It is because the list is becoming somewhat of a gauge; a tangible proof for the power of culture; an element of soft power (Schreiber 2017) of a given country that has managed to successfully inscribe an element of its heritage on the international forum and thus made it visible, noticeable, and widely esteemed. The list, therefore, is a clear source of information about what is considered to be a carrier of social (but not only!) values (see Schuster 2002, 15).

Equipping the Convention with the List has to be also considered as an element of expanding the knowledge about the Convention itself, as well as raising awareness and highlighting the meaning of intangible heritage. 'It is vital, as it means that the humanity – and this sounds proud – recognises our customs and pays attention to them as authentic, valuable, and attractive', noticed the director of the Historical Museum of the City of Kraków, when he commented on the first Polish nomination in 2017 for the inscription of the Nativity Scene tradition in Kraków on the Representative List (Gazur 2017). 'The humanity' in the case of the Representative List thus directly replaced 'the world' from the World Heritage List (1972 Convention). And even though the 2003 Convention currently avoids the terms 'uniqueness', 'authenticity', 'mastery' or 'masterpiece', 'world' or 'universal' (UNESCO 2016a, para. 31), it is those terms that are commonly tied to the concept of 'the list': something must, therefore 'deserve' to be inscribed, and the proof that it indeed does is its 'distinctiveness', 'authenticity' or 'uniqueness'. In this way, the collection of meanings and connotations tied to the World Heritage List becomes passed on – almost genetically – to the Representative List of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity, the title of which might for many be as well 'The List of Authentic Intangible Heritage of the World', as every one of the 365 currently inscribed elements (as of December 2016) might be considered a 'world-scale phenomenon' (Gazur 2017). It was even directly stated so by the representatives of various organisations and communities when they filed the declarations of consent to inscribe yoga as 'world heritage' on the Representative List in 2016...⁷ What is interesting is that a similar title was proposed in the draft version of the Convention: The List of Treasures of the World Intangible Cultural Heritage (article 11C; see UNESCO 2003, para. 20) and the arguments that advocated its creation included, among others, the following (proposed by the representative of Benin on behalf of a group of African countries): if we do not create a list of masterpieces of intangible heritage as a part of this Convention, it will be treated as a 'second rate' Convention and not as good as the one from 1972 (Hafstein 2009, 103).

The enormous impact of an inscription on the Representative List on states is also highlighted by the intense efforts of the national delegations to influence the Intergovernmental Committee – in the case of the Evaluation Body's⁸ negative recommendation of the nomination prepared by said states for the Intergovernmental Committee – to nevertheless press the Committee to decide



⁷ Nomination file no. 01163 and the consent of communities are available online, see UNESCO 2017.

⁸ Created to assess applications in 2015 as a successor of the Subsidiary Body and the Consultative Body. In the draft Convention the latter was provisionally named Scientific Council, see UNESCO 2003, para. 17.



Cross-cultural encounter. Polish falconry specialists meeting an ICH expert from China, October 2016.
Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.



Cross-cultural encounter. *Perebory* (weaving traditions in the Bug River region) bearers with Professor An Deming from China, October 2016. Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

positively on the inscription. This situation finally in 2016 became jarring and caused a general discontentment, both among the states – observers of the Committee meeting as well as within the Committee itself. In 2016, in Addis Abeba, out of 19 negative recommendations, as much as 15 were inscribed on the Representative List (thus ignoring the recommendation of the Evaluation Body). A special ad-hoc group has been therefore created with the aim of solving this issue in the future. This problem itself can be also treated as 'heritage' of the World Heritage List and, furthermore, as an element of the functioning of almost every international treaty that is developed and ratified by states, and governed by the established organs operating under the provisions of this treaty comprised – again – of the representatives of these states.

Such perception of the meaning of the Representative List is a source of natural determination among the states to prepare nationwide applications – as, in such way, their social and political meaning increases (see Duvelle 2014). Hence, we see inscriptions where the term 'a community' – which according to the ideas of the Convention creators was supposed to pertain to a specifically defined social group that inhabits a specific territory, tied by intangible cultural heritage practices – is interpreted as 'community', or in other words, the entire 'nation-state', such as in the case of 'Turkish coffee culture and tradition' (2013), 'Gastronomic meal of the French' (2010), or 'Chinese calligraphy' (2009).

At the same time, there is a need to highlight the fact that during this fight for a change of perception of the Representative List there has been an increasing pressure on the previously 'neglected' registers: List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (Article 17 of the Convention, the number of inscriptions as of 2016: 47) or the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices (Article 18 of the Convention, number of inscriptions as of 2016: 17).

Thus, in this context, three basic questions emerge: first, will it be possible to realistically balance the Representative List by inscriptions on the Urgent Safeguarding List and the Register of Good Practices within the next 10 years and thus change the vector of the interests of countries and the centre of gravity of the Convention? Second, is it possible to create, and if yes, what are the mechanisms that limit the political character of the actions tied to the Representative List inscription procedure and can they be prepared and implemented in the subsequent years? Third, in what way should the communities, groups, and individuals be helped after the inscription on the Representative List – despite the frequent post-inscription commercialisation and folklorisation – so that the phenomena nurtured by them do not lose their original, important pre-inscription context?



Remark 5: the 2003 Convention reinforces the prestige and the soft power of the countries and UNESCO itself.

This aspect of the Convention is not only a pleasant addition to the 'usual' activities of states; in fact, it is a crucial strategic element in the current 'beauty contest' of states on the international arena and in their struggles to achieve high ranks on the ranking of 'international attractiveness' – the soft power rankings of countries. This soft power is undoubtedly built up by the inscriptions on the Representative List; however, they are still not visible in the assessment criteria of soft power in the most popular rankings of countries: Soft Power 30 and the Elcano Global Index (Schreiber 2017). This pivotal aspect tied to the 2003 Convention is mentioned in this volume by Eva Románková-Kuminková:

An inscription on the Representative List is a highly prestigious matter and the States Parties to the Convention approach it accordingly. It means that political motives can very easily push away any ideals and the well-intentioned wishes of experts to provide responsible international protection. ... Thus, on the one hand, the Representative List promotes the goals and ideals of the Convention, and on the other hand, it creates space for political and institutional manipulation.

Joseph Nye furthermore states: 'a country's soft power is based on three resources: its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policy (when others see it as legitimate moral authority)' (Schreiber 2017, 45). The researchers of cultural politics have noticed that in the 19th century, countries that were conscious of the primary role of their cultures began to compete in a 'global race for soft power' (Holden 2013). It is also connected to the highly popular concept of the so-called 'nation branding' of Simon Anholt (Anholt 2006, 23). There is thus a reason why the states which possess the largest resources of soft power are leaders in the strength of their 'brands' (Schreiber 2017); rankings of national brands are created in parallel to the soft power rankings.⁹ This concept, however, is not limited solely to countries; it is also used to point out the 'attractiveness' of non-state actors, such as international organisations, and UNESCO in particular. This organisation, through its arbitrary role in culture and cultural heritage, has significant resources of soft power and an awareness of them and employs this potential in positioning itself in the environment of important international organisations. The emergence of a new act of international law: the 2003 Convention, together

⁹ The most well-known ones include S. Anholt's Nation Brand Index (NBI) and the Country Brand Index (CBI) of Future Brands.

with the new concept of intangible cultural heritage that it brought, has led to increasing the soft power of UNESCO itself, as the organisation that safeguards the increasing number of processes that legitimise heritage.

The concept of soft power has become the leading one in determining the roles and tasks of UNESCO in the widely understood process of consultations on the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda, which were accepted in 2015 as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the introduction to the UNESCO document prepared in April 2014, named *Soft Power Agenda* in short (UNESCO 2014), Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General, stated that the organisation is a key actor of soft power (UNESCO 2016b; Schreiber 2017).

The prestigious character of being visible on the UNESCO forum and having inscriptions on the heritage lists may also bring positive consequences. The states that want to be visible and respected for the actions related with safeguarding intangible heritage undertake real administrative and legislative efforts, which in turn change the situation in the area of intangible cultural heritage in their countries. They can also guide the countries that have only started their journey into this area. This interpretation of a country's role in the process, adopted by China, is described by Chen Fafen (in this volume), who notices: 'Especially when China's first law – the Law of the People's Republic of China on intangible cultural heritage protection – was enacted in 2011, it has accelerated the progress of China's intangible cultural heritage safeguarding, and strengthened the awareness of its entire society about intangible cultural heritage, and furthermore, significantly improved China's global influence'. At the same time, a direct impulse to such action was provided by UNESCO, which encouraged countries to develop their safeguarding systems through its Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity programme. Today, ICH safeguarding in China is described as one of the national goals.

A similar approach to prestige – embedded into the functioning of the 2003 Convention – and its potential positive outcomes is mentioned in this volume by Adina Hulubaş:

The steps towards a secure future may be symbolised by an image of concentric waves on water, created by an object falling in. In the centre, we have the public acknowledgement of cultural value, but then local initiatives have to be supported and protected from the pressure exerted by central standards. ... These initiatives, along with the activities of the National Commission for the Safeguarding of ICH, gradually ripple the public awareness and aim at creating a sustainable development for ICH in Romania, involving citizens, civil societies, the business sector, and the higher authorities. ... A company uses the Living Human Treasures programme for their brand campaign, which might have been an inspiration from the ceremony held at the





presidential palace last year. This act of public recognition is a vivid example of the circular waves created by prestige; it has managed to involve all the above mentioned social entities.

Prestige in the field of culture is thus built by creating a space for cooperation and dialogue. In this way, the actions undertaken by the countries on the UNESCO forum legitimise this institution as somewhat of an arbiter that creates and oversees the international cultural heritage regime (or to be precise, regimes. For a description of various regimes, see Bendix, Eggert, and Peselmann 2013).

Furthermore, as noticed by researchers Velika Stojkova Serafimovska and Ivona Opetčeska Tatarčevska in this volume: 'It is also a matter of prestige in a world of United Nations' activities to be networked in this system and to cooperate on an equal level with other states. ICH has the power to solve conflicts, mainly because in many different ways it goes beyond political borders'. This can be supported by the evidence of the multinational inscriptions on the Representative List which unite the communities, groups, individuals, and countries in a common goal, and result in tangible and concrete outcomes through the creation of fora for communication, education, dialogue, and joint action.

Remark 6: the Convention evoked new processes of patrimonialisation (heritagisation).

The term 'patrimonialisation' has a Latin etymology: *patrimonium* means homeland, but also property. It points out, however, not at the object – the heritage, but at the sole fact of the presence of a specific heritage making policies, and it highlights the activity of selecting what is meant to become heritage (in foreign literature this term is used interchangeably with the term 'heritagisation', see Adell et al. 2015). It thus points out to a heritage that is subjected to transformations and incessant practices of ascribing status to the chosen testimonies of the past and using this status for the sake of the present. On the level of international relations, the term patrimonialisation thus concerns the research of political processes aimed at the concept of cultural heritage as a specific resource, which must be subjected to procedures of legitimisation and institutionalisation on various international fora, basing on specific selection, classification, and hierarchisation policies related to those elements of this resource, which are regarded as worthy from the perspective of a specific individual, group, community, local, national, or international government

administration, and meet the criteria created by and enforced by the legitimate organisations: councils, committees, commissions, and expert teams (Schreiber 2016b). Thus, patrimonialisation is an element of the cultural policy of states, but also of international organisations, local communities, and other subjects in the realm of functioning in various international cultural heritage regimes (on fragmentation, see remark 10). It is moreover an element of the cultural policy that proposes a 'specific reading of the past' (Kowalski 2013, 11), in which, however, the past plays a gradually less important role than the challenges of the present. In this present time, it is the people and their needs – the bearers of the heritage – that become more important, or at least, as important as the heritage itself (see remark 6).

The 2003 Convention encourages reading the past in a way that will make it into a mere springboard; a starting point for highlighting the continuity of practices related to the bearers of the heritage. The Convention's philosophy encompasses, above all, the present and the future, together with the individuals and groups rooted in sustaining their intangible heritage.

The authors of this volume notice this way in which the Convention works. Velika Stojkova Serafimovska and Ivona Opetčeska Tatarčevska employ this perspective to write about the *Kopačkata* dance, which was one of the first elements that the Republic of Macedonia applied to be inscribed on the UNESCO ICH list in 2011. The actions undertaken in order to prepare this application initiated new processes of patrimonialisation, tied to both the UNESCO guidelines related to the implementation of the intangible cultural heritage safeguarding system, as well as to the contemporary political factors (Stojkova Serafimovska and Opetčeska Tatarčevska, in this volume). The same thing occurred – however, without UNESCO's participation as it did not manage to become inscribed – to the Galičnik wedding, in whose current form the borders between a national festivity, a corporate-organised ritual, a festival organised for tourists, and a staged folklore and cyclical event have become blurred (Opetčeska Tatarčevska, in this volume). Ivona Opetčeska Tatarčevska notices that, on the one hand, the institutionalised ICH safeguarding systems are always grounded in the political processes of patrimonialisation and recontextualisation and thus are subjected to their influence, but on the other hand, the way and the degree to which these processes affect cultural practices differ substantially, even within the borders of the same country. To use Adina Hulubaş's metaphor about the concentric waves that appear after dropping a stone in water, it is not difficult to notice that even the elements that officially remain outside the processes of patrimonialisation stemming from the 2003 Convention are nevertheless subjected to its influence – even if they are playing a secondary role, they still have to relate or subordinate to the primary processes that run in parallel.





The welcoming of the guests of the Forum by the mining orchestra in Wieliczka Salt Mine, October 2016.
Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.



Polish national dances in Wieliczka Salt Mine, October 2016. Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

These processes of redefining heritage for the purposes of the UNESCO list nomination procedure, which include, among others, a visible identification of safeguarding institutions and the creation of spaces for obtaining consent from the bearers of the heritage, can be observed with almost every application, regardless of the country.

At the same time, they generate the need to create institutions that guard the procedures which legitimise, classify, select, and include or exclude certain elements from this heritage resource. This does not remain unnoticed by the researchers from Croatia (Hrovatin i Šimunković, in this volume):

The preparation of the nomination files for two editions of the UNESCO Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity programme in 2003 and 2005 resulted in the formation of a special expert Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage in Croatia in 2002, and a special Department for ICH in the Ministry of Culture in 2004 that prepared the first inscriptions into the National Registry of Cultural Goods of the Republic of Croatia ...

These challenges are addressed accurately by Velika Stojkova Serafimovska (in this volume), who notices also a positive side in these patrimonialisation processes driven by the Convention, in places where they lead to local bearers becoming independent:

the traditional performing art is a living matter that constantly changes, transforms, transits, and lives as a separate entity that absorbs and records all changes to individuals, performers, communities, collectives, regions, and the peoples it originated from. It changes from personal or collective expression to public national cultural heritage; from a spiritual asset into a commercial product; from the limited artistic form and a part of the syncretic rite and everyday life into differentiated musical expressions and forms; from local rural culture into an element of urban and national culture (Pečeva 2014). Although the long-term effects, in this case, remain to be seen, it suggests that the processes of safeguarding ICH, when implemented in ways that empower local tradition-bearers, may be effective in sustaining cultural traditions even when safeguarded ICH elements are simultaneously employed for other political and ideological ends.

Therefore, even though the processes of patrimonialisation entail the choice of whose heritage will be safeguarded via legal regulations and whose heritage will be dominated and marginalised, and also the choice of various international fora where it is showcased or hidden – or even negated and excluded – and thus, the decisions on whose voices will be heard and muted; at the same time, the initiation of this process of selection, through the power of the Convention, gives this voice to the bearers. It is here that lies the emancipatory, liberating element of the 2003 Convention.



Remark 7: the 2003 Convention created new fields of power for the research about the human and culture, especially for cultural anthropology (ethnology, ethnography, folklore studies).

The importance of studies on culture (cultural diversity of humanity), especially those based on fieldwork, has undoubtedly become greater on the international arena thanks to the 2003 Convention. It is particularly interesting as the reflection on cultural heritage has been interminably crossing scientific disciplines and various fields of science; in fact, it is considered as an area that links together various disciplines (Bendix, Eggert, and Peselmann 2013, 11; Logan, Nic Craith, and Kockel 2016, 2) and that does not give privileges to any of them: whether it is conservation, architecture, history of art, ethnology, folklore studies, sociology or philosophy, law, economics, or political studies. However, the potential of cultural anthropology (ethnology, ethnography) on the level of international heritage regimes can be only fully seen after 2003. For it was the 2003 Convention that created a clearly defined space for the activation and demonstration – in the areas that had been until then dominated by experts from other disciplines – of anthropological and ethnographic associations, represented, for instance, on the forum of nongovernmental organisations accredited by the 2003 Convention, which counts 164 organisations at the moment. These organisations, abiding by the rule of equitable geographical representation, also nominate 6 experts to the 12-person Evaluation Body, which assesses the applications for the Representative List, the Register of Good Practices and the Urgent Safeguarding List. The states parties of the Convention are also responsible for the nomination of experts in the areas safeguarded by the Convention when applying for the Intergovernmental Committee (art. 6, p. 7: 'States Members of the Committee shall choose as their representatives persons who are qualified in the various fields of the intangible cultural heritage').

This extraordinary career of cultural anthropology has been also noticed by the experts writing in this volume. It is related to both the increase of importance of anthropology and its representatives on the international, as well as the national level. Thus, the created national solutions, connected to the almost universal ratification of the Convention, take into account mainly anthropologists (ethnographers, ethnologists, folklorists) when creating expert teams or evaluating bodies that assess the national-inventory applications. An Deming, for example, refers to the Chinese experiences and the crucial role played by the China Folklore Society, especially in connection with the actions that have been undertaken after the ratification of the 2003 Convention. He writes:



Folklore studies and other related disciplines also celebrate new opportunities. This does not mean the superficial prosperity ... this movement enables scholars to think thoroughly and deeply about the relationship between culture and people's lives; it enables them to investigate Chinese folklore more deeply and more comprehensively, with strong support from governmental agencies ... Therefore, it makes it possible to contribute new perspectives and methods based on Chinese experiences, both to the academic domain and to the campaign of ICH.

Such experience of the special role of anthropologists, ethnographers, folklorists in the system of safeguarding – a system that also requires supervision, selection, assessment and control of specific practices and cultural phenomena performed to address its requirements – is also described by Eszter Csonka-Takács. She describes the network of experts established in Hungary for a systemic improvement of ICH safeguarding:

The Directorate [of the Skanzen in Szentendre – H.S.] relies on the mediating work of county rapporteurs. The Skanzen created this professional network based on the institutions of the county museum system to coordinate and facilitate the promotion, the awareness-raising, and to give professional guidance to the communities. By selecting an expert – most commonly an ethnographer – from each county, a group of professionals has been formed, which helps in mediating information, informing and looking up communities, and preparing the nomination document. They provide professional advice to interested communities and organise orientation forums with the participation of the Directorate, facilitating contact between the involved parties.

The description of the county rapporteurs' tasks thus largely overlaps with the activities of most ICH experts that operate within the states parties to the Convention, pointing out to the great responsibility that they carry as intermediaries, the so-called cultural brokers (Jacobs, Neyrinck and van der Zeijden 2014) between local communities and the systems and structures of power.

In this tome, the importance of anthropologists is also mentioned by Filipović, Židov, and Hrovatin.

The incredible career of anthropology, however, inevitably leads to tensions between the various roles that the anthropologist has to play: the researcher striving to discover the truth, the spokesman of his own culture, the representative of a selected occupation or the culture of an organisation (e.g. an anthropological society), and finally, the trusted delegate of the interests of a given group. These are all subject to the milieu regulations, which take shape of ethical codes of conduct created by anthropological associations.

For a long time anthropologists – in response to the post-colonial criticism in their field in the 1970s (Asad 1973) – have made it a matter of honour to give voice to the excluded and margin-





alised communities. Today, again, through the 2003 Convention, they are forced to trailblaze the jungle of responsibilities and power relationships, navigating between the interests of their subjects, those of their own, the interest of their sponsors and finally, the ideals of supporting the scientific and humanistic aims of anthropology. They have been compelled to react to the emergence of a new legislative act, which for the first time has related to their knowledge to such an extent. This causes extreme reactions in most countries, including Poland (Schreiber 2014) and France. They follow similar patterns, described by Christian Hottin and Sylvie Grenet (2017, 63): spanning from a radical rejection to enthusiastic support, spectated by a wide audience of more or less sceptical and cautious observers of the situations' development. It is thus quite visible that, by entering the legal and ideological framework of the Convention and the international and local system it had created, anthropologists begin to take on actions that are at some point less oriented towards research and more in tune with the implementation of cultural policies (of their own country or those of UNESCO) (Hottin and Grenet 2017).

Anthropology creates a special and unique type of connection between the researcher and the researched. His role as an expert-researcher of the community nominated for an inscription on any of the UNESCO lists (nominated by the country) entails duties towards both the researched community as well as towards the sphere of power that influences this group, which is able to create and exert legislative acts and specific safeguarding programmes. By entering this intricate maze of interconnected processes, the researcher himself frequently becomes an object of manipulation. Ewa Nowicka (2006, 150) notices:

Indeed, it is not clear whether the anthropologist is to be a cool observer and analyst that only sometimes delivers his/her insight when an order is placed, or an active participant of social life, a mediator and advocate of the conflicted parties. In this context, the educational or moralising role of anthropology and anthropologists is also mentioned. Such tasks, if set before the discipline, raise a series of ethical issues, as well as practical and political doubts which anthropologists are unable to escape, whether they want it or not. One of the ideological assumptions of anthropology, deriving from its earliest development stages, is the desire to defend an existing cultural difference, the diversity that becomes a separate value in its own right.

A question remains open whether the anthropologist that navigates through the structures of heritage regime, local or international, can realistically defend this diversity without having to compromise (ethically or politically). The 2003 Convention, by opening these areas of power, undoubtedly leads the entire anthropological milieu into a somewhat intellectual, ethical, and practical 'temptation'.

Remark 8: the 2003 Convention was the first to give voice and subjectivity to communities, groups, and individuals.

'Communities are at the heart of the intangible cultural heritage safeguarding system' – this is yet another obligatory statement which appears each time the 2003 Convention is quoted (see, for example, Skounti 2017, in print; Blake 2009, 2017; Duvelle 2014). Indeed, in the text of the Convention itself the term 'communities' appears 11 times, whereas the experts are mentioned only twice: in article 21, point b), which describes international aid in providing experts; and article 6, point 7, which describes the nomination of persons that possess adequate qualifications in various aspects of intangible cultural heritage to the Intergovernmental Committee. One can also conduct 'an archaeology' of the institutional presence of the concept of safeguarding individuals, starting from the 2003 Korea proposal of creating the Living Cultural Properties safeguarding system, and only later protecting groups and communities, which resulted in the acceptance of the Living Human Treasures programme (UNESCO 1993), and subsequently evolved into the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity Programme, whose 90 elements have become incorporated into the system of the 2003 Convention (article 31).

In all the international treaties that have appeared since 2003, whether on the UNESCO or the Council of Europe forum, its new, grassroots, social, open dimension is profoundly visible on all levels, including decision-making, creating, maintaining, and safeguarding cultural heritage. The two most important international conventions adopted after 2003 that protect cultural heritage are the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and the Council of Europe Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society¹⁰ (the so-called Faro Convention). Both of them highlight the significance of social participation as key to preserving cultural heritage. The Faro Convention goes as far as to introduce, in article 2 b), the term 'heritage communities' that consist of 'people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations'.

Giving the voice to the communities and individuals has also resulted in noticing other groups, the so-called passive bearers of cultural practices, who are mentioned by An Deming (in this volume):

¹⁰ *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*, Faro, 27 October 2005. Unfortunately, this Convention is ratified only by 17 out of 47 member states of the Council of Europe. Only 8 member states of the EU ratified it.





For quite a long time, in accordance with the situation of the academia, the attention of most participants of the ICH programme has been mainly paid to the active bearers, who are usually very dynamic in the transmission of specific cultural items and have special talents in particular cultural genres. However, when the concept of community as integration was introduced to the public, together with more and more scrutiny on the distinction between the 'active bearers' and 'passive bearers' by some folklorists (Yang et al. 2011, 23–24), it has been gradually accepted that those ordinary people who are not specialists in any cultural items actually shape the main foundations of the viability and vitality of the concerned traditions. Based on increasingly more discussions and adequate communication, the concept of 'everyone is the bearer of traditional culture' was subsequently promoted.

The expanding apprehension, together with the increasing importance of the role of 'bearers' is also noticed by the researchers from Croatia: 'We can also observe an increasing recognition among the public of the exceptional value of intangible cultural heritage, as well as the conviction that the commitment and responsibility for its safeguarding and transmission to future generations should rest on the bearers, local communities and relevant institutions; local, national, or minority identities' (Hrovatin and Šimunković, in this volume).

The importance of bearers is not solely declarative, and for a long time has been the object of scientific scrutiny (Onciu, Stefano, and Hawke 2017; Adell et al. 2015; Rudolff and Raymond 2013; Kono 2009). All the accepted nomination procedures on the UNESCO level take into consideration the necessary element of their free, prior and informed consent for any actions that affect them. Reading the consent forms might sometimes yield surprising discoveries (for example, the fact that sometimes dozens or even hundreds of bearers sign institutionally prepared forms of consent of inscribing their ICH element on... the World Heritage List, instead of the Representative List), however, it does not change the fact that it is the first time that communities, groups and individuals cannot be ignored. Their cooperation, joint effort, and also the shared responsibility for sustaining a given cultural phenomenon is fundamental for the Convention.

However, as observed by An Deming (in this volume), the ambitious goals connected to the presence of communities, groups and individuals in the system of the Convention cannot be fully achieved as the project of ICH safeguarding, despite the fact that it came into being based on principles of equality and diversity of cultures, has led to a creation of a new hierarchy of those cultures, as well as of their elements within: 'The experts and UNESCO have the privilege to determine what item is suitable to be inscribed on the Representative List, which in the public mind means a certificate to the more valuable; whereas the actual bearers of a particular cultural item cannot have

their voice on it'. It is thus necessary to notice that even such a significant change in the language of legal international acts does not result in a sudden change in the practice of countries, including implementation processes. An example of such attempt to sustain 'nation-centrism' can be the stretching of the term of 'community' in the 2003 Convention in order to include national community, which allows inscribing on the Representative List not only local and regional communities but also the nation-wide ones. Thus, the revolutionary step which made communities, groups and individuals the most important subjects in the system of ICH safeguarding has, in the practice of UNESCO – an organisation made by countries and for the countries – turned out to be crucial, yet also easy to manipulate, especially in situations in which the Convention does not provide a definition of a community, a group, or an individual. What is more, it also does not provide any guidelines on the way in which representatives of such groups should be selected, nor the way to distinguish communities from groups. An unanswered question also remains: should the expectations of benefits of being inscribed on the UNESCO list, expressed by communities, groups and individuals, be condemned?

Even though these questions still remain largely unanswered, the 2003 Convention and its various fora, including the ICH NGO Forum, undoubtedly create opportunities to identify and discuss these problems and to propose practical solutions to them.



Remark 9: the well-thought implementation of the 2003 Convention on the local level is its most powerful advantage, which may in practice ensure the realisation of the concept of sustainable development.

The concept of sustainable development, originating in the 1980s, can be certainly called an international success. In the context of UNESCO, its way was paved by adopting the 2013 Hangzhou Declaration (UNESCO 2013b), which called for an attempt to inscribe culture into the newly drafted UN development goals for the subsequent 15 years. It needs to be noticed that although culture did not make it as an independent point on the list of 17 new Sustainable Development Goals, it appears in many different forms (local culture, cultural diversity, intercultural understanding, culture of peace) in a number of places on the Agenda (point 8, point 36, and goals 4, 8, 11 and 12). The importance of heritage is particularly emphasised in goal 11: Making cities and human settle-



The ICH bearers with Professor Małgorzata Rozbicka and Professor Magdalena Gawin at the II Official Ceremony of Awarding Diplomas of Inscription into the National ICH List. Ceremony closing the Forum in Sukiennice (Cloth Hall), Kraków, October 2016. Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.



The audience and ICH bearers gathered at the II Official Ceremony of Awarding Diplomas of Inscription into the National ICH List. Ceremony closing the Forum in Sukiennice (Cloth Hall), Kraków, October 2016. Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

ments inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. In the framework of this goal, task 11.4 is formulated: strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage. It is, however, the only place in the Agenda in which the term 'heritage' appears.

Inscribing sustainable development into the heart of the safeguarding system materialised thanks to the adoption of a separate Chapter VI in the Operational Directives of the Convention on June 2016, on the session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention. The 2003 Convention thus became the first act of international cultural heritage law, which inscribed the concept of sustainable development into its safeguarding system in a way that was very concrete and legally binding. Another challenge is ensuring that the concept of intangible cultural heritage will be considered and implemented in practice during the creation of programmes and strategies of sustainable development on various levels and by various subjects (Duvelle 2014, 41). For as the system of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage treats sustainable development with uttermost importance, the same cannot be (or at least not yet) said when considered from the perspective of globally and nationally implemented programmes of sustainable development.

How can we, therefore, practically translate the idea of sustainable development to the scope of the 2003 Convention? This is what the authors of this publication are considering. They tackle different topics connected to the concept of sustainable development – so crucial from the perspective of the Convention and important in the system of intangible heritage safeguarding (see the text by Timothy Curtis). Adina Hulubaş notices that, in the context of intangible heritage safeguarding, the sustainable development goal can be realised only if the young generation together with the older generation are both engaged in the process. It also leads to its balancing through ensuring that the safeguarding practices are attended by at least two generations. Anita Vaivade, in turn, states that the core of sustainable development lies in treating phenomena holistically, and ensuring various methods of their safeguarding, including – interestingly – a guarantee of the right to refuse the participation in these measures, which was inscribed into the Latvian ICH safeguarding act adopted in 2016 by the Latvian Parliament. This serves to reinforce the basic idea that it is the community that should independently decide on what is good for them and on the way of protecting their cultural traditions. In this perspective, sustainable development means a balance and variety of safeguarding measures and leaving the decision of choosing them to the communities themselves.

Katarzyna Smyk, in turn, sees the potential to realise the ideals of sustainable development through the 2003 Convention in its auto-reflective effect on the bearers and in making them





more conscious about their engagement in safeguarding measures. In this way, the own actions of communities, groups and individuals (bottom-top), as well as the actions inspired externally (top-bottom), become balanced and thus – sustainable.

Mirela Hrovatin (this volume), while analysing this issue, also notices that the implementation of sustainable development in practice is based primarily on engaging the bearers and the entire local community into each step of planning the development projects. She notices: 'not all the solutions can be reached for all types of ICH on the theoretical or universal levels. Thus, the more local and specific approach to ICH, the better'. This perspective is also about sustainability; this time, of the proposed safeguarding measures, created internationally as theoretical and proposed solutions, as well as of their practical aspects, adjusted to the local conditions. Eva Románková-Kuminková, consecutively, writes about the potential and real dangers for sustainable development, which are connected with the inscription if a given element onto the UNESCO lists and points out to the fact that considering the expressions of intangible cultural heritage on the heritage lists will not ensure sustainable development on its own. It is necessary to complement it with conscious actions made by communities, groups and individuals, among which one can find the decision to refuse to inscribe one's practices to the national inventory, not to mention the UNESCO list itself (in this volume).

Therefore, taking into consideration the great variety of the tackled topics relating to sustainable development, we can see that the concept itself has such a wide scope that it becomes incredibly blurred and indistinct; an ideal concept for disputes and deliberations for researchers but incredibly difficult to explain to the communities in practice and hard to translate into concrete solutions. In summary of the deliberations on it in this volume, the centre of gravity should be shifted from the category of 'development' to the category of 'sustainable'. It seems much easier to operate and practically implement, as well as to establish whether it is realised in practice, which is pointed out by the authors themselves.

Remark 10: the Convention is the biggest achievement of the contemporary international cultural heritage law, and at the same time it leads to its further fragmentation.

In 2003, intangible heritage became incorporated into the previous heritage regimes made for various dimensions of heritage (cultural, natural, underwater) functioning within UNESCO, and –

what is important from the perspective of countries participating in the Forum – other regional organisations, including the Council of Europe (embracing architectural, audiovisual, archaeological heritage – see below).

The multitude of definitions of 'cultural heritages' is accompanied by a multitude of legislative solutions, which results in a fragmentation of both the concept of cultural heritage and of its international safeguarding regimes. The term 'fragmentation' was popularised by Martti Koskenniemi in 2006, in the report for the United Nations Commission on Human Rights that was devoted to this phenomenon (Koskenniemi 2006).¹¹ It can be understood as the branching out of law into highly specialised fields (boxes), which claim the right to be relatively mutually autonomous and independent of the law in general sense (namely, of the general acts and rules of international law) (Koskenniemi 2006, para. 13). One of such fields is the current international cultural heritage law, which led to the creation of a specific group of experts in the area of heritage studies, including international lawyers, who deal specifically with this field.¹²

The fragmentation of international law also takes place within its respective fields, leading to a further internal fragmentation. This is the case with the concept of cultural heritage and with the regimes of its international safeguarding; it is already particularly visible during the analysis of the legislative *acquis* of the two organisations that have adopted the largest numbers of international legal regulations devoted to this matter: UNESCO and the Council of Europe.¹³ In UNESCO alone, we are dealing with distinct concepts and regimes of underwater heritage (2001 Convention), cultural heritage (1972 Convention), natural heritage (1972 Convention), natural & cultural heritage (1972 Convention), and intangible heritage (2003 Convention).

If we analyse the field of European regulations, the primary organisation that adopts treaties on cultural heritage under its auspices is the Council of Europe. Inside its framework, we are dealing with architectural heritage (1985 Convention),¹⁴ archaeological heritage (1992 Convention),¹⁵ audiovisual heritage (2001 Convention),¹⁶ and the 2005 Faro Convention on the Value of Cultural

¹¹ For the newest publications on this phenomenon, see e.g. Jakubowski and Wierczyńska 2016.

¹² Regarding the community of expert lawyers-heritologists, see e.g. Lixinski 2013. See also the creation of the separate Committee on Cultural Heritage Law in the framework of the International Law Association, directed by Prof. James Nafziger.

¹³ Thus excluding from analysis the dissipated regulations that regulate access to cultural heritage and the possibility to care for it within the framework of human rights protection, for example the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948, or the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights from 1966. See more in: Schreiber and Budziszewska 2015.

¹⁴ Dziennik Ustaw 2012 item 210.

¹⁵ Dziennik Ustaw 1996 no. 120 item 564.

¹⁶ Not ratified yet.





Heritage for Society.¹⁷ In practice, both organisations cooperate with each other in this field only on a very limited scale. They in fact copy, create similar solutions or altogether ignore the efforts and reflections made in this field by the other organisation (vide: the works on the Delphi convention performed by the Council of Europe).

These constructed definitions of 'heritages' subsequently grow into having their own institutions, procedures and criteria, even within the same organisations that rarely 'communicate'¹⁸ with each other. This situation results in splintering into fractions: communities, groups and individuals; experts, government and non-government institutions. Thus, we have experts: (art) historians, conservators, archaeologists, (landscape) architects, ethnographers, linguists, and others, who take care of their own respective fields, protecting them against the intruders from other 'regimes' and organisations, thus literally and metaphorically 'guarding' their cultural heritages (this phenomenon is referred to as the expertisation of cultural heritage; see Lixinski 2013). Therefore, even though cultural heritage is officially regarded as inseparable and in need of an integrated or holistic approach¹⁹ – and as one that should not be separated into tangible and intangible – the existing separate legal solutions and distinct institutions, in fact, contribute to sustaining the prevalence of sectors. This leads to a situation, in which – as in an endless loop – the legal, organisational, and expert fragmentation is still supported, both on the local, national and on the international level. An important aspect of this process is the continuous professionalisation of the discussion and of the formulation of solutions in respective fields, which in turn results in the creation of conditions that sustain the prevalence of specific 'regimes'. This term has been a subject of in-depth scrutiny of Regina F. Bendix, Aditya Eggert and Arnika Peselmann (2013).

These authors indicate that they use this term in the way it was defined in the theory of international regulation (Bendix, Eggert, and Peselmann 2013, 12–13), in which 'international regime' (the 2003 Convention should be treated as such) pertains to the norms and regulations that have been negotiated between the actors on the international level (here: in the form of regulations and norms written down in the 2003 Convention). Such regime leads to the emergence of new

¹⁷ Not ratified yet.

¹⁸ Exceptions include the recent cooperation between teams of experts, for example the 1954 Convention, the 1970 Convention, and the 1972 Convention related to the identification of threats to cultural heritage in the Middle East and North Africa. Although the UNESCO Cultural Conventions Liaison Group was founded in 2012, which was comprised of the secretaries of the respective conventions, the activity of this group does not result in the actual tightening of the cooperation between these conventions.

¹⁹ See e.g. European Commission 2014; Human Rights Council 2015, para. 8.

institutions (e.g. the organs of the Convention), whose task is to make decisions and generate rules, also in response to new issues (here: for example, the issue of sustainable development and its regulation through accepting the new Chapter VI into the Operational Directives).

Another practical, almost mundane problem connected to the fragmentation of the safeguarding of cultural heritage and to the presence of many different regimes is also the growing financial problem on the level of international organisations which have to manage the increasing number of conventions and the growing number of member states.

The report presented in UNESCO in 2013 directly highlighted the fact that 'while the work of the convention secretariats has increased over the years, the financial resources of the secretariats have not been in tandem with the workload' (UNESCO 2013a, 7).

In order to approach this problem, the Cultural Conventions Liaison Group (CCLG) was formed in 2012, comprising of secretaries of respective conventions and senior management of the Culture sector. Its task was to foster coordination and efficiencies among the convention secretariats, which, after all, share similar problems and challenges. However, the opinion about the effectiveness of this Group's actions is rather moderately optimistic, and even sceptical (Duvelle 2017, in print), and if there are no radical, diametrically different steps, the process of fragmentation will deepen further. And even though countries, as well as international organisations, might be interested in sustaining this fragmentation status quo, it leads to many difficulties from the perspective of the coherence of the safeguarding actions – and their administrative realisation. Solving the existing contradictions thus seems to be beyond the capabilities of states. The largest potential and possibility of stopping or even reversing the process of fragmentation lies therefore in a vision and a specific programme, which can be presented by an international organisation and in obtaining the support for it by states that in fact are its part. This scenario, however, seems implausible.



Conclusions

The 2003 Convention, by placing communities, groups and individuals in the centre of attention has at the same time made central the question of the ethics of conduct in issues related to the human and his cultural identity. These ethics are situated – in many cases – on the pole that is opposite to politics. The 2003 Convention, as every instrument of international law which is ratified by countries, gathers the representatives of these countries and constitutes a platform of their



interests, has a political character, however, it is the attempts to break the rules of its functioning in a political-free space that are the most significant threat to it. The system of checks and balances that is forming before our eyes after 10 years of its functioning, which entails the cooperation of the bearers of heritage (communities, groups and individuals), delegates of countries (also with the participation of the Convention Secretariat), and the representatives of the scientific world (experts), requires constant concern to keep them in the right balance. The pessimistic, however realistic assessment of this challenge suggests that the 'implementation optimism' stemming from the nearly universal ratification of the 2003 Convention, together with the pressure of countries to be 'on' the lists, will never free the Convention entirely from politics and the attempts to increase the role of states at the cost of the other two elements of this system. At the same time, a realistic assessment of this situation can yield solutions (procedures) which will allow to practically strengthen the role of bearers themselves, which will in turn highlight the importance of ethical principles encompassing their heritage and ultimately make the criteria of evaluation of the inscription on the lists as well as those of the Convention itself more objective, thus reducing – however not entirely eliminating – the processes that lead to its politicisation. Thus, a creation of a functioning system of checks and balances is possible, however, it will require efforts of all sides of this convective 'three-partite division of power', including bearers (communities, groups and individuals), representatives of states, and experts. The concessions made by the strong for the weak in this present system might perhaps be the biggest challenge in the subsequent 10 years of the functioning of the 2003 Convention. It is they, however, that might constitute the crucial difference distinguishing it from other acts of international cultural heritage law and ultimately lead to a situation in which the widely-known statement of its 'revolutionary' character fully 'enters into force'.

The texts gathered in this volume allowed to extract key issues that characterise the underlying assumptions, the philosophy of safeguarding, and the practical applications of the 2003 Convention. The 10 remarks presented above definitely do not exhaust what can be said and needs to be said about it. Fortunately, the proliferation of research and the rapid increase in awareness related to the 2003 Convention among states, together with the growing engagement of ICH bearers into its identification, transmission and development raises hope that in the next 10 years the issues analysed here

will have at least partially changed their shape and character for the better, and the most burning problems will have been at least partially solved. It certainly should be wished to the 2003 Convention itself, to the states parties, and to its 'guardian' – UNESCO, but most of all, it should be wished to those to which it owes its existence: the bearers of intangible cultural heritage.

The research on the subjects gathered in this article has been funded from the young scientists grant (2016), awarded by the Faculty of Political Science and International Studies of the University of Warsaw. The author would like to thank dr. Andrzej Jakubowski for his helpful comments on the first version of this text.

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Acknowledgements



Publication of a book that contains nearly 40 papers representing the experiences in the implementation of the 2003 Convention of the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage in 17 countries, in two language versions: Polish and English, in both digital and paper form, is a great challenge.

Facing this challenge would not be possible without the kindness, devotion, and cooperation of many people, whose work was only brought together and bound by the editor.

This publication is the aftermath of the first major international endeavour in Poland devoted to intangible cultural heritage: The First China – Central and Eastern European Countries Expert-Level Forum on Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, organised in October 2016 in Kraków. It was realised by the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and the Polish Heritage Board, which cooperated on the substantive issues with the Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China.

The book that the reader is holding is a robust and essential element of this meeting and allows to return to the important discussions and themes related to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, which were raised during the debates in the International Cultural Centre in Kraków.

Therefore, I would like to thank Prof. Magdalena Gawin, Vice Minister of Culture and National Heritage and General Monument Conservator, and Prof. Małgorzata Rozbicka, the Director of the National Heritage Board of Poland. Without their support, this book could not have been published.





The participants of the Forum in the Wieliczka Salt Mine, October 2016. Photo by Paweł Kobek, © National Heritage Board of Poland.

Thanks to this publication, the voice of the experts invited to Poland can reach a significantly wider audience and join the lively discussion that is currently shaping the cultural heritage safeguarding system in all 17 countries.

The experts that came to Poland made the atmosphere of the Forum not only subject-oriented but also very kind, and the contacts that were made are still kept alive today and certainly will find a continuation in future endeavours, perhaps even joint applications for entries of the common regional and trans-national intangible cultural heritage on the UNESCO lists. The kind and patient cooperation of all the experts – authors of the texts for this publication – was the key factor to its creation. I would like to thank them with all my heart!

I would also like to give my sincere thanks to Professor Andrzej Rottermund, who reviewed such a big volume. His remarks allowed us to notice new issues, important not only from the perspective of the book but from the entire system of safeguarding itself.

Such ventures also have their 'silent heroes' – hidden behind the authors' names. I would like to express my greatest gratitude and appreciation to the language editor Tomasz Wiśniewski, who has proofread and corrected the final edition of the English version of the book. Equal appreciation and gratitude go to the editor of the Polish language version, Aleksandra Zych, who has also performed the mechanical editing of all the texts. Without the two of you, the book would not take the shape that we had all dreamed about. The formal side of the publication process was overseen with patience and understanding by Katarzyna Sadowska-Mazur, the head of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Unit at the National Heritage Board of Poland. Without her help in the key moments, we would not have achieved it all. I would also like to thank Magda Piotrowska-Kloc (Printomato) for the professional typesetting and preparation of the book for print.

I sincerely hope that this work will become the point of reference to further actions and projects of safeguarding intangible heritage in the 17 states – parties to this crucial UNESCO Convention – and that it will allow us to build a better, more inclusive and balanced system of safeguarding intangible heritage in our countries.



Hanna Schreiber

July 2017