ICH Festivals on the Silk Road
In the early months of 2020, the world was hit hard by the rapid spread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19). An increasing number of countries are closing their borders and imposing restrictions limiting social interactions. In order to combat this pandemic, however, transparent information-sharing, as well as cross-border cooperation, are important more than ever.

We are highly sensitive and responsive to visual stimuli. In contrast, our reaction to invisible and intangible things is often slow and overdue. The same goes for ICH. Look at how an international convention and safeguarding measures were created for visible and tangible heritage decades before their counterparts for intangible heritage. Nevertheless, we now realize the intangible cultural power of humankind as creators of tangible cultural heritage and are making various efforts to safeguard this power. The ICH Courier is determined to endeavor more vigorously to discover and introduce such safeguarding activities.

The main topic of Windows to ICH in this volume is ICH festivals on the Silk Road. The Silk Road was a historical network of trade routes connecting the East and the West as well as a means for cultural exchange. In particular, Central Asia, as the historic heart of the Silk Road, is home to a variety of festivals and celebrations related to ICH, such as Nauryz. A festival inherently provides a setting for experiencing a wide range of ICH, including rituals, food, crafts, music, and dance. We hope that this volume will present you with the experience of ICH festivals across the Silk Road.

Following the story of ICH and artificial intelligence featured in the previous volume, this volume discusses holograms as a tool for ICH transmission, providing the opportunity to consider the use of digital technology as a new way to enjoy ICH.

Besides, we examine various ICH safeguarding activities in the field: the project of the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage to lay the groundwork for ICH transmission by preserving the languages of ethnic minority groups, traditional knowledge of a fishing community in the Philippines, and ICHCAP’s pilot project for ICH education at primary schools.

This year, as always, we will continue to dedicate our utmost efforts as a messenger to introduce and share ICH safeguarding efforts across the Asia-Pacific region. We hope the best for your health and happiness throughout the year.
The Virtual and the Real
Intangible Cultural Heritage and Holograms

Jin-ho Park
Cultural Heritage Digital Restoration Expert
Former KAIST Senior Researcher

Origin and History of Holograms
Korea is currently experiencing a Fourth Industrial Revolution. And there are increasing attempts to adapt the Fourth Industrial Revolution in cultural heritage across the country, and holograms are recently drawing keen attention as a potential technological advancement for this purpose. However, hologram technology is nothing new; rather, it can be traced back to 150 years ago.

Hologram is a newly coined word comprised of the Greek words holos, meaning “whole,” and grammus, meaning “painting.” In sum, the term refers to a perfect painting that shows not just one side of an object, but its entire shape simultaneously. The theatrical technique of Pepper’s Ghost, which was introduced in the late nineteenth century, created impeccable stereoscopic images that were projected at the front of the stage, but the illusion was exposed when viewing from the side or back of the stage.

Therefore, the simple optical illusion of Pepper’s Ghost failed to create a perfect painting, strictly speaking. Nonetheless, in hindsight, it was the prototype of pseudo-holograms, given that it created an impeccable glasses-free, stereoscopic 3D image in the eyes of the audience, by applying the principle of a 45-degree angle reflector.

As mentioned above, it was approximately 150 years ago when humankind successfully set an image afloat in three-dimensional space for the first time. Later, in the late nineteenth century, an English engineer named Henry Dircks invented a remarkable image technique to levitate a ghost onstage. Using this technique, a bright light was focused on the subject from a dark room under the stage. Its image was reflected onto a mirror inclined backward at a 45-degree angle and then projected onto a glass plate installed at a slanted angle onstage. In the eyes of the audience, a ghost appeared as if it was floating in the air, as the shape of the subject was reflected onto a transparent film layered over the dark background.

Ultimately, this technique created an optical illusion by utilizing the simple principle that a glass plate installed in a dark place would reflect light, just like a mirror. After several years had passed, John Pepper staged a ghost performance in a theater using a novel optical technology. This show, titled Pepper’s Ghost, soon became a sensation across European theaters. In a way, the ghost-performance pattern designed by Henry Dircks laid the theoretical foundation for the pseudo-hologram described above and laid down the framework to create fabulous holographic effects in large performances and state-of-the-art digital shows today.

As optical or laser holograms are no longer in the spotlight today, Pepper’s Ghost can be seen as the origin that gave birth to the holograms with industrial applications.

It was only during the twentieth century that a genuine holographic technology, as opposed to an optical illusion, was developed to generate stereoscopic light flows by projecting light beams onto an actual space.

In 1947, the English physicist Dennis Gabor originally discovered holography that generates stereoscopic images of an object onto a three-dimensional space through the intersection of two light sources, and this was later acknowledged as a great invention that earned him a Nobel Prize.

Pseudo-holograms Applied in Cultural Heritage
These so-called pseudo-holograms are not genuine holograms from the viewpoint of optical holograms. Instead, they reflect objects using computer-based projectors.

Pseudo-hologram is translated to “hologram-like” in English and “擬似 (similar to reality) hologram” using Chinese characters.

Pseudo-holograms are shown by reflecting actual figures and images into the air using special displays, and special beam projectors and LEDs are used to generate stereoscopic images reflected in the air. Its principle began with the technique of Pepper’s Ghost whose trial performance was staged across Europe in 1862.

Until recently, it had been referred to as a 3D holographic projection as a similar concept, while the term “pseudo-hologram” was coined to attach the concept as a type of hologram as a matter of convenience. Representative cases for the commercialization of this pseudo-hologram include Mission’s Eyeliner, Vizor’s Free Format, Lincoln Museum’s mist hologram exhibition, Actuality Systems’ Perspecta, Activ 3D’s 3D-holobox hologram display, InnoVision Labs’ HoloAd and Realfiction’s Dreamoc XL.
The Digilog Samulnori: A large number of cases where holograms are used for commercial purposes are those based on the Pepper’s Ghost technique of projecting three-dimensional images onto a large transparent screen. It remains unfeasible for individuals to enjoy holographic images at home, but large-scale holograms are beginning to be used by institutions with the necessary technological and financial resources, such as concerts by famous stars and major companies’ marketing events.

1) Digilog Samulnori

An awe-inspiring performance titled, Digilog Samulnori: The Dead Tree Blooms, was held at Gwanghwamun Art Hall in January 2010. It was the world’s first attempt at combining holographic projection technology with historical figures in performances and virtual holograms, demonstrated that holograms, hailed as the pinnacle of 3D technology, has the potential to transform the performance culture of traditional cultural heritage in the years to come.

The holographic storytelling behind the performance is as follows. As the curtains are raised, a dead tree in the desert begins to sprout as the performers and the responses of the audience. Amid the rhythms of traditional percussion instruments resonating through the hall, the stage presents surreal images, such as the dead tree that abruptly blooms, three or four virtual Kim Deok-su copies each playing a different musical instruments. As such, the dimensional illusions projected onto the stage in this performance delivered a shockwave to the audience's visual and auditory senses and elicited enthusiastic responses, which in turn led to an explosion of interest from media and the public, followed by a hologram syndrome across society. This single performance served as a trigger to capture the nation's attention when complete holograms had received little attention until then.

The first technological feature of Digilog Samulnori was to use sensors that respond to the intensity of sounds generated by percussion instruments and the movements of performers, allowing the holograms to change according to the actions of the performers and the responses of the audience. As the sound of instruments, for instance, becomes increasingly louder, the dead tree on the stage begins to sprout as flower petals swirl around it. The vibrant movement of the performers is accompanied by butterflies that fill the stage and flutter up into the sky.

The performance is not composed of pre-recorded images, but real-time interaction between digital technology and analogue traditional rhythms, allowing 3D images to change in response to the audience. Normally, 3D movies or broadcasts, for instance, show recordings based on linear scenarios, thereby precluding audience participation. This is why Digilog Samulnori is referred to as a 4D performance. The stage allows both digital technology and imagination to interact with each other within the same space through physical contact among human beings, thereby turning the stage into an interactive communication venue between audiences, performers, and 3D images.

Specifically, the holographic images and live performers on stage create a time-transcending ensemble, allowing holographic images to instantly respond to the performers' sounds and movements through technological means, such as sound and motion sensors.

It can be said that this novel venture broke down the boundary between the virtual and the real, creating a new digilog space based on the convergence of art and technology. The second technological feature was that the performance delivered a 3D world without any assistance of specially designed glasses or other equipment for the audience. It enabled audiences to watch 3D movies such as Avatar. This indicates that the performance applied the same technical mechanism as 3D movies, albeit through a different implementation method. As a result, Digilog Samulnori, characterized as a marvelous performance created through the collaboration of actual performers and virtual holograms, demonstrated that holograms, hailed as the pinnacle of 3D technology, has the potential to transform the performance culture of traditional cultural heritage in the years to come.

2) AI Holographic Content Baekbeom Kim Koo

If Digilog Samulnori features a combination of intangible cultural heritage and hologram technology, the latest creation of “Holographic Baekbeom Kim Koo” aims to connect the holographic projection technology with historical figures in modern and contemporary times.

Kim Koo was one of the leading independence movement activists in Korean history. He was also known by his penname Baekbeom and left a significant legacy on modern Korea. In this project, Baekbeom Kim Koo was re-created using a holographic actor. It was an inspired, ambitious attempt to bring the historical figure back to life, based on thorough research of historical records, with the assistance of state-of-the-art scientific advances such as motion capture and holograms.

A Talk Concert with Baekbeom Kim Koo, which was held in Korea 2019, was met with high acclaim from the audience. It was presented in the format of a history talk show hosted by the interactive hologram, who communicated with the audience as he talked and moved before them.

A wide range of technologies were applied in creating the content of holographic Baekbeom. Interlocking solutions for real-time holographic displays with advanced technologies, such as hologram display technology, facial capture, and motion capture, were used to turn his understudy’s motions and facial expressions into those of the 3D character of Baekbeom.

These technologies enable real-time communication. When the audience asks questions in real-time, the AI holographic Baekbeom, in the form of a digital actor, would recreate the ambience of a personal conversation with him. The holographic Baekbeom represented a remarkable advancement in that it involves not just a single technology, but several technologies combined with AI as a central part of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, thereby elevating the application potential of hologram technology to a higher level.

Prospects for Using Holography in Cultural Heritage

Since the performance Digilog Samulnori as the first effort to combine intangible cultural heritage and holography, there has been a greater focus on the potential of hologram technology to be applied to cultural heritage, following a cascade of hologram-applied performances and exhibitions.

Holograms are expected to be applied to museum exhibitions in the future. Likewise, although this technology still faces many limitations, the holographic presentation, through steady technological innovations, appears to be developing to the point of blurring the boundary between the physical world and the virtual world.

The cultural industry can adopt hologram technology in a wide array of cultural heritage exhibitions, in addition to intangible cultural heritage performances described above.

This is attributable to holograms’ multi-faceted nature, from two-dimensional and three-dimensional features as floating objects with kaleidoscopic forms and colors, to an interactive four-dimensional world made possible through audience participation. For this reason, holographic technology will likely play a remarkable role in the establishment of digital museums based on tangible or intangible cultural heritage.

As holograms can create a setting identical to an actual exhibition, their use for digital exhibitions holds high potential for application in museums. As the biggest concern facing museums is limitations of offline space, which makes it difficult to display even a single artifact at once. In this regard, virtual artifacts converted to holographic data are not bound by spatial restrictions, not only for display purposes but also as a way to safeguard cultural properties.

Furthermore, as holographic images of cultural assets can replace actual relics in galleries, there are many more benefits, including comparative exhibitions and research into international cultural properties, preservation of local museums’ regional uniqueness, and circulation of destroyed relics as holographic images, as well as effortless cultural exchanges with foreign countries.

Cases of Exhibitions for Korean Cultural Heritage Using Hologram Technology

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An awe-inspiring performance titled, Digilog Samulnori: The Dead Tree Blooms, was held at Gwanghwamun Art Hall in January 2010. It was the world’s first attempt at combining samulnori, or Korean traditional percussion music, with 3D holographic projection technology. This new style of artistic performance gained tremendous attention as a collaboration between performers and holographic characters. Kim Duk-soo, a master of samulnori, collaborated with his holographic copies, accompanied by Korean traditional dance and songs performed by traditional choreographer Guk Su-ho and pansori singer Ahn Sook-sun.

As a novel format of performance based on the combination of traditional culture and advanced technology, Digilog Samulnori was inspired by the idea of associating samulnori—which represents a traditional flow of nature across the seasons of spring, summer, fall and winter, along with rain, cloud, thunder, and wind—with 3D projection technologies. To describe this amalgamation, the term “digilog” was coined as a portmanteau of “digital” and “analog.”

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ICH depends on transmitting knowledge, skills, and the inspiration to share this knowledge with the next generation. Transmission depends on the local language where the knowledge originates. When this language is small, Indigenous, or minoritized, the speakers are almost always pressured to shift to a more dominant or more prestigious language; over time, much of the traditional knowledge and practices are lost along with the language. So, language maintenance and revitalization efforts are structural underpinnings for sustaining ICH.

The linguistic picture of Tibetan areas in China is complicated. In addition to the large Tibetan languages of China – Ü-Tsang, Amdo, and Kham – there are at least 50 smaller Tibetic languages¹ and 38 minority (non-Tibetic) languages², many of which identify as Tibetan. With perhaps the exception of the largest three, all urgently need measures for maintenance or revitalization.

Accordingly, Nankai University (NKU), the Ancient Tibetan Texts Research Center of Qinghai Province, Shanghai Normal University (SHNU) Tibetology Research Center and the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH) joined in 2016 to create the Sino-Tibetan Language and Linguistics Summer Institute. The Institute comprises the two-week Sino-Tibetan Language Research Methodology Workshop (hereafter "the Workshop"), and during the weekend in between, the academic Tibetan Language and Linguistics Forum³.

This report addresses the Workshop—held every August since 2016, training nearly 150 students. The Workshop’s primary objective is to provide linguistic training to minority nationality students, primarily those from Tibetan languages and cultures. The training serves as a foundation to document their own languages and cultural practices, to provide linguistic descriptions that feed into pedagogical materials, and to increase awareness of language shift and revitalization approaches. Secondly, but also vital for continuation of low-prestige languages, is to instill value and legitimacy for their languages.

Field Report

The Sino-Tibetan Language Research Methodology Workshop

Atshogs Yeshes Vodgsal
Nankai University

Mary S. Linn
Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage

Students discuss a language problem with Professor George van Driem at the 2016 Sino-Tibetan Language Research Methodology Workshop © Mary S. Linn

Student manual for the 2016 Sino-Tibetan Language Research Methodology Workshop, designed by one of the students. © Atshogs Yeshes Vodgsal

Field Report
Shkuz Village, Sichuan Province, China, by Field Report Documentation of horse saddle making in Research Methodology Workshop © rGyalthar

The ability to speak their languages is not essential. Some students come with little

Workshop was to begin, CFCH and NKU signed a Memorandum of Understanding.

areas of China had repeatedly managed to scrape together funding to hold this kind

workshops for Tibetan students. NKU is a top-tier research university with interna-
tional collaborations and a long tradition of research in ethnic minority languages, including graduating the first Tibetan PhD student in linguistics. Considering Mary

had almost thirty years of experience in community-based training institutes, it was

match in shared goals and complementary expertise. After months of hard work, in June 2016, and just two months before the first Workshop was to begin, CFCH and NKU signed a Memorandum of Understanding. Until this point there had never been an academic institute devoted exclusively to

languages and from urbanization. Students have some background in language

the humanities. What was once an experiment to see if such a

We can argue for workshops in other areas of the world by showing the positive effect they have on individual and community engagement with their languages and cultures. What was once an experiment to see if such a Workshop was feasible is now an experiment in keeping up with the demand for more and responding to changing times.

The Workshops

The workshops give students practical and technical skills in linguistic software and video recording cultural practices. PhD students from the USA and China usually instruct these workshops. While having graduate teaching assistants is not common in China, the Workshop students see peers who are interested in studying their languages and gain role models for continuing their higher education. It also trains the graduate students to teach in semi-formal settings.

Linguistics field methods courses partner an instructor with a consultant who is a native speaker of a language that the students do not know (we have worked with Khrochu and Ersu speakers) for them to learn how the language works. They also learn ethical protocols of working with speakers. Our field methods workshop is extremely condensed in time. Still, students are able to produce a description of the sound system and some other part of the language (of their choice). The student projects contribute to real-world documentation of their highly endangered languages.

The evenings are equally full—with guest lectures, study hall, and salons, where students share their own research or community language projects. In short, the students eat and sleep language for two weeks. And still they want more.

Impact

During and after the Workshop, students connect to each other and instructors through a group WeChat. We disseminate course materials to overcome existing language barriers. Importantly, the WeChat groups encourage students to support each other, and our partners to funnel news and opportunities their way.

By this time, students understand better what information they use the most and what they need. We ask how they have used the information (e.g. teaching products, data collection, furthering their education). We gauge broader impact by asking if they have shared the information with others, and if so, how (e.g. local workshop, teaching, discussions, WeChat). To this end, the Workshop is successful, as students each year report documentation projects in their own communities, sharing infor-
mation, and encouraging language use.

For more information about the NKU’s extraordinary efforts, the Workshop courses, and the role of graduate students, listen to the presentation “Mary Firsts: The First sino-Tibetan Summer Linguistics Institute,” with Xiang Xin, Mary S. Linn, Zoe Tribur, Nathaniel Simms and Xuan Guan, given at the International Conference on Language Documentation and Conservation, University of Hawai‘i, Manoa, March 4, 2017, at https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/handle/10125/41974.


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NOTE

1. “Tibetic” refers to languages derived from Old Tibetan, fol-


ICH Festivals on the Silk Road

The festivals allow local communities to celebrate and commemorate their intangible heritage while providing an opportunity for every member of society to enjoy intangible heritage. While such festivities comprise intangible heritage in themselves, they also serve as an effective way to raise awareness of intangible heritage. This volume introduces the diverse festivities held in Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Mongolia and Uzbekistan.
Mehrgan is an autumn festival and relates to agriculture and gardening. During the spring farmers sow and in autumn they gather the harvest; in the spring they plant trees and prune them to be fruitful, and in the autumn, they gather the harvest. Thus, the Mehrgan festival expresses the thankfulness of the people for an abundant harvest given by their god.

Mehrgan is an autumn harvest festival celebrated during or after gathering a harvest. In ancient times, Mehrgan marked the autumn equinox, and according to an old Iranian calendar, celebrated on the mehr day of the mehr month, equal to 8 October. In the Republic of Tajikistan 15 October is the official day of Mehrgan.

The word mehr according to Iranian mythology is the name of the Zoroastrian deity Mithra who is considered the god of consent, friendship, and light of sky. About the genesis of the Mehrgan, there are multiple ancient sources. For example, one such source shāhnāma of Ferdowsi mention king Faredoon as a founder of the festival. King Faredoon struggled with demon ruler Zahhāk and after victory on him gathered people and held the festival Mehrgan.

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During the celebration people organize exhibitions of agriculture products, fruits, and various of grains. Some groups prepare different traditional dishes using fresh products and put them out on a table for an exhibition. The special tablecloth of the Mehrgan contains fruits such apples, pomegranates, grapes, lemons, and pears. The exhibition of folk crafts products is a main part of the festival. Musical groups join the festival with joyful concerts; dancers dance traditional lyric and humor dances.

On the other side of the square or stadiums are traditional sport games and entertainment, such as wrestling, rope pulling, and rope walking. Holiday strolls are organized in the cities and towns.

In the villages and rural areas, people continue traditional customs, such inviting guests and sending fruits as autumn present to the friends and neighbors.

During the Soviet period when the agricultural societies were united in collective farms, they celebrated Mehrgan as idı hasılat (harvest festival). On a certain day in October, heads of the collective farms with the members of farms organized a massive fair to display the samples of the year’s harvest. These fairs would have a very celebratory nature, and music was played, and people congratulated one another for the abundant harvest.

After gaining its independence, the Tajik government directed its attention to revive traditional cultural festivals and as such Mehrgan has been inserted into the event calendar in Tajikistan by the decree of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Leader of the Nation his Excellency Emomali Rahmon.

The Mehrgan festival has several social functions and cultural meanings. People come together despite age, gender, job, social background, ethnicity, and religious affiliation in the celebration yard. They collectively prepare exhibitions of the best products from the field, gardens, and farms and play musical instruments and sing songs. Today the Tajik people consider Mehrgan a celebration of friendship, love, and truth. Participants share their happiness with other people, respect and congratulate each other. It promotes the mutual understanding and respect each other. As well as no parts of the element harms the surrounding nature, air or water. In the celebration day gardeners will organize exhibition and sell of different fresh fruits and peasants organize the sale of vegetables. Craftsmen, like blacksmiths and carpenters, bring to the exhibition their handmade traditional working instruments and sell them to the peasants, gardeners, farmers, and other people.

Mehrgan festival also serves as symbol for stability of national identity for the Tajik people. Tajiks consider the festival a big national celebration related to nature. In this regard, it should be noted that the Nowruz holiday marks the spring equinox, and the Mehrgan means also the autumn equinox.

In the Sughd region where gardening traditions have developed, Mehrgan is a lovely festival of gardeners. The elder gardeners coach the younger generations to learn the traditional knowledge and skills related to the element. There are many famous gardeners who have learned from their fathers and grandfathers, or uncles, and they work to pass their knowledge and skills of gardening and holding festival.
ICH Related Festivals in Azerbaijan

Shahin Mustafayev
Deputy Director, Institute of Oriental Studies

Azerbaijan is one of the countries whose history is intricably linked with the Silk Road. From ancient times, the network trade routes connecting the east with the west and the south with the north crossed the territory of Azerbaijan. It is not surprising that the diverse colors, sounds, and images, characteristics of people with a dynamic history that were open for constant interaction with the outside world, was reflected in traditional Azerbaijani culture.

The folk art of Azerbaijan is remarkable for its amazing diversity and vividness. The festivals organized in this field are designed to draw the attention of the public for the need to preserve of national traditions. So, in late October to early November 2019, the First Baku International Festival of Traditional Crafts “Folk Art” was held in the historical part of Baku. About sixty participants from thirty-five countries participated in the festival. For seven days, craftsmen from the countries of Central Asia, the Near and Middle East, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Southeast Asia sat on the main streets of the Old City, demonstrating their skills, creating traditional samples of the national culture of their countries in front of audiences. Here one could see objects from woven straw, characteristics of the peoples of African and Asian areas, graphic works styled as medieval Iranian miniatures, samples of traditional ceramics of the Slavic peoples and various types of carpet products created by craftsmen from Central Asia. Also, within the framework of the festival the international conference Prospects for the Further Development of the Art of the Islamic World was held.

Azerbaijan is located on a fertile strip of land on the shores of the Caspian Sea. Despite its small territory, it includes nine climatic zones from dry semi-desert to humid subtropical. It is not surprising that historically, the land of this country has been the area of ancient farming and animal husbandry. The fruits and vegetables grown since ancient times on this land have always been distinguished by their exquisite taste. Many of them have symbolic meaning in poetry, musical culture and traditional and modern painting of Azerbaijan. And it is no accident that at present, the so-called “fruit” festivals that are held in various regions of the country have become traditional in Azerbaijan. These events are an important platform contributing to the fruitful synthesis of folk customs with musical culture and traditional crafts.

For instance, at the end of August 2019, in the ancient city of Shamakha, historically famous for its viticulture, the festival of grapes and wine was held for the first time. Within two days, local and foreign guests of the festival had the opportunity to get to know closely the ancient traditions associated with the cultivation of grape varieties and wine production in Azerbaijan. The festival was accompanied by musical and dance performances, a demonstration of folk crafts associated with these types of production, the performance of classical Azerbaijani and Eastern poetry, in which wine was chanted, an exhibition of carpets with decorative elements symbolizing grapes, etc. The festival was of great importance for popularizing both the traditional type of production in Azerbaijan, and for preserving and popularizing various types of folk crafts, instilling in young generations love and respect for music and classical literature.

Over the past few years, in the Goychay district, a traditional place of primary production of pomegranate, festivals dedicated to this fruit are held in the days of its collection. Pomegranate is considered the king of fruits in Azerbaijan, and a number of poems and songs are composed about it. For centuries, pomegranate has been the main source of income for local residents. Some even claim that this is the only country where all varieties of pomegranate grow. People from various regions of the country as well as foreign guests come to the festival. Throughout the days of the festival, various exhibitions are held on the central square of the city of Goychay, a fair is unfolding. Competitions, performances by folklore groups, athletes, and concerts are also held.

No less colorful and massive is the Apple Festival in one of the northern regions of Azerbaijan and the mountain tourist center—the city of Guba, famous since ancient times for its picturesque fruits, and apples of various varieties. In the popular Azerbaijani folk song, the “White Apple of Guba,” which a young girl presents to her lover as a symbol of her sincere and deep feelings, is sung. The Apple Festival has been held every fall in the city since 2012. Within the framework of the festival, guests from Azerbaijan and foreign countries get the opportunity to taste varieties of apples and apple products—cakes and sweets, preserves, and compotes. Here dance groups, performers of folk music, artisans and craftsmen show their art. The purpose of these festivals is the preservation of national traditions, the development of agriculture, and promotion of tourism in the region.

Other festivals related to the intangible cultural heritage are periodically held in Azerbaijan. Among them, the International Music Festival “Silk Road,” organized annually in the ancient city of Sheki, and the festival in the city of Aghsu, dedicated to the traditional way of life and crafts of nomads, enjoy great popularity.

ICH COURIER  

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Deputy Director, Institute of Oriental Studies

Azerbaijan is one of the countries whose history is intricably linked with the Silk Road. From ancient times, the network trade routes connecting the east with the west and the south with the north crossed the territory of Azerbaijan. It is not surprising that the diverse colors, sounds, and images, characteristics of people with a dynamic history that were open for constant interaction with the outside world, was reflected in traditional Azerbaijani culture.

The folk art of Azerbaijan is remarkable for its amazing diversity and vividness. The festivals organized in this field are designed to draw the attention of the public for the need to preserve of national traditions. So, in late October to early November 2019, the First Baku International Festival of Traditional Crafts “Folk Art” was held in the historical part of Baku. About sixty participants from thirty-five countries participated in the festival. For seven days, craftsmen from the countries of Central Asia, the Near and Middle East, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Southeast Asia sat on the main streets of the Old City, demonstrating their skills, creating traditional samples of the national culture of their countries in front of audiences. Here one could see objects from woven straw, characteristics of the peoples of African and Asian areas, graphic works styled as medieval Iranian miniatures, samples of traditional ceramics of the Slavic peoples and various types of carpet products created by craftsmen from Central Asia. Also, within the framework of the festival the international conference Prospects for the Further Development of the Art of the Islamic World was held.

Azerbaijan is located on a fertile strip of land on the shores of the Caspian Sea. Despite its small territory, it includes nine climatic zones from dry semi-desert to humid subtropical. It is not surprising that historically, the land of this country has been the area of ancient farming and animal husbandry. The fruits and vegetables grown since ancient times on this land have always been distinguished by their exquisite taste. Many of them have symbolic meaning in poetry, musical culture and traditional and modern painting of Azerbaijan. And it is no accident that at present, the so-called “fruit” festivals that are held in various regions of the country have become traditional in Azerbaijan. These events are an important platform contributing to the fruitful synthesis of folk customs with musical culture and traditional crafts.

For instance, at the end of August 2019, in the ancient city of Shamakha, historically famous for its viticulture, the festival of grapes and wine was held for the first time. Within two days, local and foreign guests of the festival had the opportunity to get to know closely the ancient traditions associated with the cultivation of grape varieties and wine production in Azerbaijan. The festival was accompanied by musical and dance performances, a demonstration of folk crafts associated with these types of production, the performance of classical Azerbaijani and Eastern poetry, in which wine was chanted, an exhibition of carpets with decorative elements symbolizing grapes, etc. The festival was of great importance for popularizing both the traditional type of production in Azerbaijan, and for preserving and popularizing various types of folk crafts, instilling in young generations love and respect for music and classical literature.

Over the past few years, in the Goychay district, a traditional place of primary production of pomegranate, festivals dedicated to this fruit are held in the days of its collection. Pomegranate is considered the king of fruits in Azerbaijan, and a number of poems and songs are composed about it. For centuries, pomegranate has been the main source of income for local residents. Some even claim that this is the only country where all varieties of pomegranate grow. People from various regions of the country as well as foreign guests come to the festival. Throughout the days of the festival, various exhibitions are held on the central square of the city of Goychay, a fair is unfolding. Competitions, performances by folklore groups, athletes, and concerts are also held.

No less colorful and massive is the Apple Festival in one of the northern regions of Azerbaijan and the mountain tourist center—the city of Guba, famous since ancient times for its picturesque fruits, and apples of various varieties. In the popular Azerbaijani folk song, the “White Apple of Guba,” which a young girl presents to her lover as a symbol of her sincere and deep feelings, is sung. The Apple Festival has been held every fall in the city since 2012. Within the framework of the festival, guests from Azerbaijan and foreign countries get the opportunity to taste varieties of apples and apple products—cakes and sweets, preserves, and compotes. Here dance groups, performers of folk music, artisans and craftsmen show their art. The purpose of these festivals is the preservation of national traditions, the development of agriculture, and promotion of tourism in the region.

Other festivals related to the intangible cultural heritage are periodically held in Azerbaijan. Among them, the International Music Festival “Silk Road,” organized annually in the ancient city of Sheki, and the festival in the city of Aghsu, dedicated to the traditional way of life and crafts of nomads, enjoy great popularity.

ICH COURIER
Tsagaan Sar: Lunar New Year Festival

Urtasun Norov
President
Foundation for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage (FPNCH)

The lunar month festival of the Mongols or holiday celebration of the first day of “White Moon” or “White Month” symbolizes the departure of winter and welcoming the spring of the new year. This festival and its rituals and traditions are unique and naturally accorded with a specific lifestyle of Mongolian nomadic culture. Therefore, during this festival, there are no gatherings of masses on the street to participate in folk parades and street carnivals as in urban cities and villages.

According to historical chronicles and research of specialists, Mongols celebrated the Lunar Moon festival since ancient times. The celebration comes from a time (third century BCE to first century CE) when our ancestors of the Huns Empire—the First Empire of nomads of the steppes created a lunar calendar. According to the Secret History of the Mongols, Chingis Khan (1162–1227) on the first day of the lunar new year, wore new clothes, paid respect to heaven and earth, bowed and greeted his mother Oulun, and took part in a ceremony in his palace.

Since that ancient time, the White Moon festival and its associated rituals and rites deeply penetrated ordinary Mongol life and practices. This is one of the main nationwide annual events, next to the national Naadam celebration. This festival is usually celebrated on the first through third days of the first lunar month of the coming year.

People start preparing for the White Moon festivals several weeks ahead. They prepare plenty of food for their relatives, neighbors, friends, and their children who visit the family. For example, every family prepares hundreds of big dumplings called buuz and makes traditional special cookies kheviin boov for the new year celebration. They try to have enough gifts for every guest, especially for children. Women make new traditional dresses deel for each family member. Men of families catch their best horses and decorate them because they will ride them to visit relatives and friends, who live far away.

The day before the first day of White Month is called Bituun (to close down) which means the final (closed) day of the current year. This day is also named as “no moon day” or “dark moon” because the moon does not appear in the sky. The next day, in the sky, appears new crescent moon which is named “Light Moon” or “White Moon.” Therefore, people have to welcome the first day with “Light Moon” of the new year with a celebration, good wishes, and fresh and clean. In addition to it, the word white symbolizes the milk and purity of human intent and soul as white milk.

In such senses, a day of Bituun closes up “no moon or dark day” and the door preventing bad things from passing to the new white (light) day of the coming year. Due to this tradition, people pay their debts and try to genuinely reconcile if they had problems with someone. Therefore, on Bituun day people thoroughly clean around their ger (traditional home), and herders also clean the livestock barns and shades to meet the new year fresh. Putting wormwood on the doorway is to chase away all negative things.

Families put a feast of sheep rump, tiers of traditional cookies that are erected on large plates by odd numbers and decorated with candies and dairy products, airag (fermented mare’s milk), rice cooked with curd, steamed dumplings, and much more. In front of the altar of family lamps of oil, incense is burned and small prayer wheels are turned to symbolize enlightenment. When it gets dark, people sit together around the table and feast all evening to make wassail. The neighbors, relatives also visit each other if they wish. After that family members listen to interesting stories or play various traditional anklebone and table games.

On the first day of the White Month, people wake up before sunrise and get dressed in their new or nicest national clothes. They go outside, walk, and return by the way prescribed in a book of astrology that means their right life path and destiny in the new year. Then men go to the nearest hill or mountain to watch the first sunrise of the New Year and make offerings to the sacred site of Ovoo. Women make milk tea at home and perform tea libation rituals to honor the earth, heaven, and god wishing the best to their family.

Thereafter they visit their parents, grandparents, or elder relatives and perform a special greeting ritual called zolgolt. All people defer to the most senior person, but the precedence of age is significant. According to the sequence of age, they stretch out their both arms with open palms while holding an honorary blue scarf khadag under the arms of senior person to prop up his or her elbows. The elder kisses or sniffs both cheeks of the younger ones. Each visit must start with zolgolt to the eldest one in the house and in order of age.

Afterward, guests take a seat and exchange stuff boxes of a masterpiece, in which tobacco is powdered, asking each other, “How was your overall health last year?” If you are visiting a herder family, it sounds pleasant to ask, “Did you pass the winter successfully without loss of livestock?” Meanwhile, the guests served with milk tea first and dairy products then the steamed buuz. Guests have to taste everything offered by the host and main dishes on the table. Gift-giving is very symbolic and respective to the White Moon celebration. When guests leave, the host family gives gifts to everyone to thank their visit.

Moreover, there are some rituals primarily linked with Buddhism. Many people go to temples or monasteries to hear prayers and chants for the well-being of the new year.

The White Moon festival is linked to Buddhist and spiritual practices of Mongolian people of all ages in life. This festival expresses ideas and wishes of peace, mercyfulness, prosperity, and reconciliation.
Traditional Uzbek Atlas Bayrami Textile Festival

Shukhrat Ganiev, Mayor of Fergana Region, Chairman of Organizing Committee of the Atlas Bayrami Textile Festival

Saida Azimova, Senior Expert, National Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan for UNESCO

Ikat making in Uzbekistan is an ancient type of applied art. The history of ikat atlas and adras making technologies in the territory of Uzbekistan dates to the late antique period. Historically, Margilan, as the heart of the Fergana Valley, was the birthplace of advanced silk craftsmanship of Central Asia and the center for making atlas and adras—vivid and fine traditional fabrics.

The traditional Atlas Bayrami (Celebrating Atlas) Textile Festival has been conducted biennially since 2015 by the Margilan region administration in close cooperation with the Margilan Crafts Development Centre (MCDC), UNESCO Office in Tashkent, National Commission of Uzbekistan for UNESCO, DVV International, Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Margilan branch of Khunarmand Republican crafts association, Uzbektourizm national company, and Uzbekistan association of cooks. All editions of the festival were honored with the participation of Ms. Bibi Russell, UNESCO Artist for Peace, a textile and crafts specialist, and world-famous craft designer. The main aim and objectives of the festival is to safeguard and promote the intangible Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan, support for the development of traditional crafts and improvement of quality of the crafts products as well as to attract tourists to Fergana Valley. Also the capacity building activities will contribute to improve economic and social wellbeing of the local population. The 2015 festival was held in Margilan, an ancient center of silk weaving on the Great Silk Road. Due to its success, the festival from year to year expanded to become one of the unique initiatives in Uzbekistan. The last festival, which was held in 2018 included a wider geographical range with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan joining the festival, thus expanding to a greater Central Asian area.

Furthermore, representatives from China, Spain, USA, France, Madagascar, Mongolia, and Russia also participated in the festival. The participation of these craftspeople, artists, and specialists enriched the festival and provided a more profound experience as well as contributed to the general cooperation of Central Asian countries through culture. It offered a great possibility to explore a wide variety of traditions, styles, patterns, techniques, and ideas of the region while providing an opportunity for experts to share their knowledge with the concerned audience. The following activities are conducted in the framework of the festival:

**Scientific Conference**

It became a good tradition to undertake scientific conferences devoted to different aspects of crafts, at which participate leading masters of traditional textile and clothing design artisans, art scientists, art managers, and specialists in the management of traditional crafts. The conference mainly addresses the following areas: ikat; carpet weaving, including felt weaving; embroidery; block printing; and clothing. Furthermore, the issues of safeguarding and developing traditions of textile art, including its history and present state are discussed during the conference. The scientific conferences have become one of the most important parts of the traditional textile festival. Last conference was conducted under the theme: “The Interaction of Cultures of East and West on the Great Silk Road: Hangzhou, Margilan, Valencia.” In fact, the conference has become a place for not only discussing latest developments in the field of textile and culture in general but also for exchanging opinions and exploring best practices.

**Workshops and Capacity-Building Activities on Traditional Embroidery, Block Printing and Natural Dying**

In the framework of the festival, workshops for the natural dyeing; production of textile products, carpets, block printing, metal works etc. are held in the Centre. Training programs are conducted for young craftsmen from colleges, including women, at the Centre.

The main purpose of conducting workshops and capacity-building activities is to train young craftswomen from Fergana Valley to master the new skills and knowledge on traditional handicrafts (embroidery, block printing, natural dyeing). Thus, the training strengthens the national capacity on the field of traditional crafts among the youth that promotes transmitting and safeguarding traditional skills and knowledge to the next generation and extend opportunities for improvement of economic and social wellbeing. The capacity-building activities start on the first day of the festival and are conducted by the leading masters from Uzbekistan and abroad, they continue for all three days at the MCDC.

**Art Exhibition, Fashion Show with the Elements of Traditional Textile**

The festival program also includes a number of important activities such as presentation of gastronomic opportunities of the Fergana Valley; for example a palov (a popular rice dish) contest, devzira, popular in families and tea-houses of the valley, show of Uzbek fashion designers, performances of folk music groups, puppet performances, performances of traditional karagh wrestlers and rope-walkers. Furthermore, various exhibitions of handicrafts, folk art, and fine art as well as exhibitions of children’s drawings are also held during the festival.

**Craftsmen Awarding Ceremony**

The exhibits displayed within the exhibition are evaluated by an international jury to select and award the best crafts masters and designers at the festival’s gala event with certificates and prizes. The gala event also includes a concert of traditional Uzbek performers.

**Media Component**

During the festival, several public activities on ICH are held in different national and international media.
Between Stars and Waves: Mactang’s Nocturnal Fishing Community
Ian Dale Rios
Part-time instructor, Cebu Technological University - San Francisco Campus

In a small fishing community in Mactang, a coastal sub-village in Esperanza, Poro, Cebu, Philippines, a precolumbian maritime culture survives among the few remaining traditional nocturnal fishermen. Handed down from generation to generation, these are products of our forebearers’ interaction with their habitat and the cultural manifestations of their attachment to their natural world of the sea, particularly at nighttime. The following subsections briefly documents Mactang’s maritime intangible culture based on in-depth interviews with the elderly nocturnal fishermen in the community.

Associated Beliefs and Rituals
The sea during nighttime becomes a realm where supernatural beings—referred as beings (not like our kind), they appear close to seafarers to haunt and frighten them. However, its hair-raising encounters are merely idle and disappears if you get scared, “says a traditional fisherfolk. Other supernatural beings also dwell in the waters off the coast of Mactang. They are believed to be the souls of ancient seafarers barred from heaven. In return, the sea offers and may add salt to flavor if they wish to. It was widely believed that those who performed the rituals have truly harvested more fish than those who did not.

Ethnoaeronomy and Ethnometeorology
Traditional knowledge on winds and weather are crucial in nocturnal fishing. Traditional fishermen read wind directions to gain orientation and maintain bearings for navigation. Landforms are reference points in navigation, but the absence of daylight makes it inapplicable—that drives fishermen to maximize their other senses and strengthens their relationship with the atmospheric elements. “If you can’t see land, it’s the wind you have to keep in mind,” says one fisherfolk. Apparently, the wind constantly changes, thus, it is always crucial to keep in touch with the wind to stay on track. Winds are also important in forecasting local weather. Panahon is the local word for both time and weather and weather are hazard-ous elements that needs careful observation. There are nine named winds essential in traditional seafaring (fig. 1).

Ethnoastronomy: Pamitoom
Pamitoom is the technology of using stars in fishing. Stars are referred as tigamnanan—which literally means the blood-spilling of a butchered chicken—that drives fishermen to interconnection exists among stars, time, and activity patterns of fish. This largely influences the traditional fishermen’s decision making and shapes their fishing ways. Makabugwas is a lone big star which rises at around 4 AM. Called a timplaya—when fishermen are appointed to lower down their pukot (fishnets), and tingkubit—when fish starts to reel in and bump into fishnets. Batiik resembles an L-shaped star or an islawos. It sets at around 4 AM and indicates the time when fishnets should have already been lowered down. The absence of such stars crucially affects fishing efficiency as it impairs their sense of time—if fishnets are lowered down too early or too late, it could get entwined which would keep the fish from bumping into it, if lowered down late, it would be too late to harvest the time-bound bounty.

Deteriorating nature—diminishing culture
The seascape off mactang is a multidimensional space that encompasses the marine environment, biosphere, supernatural sphere, atmosphere, and the celestial sphere; its cultural associations are reflective of an intimate human-environment relationship. However, a combination of factors threatens this relationship. Large-scale commercial fishing has exhausted the marine biological resources—a threat to the continuity of traditional fishing ways. This epitomizes the inseparability of culture and nature. Moreover, the influence of modernized education has demoted traditional fishing ways as only for the uneducated and the undeveloped is fated to remain at sea—a socioeconomic construct that marginalizes local fishermen as lesser members of society. A fisherfolk sums it up, “here, those who have no educational attainment, well, are put to the sea. The undeveloped—oh, makes do with only salt and nothing else.” Fundamentally, ignoring these components of culture disremembers the Filipino identity.

Managing Coastal Resources
The integrity of mactang’s maritime intangible cultural heritage exists not only in the consciousness of the heritage bearers, the traditional nocturnal fishermen, but also on the physical space where they interact with the natural elements. Considering the challenges we face today—the deteriorating marine ecosystem and diminishing maritime intangible culture—heritage values of intangible culture provide important insights in managing coastal resources. This study highlights the usefulness of ethnographic data in informing conservation efforts and providing strong basis for resolving conflict of resource use.

There is so much for us to learn from traditional communities in terms of intimate relationships. Traditional nocturnal fishing is a cultural marvel, a heritage of humankind that enlivens the space between stars and waves.
ICH Education for Homo Ludens

Jinyoung Seo
Assistant Programme Specialist, ICHCAP

In 2015, the UNESCO Bangkok Office published Learning with Intangible Heritage for a Sustainable Future: Guidelines for Educators in the Asia-Pacific Region, which included the results of a pilot projects conducted in four countries—Vietnam, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and Palau—with the aim of integrating intangible cultural heritage and education for sustainable development. The introduction of this handbook begins with the quote from Nelson Mandela, “Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.”

Whether positive or negative, it is a clear proposition that can bring all the consequences for both sides. This is probably why UNESCO put their efforts on education. Recently, there has been an active trend of interdisciplinary approaches between cultural heritage and education. Therefore, in the field of intangible cultural heritage, the view of heritage education has changed from learning about intangible cultural heritage to learning with and through intangible cultural heritage.

In Korea, there has been a growing discussion that the methods of cultural heritage education should be changed (Yongkyu Choi et al, 2006, p.5-6). According to Yong-Goo Kim (2018), former cultural heritage education and new cultural heritage education show differences in key areas such as the subject and purpose of education, which are compared as shown in the table below (Kim, 2018, p.162).

Under such circumstance, ICHCAP (the Centre), a UNESCO category 2 centre in the field of intangible cultural heritage, proceeded the ‘Building Primary/Secondary Education Network’ project: to create a sustainable environment for transmission of intangible cultural heritage through collaboration with the education sector and to provide contents to educational fields through the development of integrated elementary school curriculum. This project was developed based on a cooperative relationship with the UNESCO Bangkok Office, a regional office in charge of education in the Asia-Pacific region, and Jeonju National University of Education, which led the project in 2019 to conduct analysis and development of the elementary curriculum in Korea. Based on developed materials, the pilot class was held in a fourth-grade classroom at Geomsan Elementary School in Gimje, Jeollabuk Province.

### Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Former Cultural Heritage Education</th>
<th>New Cultural Heritage Education</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship with the Past</strong></td>
<td>Expansion of knowledge about past</td>
<td>Connectivity of past and present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject</strong></td>
<td>Teacher-centered</td>
<td>Learner-centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>Reinforcement of knowledge about cultural heritage</td>
<td>Identification of social context</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Major Learner</strong></td>
<td>Visitor</td>
<td>Resident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boundary of Space</strong></td>
<td>Historic sites, areas</td>
<td>Local, living space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpretation</strong></td>
<td>Nationalistic interpretation, monopolized interpretation by experts</td>
<td>Individual and common interpretation, democratization of interpretation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Teacher and students are dancing Bongsan Talchum. © ICHCAP / Cheon Youngteak

© ICHCAP / Cheon Youngteak
According to the Article 2 of 2003 Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, intangible cultural heritage is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

How to reinforce the interaction? How to change the fixed transmission atmosphere to promote creativity?

Voluntary participation and interest are important to ensure that intangible cultural heritage is alive and that future generations can accept it as their own. To do so, the priority is content should be fun. Intangible cultural heritage, which must be memorized for the test, cannot be accepted as part of life. Recalling Johann Huizinga, who emphasized that ‘culture itself bears the character of play’ (Huizinga, 1938, ix), there is a Homo Ludens at the base of our intangible cultural heritage. However, in front of the crisis for transmission and discontinuity, it is true that the intangible cultural heritage came into the textbook with the power of compulsory education, brought students’ involuntary learning. There was no more Homo Ludens.

The pilot class was a small spark to resonate sensation against the situation so far. The English word curriculum, coined from the Latin word currere, meaning ‘run’, signifies race, racetrack itself. If the ultimate direction of intangible cultural heritage education is sustainability represented by transmission and safeguarding, teachers should not tell students the first way to arrive, but should teach them the various ways by applying the broad meaning of the curriculum: all the experiences students experience both inside and outside the school. The pilot class was not conducted per subject, but through subject integration. If the previous teaching methods showed divided education methods centered on individual subjects, the thematic inter-subject classes, which are the goal of enhancing the relationship between knowledge and life, have been actively applied recently starting from the elementary school. Five subjects of Korean language, society, music, art and physical education were integrated and taught under the theme of mask culture. Students made their own masks, the teacher delivered the meaning of social satire of the mask itself bears the character of play (Huizinga, 1938, ix), there is a Homo Ludens at the base of our intangible cultural heritage. However, in front of the crisis for transmission and discontinuity, it is true that the intangible cultural heritage came into the textbook with the power of compulsory education, brought students’ involuntary learning. There was no more Homo Ludens.

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One student said after the class:

“I went somewhere with my parents, and I saw something weird in the yard, wearing a mask and swishing hands. And now, I think I can confidently say that it’s a Talchum.”

There is no doubt that the school is the place where future generations can spend the most time. Since it is not easy to go to the place of practice and meet real practitioners, intangible cultural heritage must enter the school. However, it should be considered that if intangible cultural heritage is taught in a standardized manner, it becomes the standard of assessment for ranking and cannot attract students’ interest. It is time for raising awareness and a changing point of view for education among policymakers, schools, successors, and communities alike.

As a medium-term project of the Centre, there will be a pilot project and workshop for teachers collaborated with AFCIEU (Asia Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding under the auspices of UNESCO) in 2020. In addition, the Centre is planning to share the results of the pilot project at the experts meeting on intangible cultural heritage education with UNESCO headquarters and supplement the guidelines for further application.

**References:**


**Interview**

**Ms. Ja Kyung Kwon**

Teacher, Geomsan Elementary School

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**Q:** How can you evaluate the project in general?

A: Unfortunately, children’s interest in mask dance, our intangible heritage, is very low. It is introduced as a folk game of ordinary people in the social subject, and it is taught in the physical education in a piecemeal. Through this class, I believe that the understanding and expression process of mask dance were integrated well by searching for meaning of mask dance, becoming a character with wearing a mask, decorating their own masks, learning mask dance from experts, and expressing it with friends in the group.

**Q:** What was the most difficult parts in preparing the class?

A: The most difficult thing in preparing class was that the teacher must learn the dance steps and rhythm. In my case, I learned it from an assistant instructor and guided children. For such integrated class, teachers must have basic capacity through a teachers’ workshop or training. Also, there was a time limit for the open class, but if the class is reorganized, I think the class will be more relaxed and more substantial in time.

**Q:** After the pilot project, have you ever tried similar types of classes?

A: As a teacher, how can you evaluate student participation and interest on intangible cultural heritage? Are there any points changed before and after the class?

A: Unlike learning intangible cultural heritage through textbooks and videos, this pilot class focused on student participation. Therefore, I think it helped children to participate more actively and to arouse interest. After the class, we had time for talent show, and I laughed a lot because the kids danced Bongsan Talchum. I truly believe that it was an opportunity to become more familiar and interested in mask dance after this class.

**Q:** What should be improved for proceeding further?

A: First, teachers’ interest and awareness on recognition of importance of our cultural heritage and its spread are crucial. To expand this project, all stakeholders such as the Centre, the Office of Education, and universities of education should work together to train teachers, share case studies to promote the project. Also, if we find intangible cultural heritage elements such as Nongak (Farmers’ Performances) and traditional dance with characteristics of each region and help students to learn with them, we could have a living class locally, rather than a standardized cultural heritage class in a textbook.
Safeguarding Culture for Happiness in Bhutan

Karma Phuntsho
President, Loden Foundation

The Loden Foundation is a pioneer organization in Bhutan bridging cultural heritage with socio-economic development. Loden literally means ‘the intelligent one’ and is an epithet of the Bodhisattvas, who work for the world using wisdom and compassion. Loden first started as a modest child sponsorship scheme in 1999 to help poor students go to school. Since then, it grew incrementally to become a leading NGO in Bhutan. Led by a group of people with shared visions, concerns and interests, Loden has three programs supported by a wide network of donors, volunteers, management team and partners.

Loden Education Initiative
Loden has founded five preschools to provide a safe and enjoyable environment to grow while their parents go to work. Based in clustered rural communities, the facilities blend modern childcare techniques with traditional practices of upbringing. Loden also supports many dozens of children from poor families to go to school and offers university scholarships to deserving students to pursue education in areas Bhutan stands in need. So far, Loden has supported 182 children in school and 50 in colleges.

Loden Entrepreneurship Program
Since 2008, Loden launched its entrepreneurship program to help minimize youth unemployment and economic dependency. It provides motivational sessions and basic training in business to young people. The training is followed by a competition for interest and collateral-free seed funds. Once an entrepreneur starts a business, Loden regularly monitors and mentors the business. Through this program which has trained over 2,000 young people including those in educational institutions, and funded 175 social entrepreneurs and 16 student entrepreneurs, Loden has managed to benefit over 40 cultural practitioners in hospitality, textile, art, crafts, medicine, and food. Through the entrepreneurship program infused by ethical, responsible, and sustainable Buddhist values, the foundation aims to promote a culture of intelligent business and right livelihood.

Loden Cultural Program
Bhutan is well known for its rich culture and pristine nature. Having remained an isolated country until half a century ago, Bhutan prides in the integrity and continuity of its cultural heritage. However, with the full pursuit of modernization and the onslaught of globalization, the cultures of Bhutan are fast changing, and many even vanishing. In the past 15 years, the Loden Foundation has carried out nationwide projects to document the cultural heritage of Bhutan and today remains unparalleled in digital documentation of Bhutan’s cultural heritage.

Digitization of Written Heritage
With support from the Endangered Archives Programme (EAP) of the British Library, Loden carried out digitization of manuscripts in the library of Gangteng monastery in 2006. Since then, with further support from EAP, the University of Cambridge, University of Hamburg, and University of Vienna, Loden has today digitized the manuscripts in 44 archival centers across Bhutan with the dual aim of preserving the books in digital copies and making digital copies available to readers. The program has produced over four million pages of texts in over two million digital images. Copies of the digital books have been deposited with the National Library and Archives of Bhutan, the State Monk Body and other institutions for safekeeping.

Documentation of Oral Traditions
In the course of digitizing remote archives, the Loden culture team realized the endangerment of Bhutan’s oral traditions and the urgency to record them. Thus, in 2013 with support from Arcadia Trust and University of Virginia, the foundation launched a nationwide project to make audiovisual recordings of intangible cultures including oral creations, religious practices, cultural events, arts and crafts, folk knowledge and customs, games and sports, and languages and dialects. Loden has produced some 3,260 hours of audiovisual recordings of such intangible cultures. Many old cultural experts who shared their talents and knowledge have since passed away making the recordings invaluable heritage. Most of the recordings are currently accessible via the University of Virginia, but it is our plan to make all our recordings and digital images accessible from a server in Bhutan.

Photographs of Arts and Artifacts
In parallel with the digitization of books and creation of audiovisual recordings, the team also created a large collection of photographs of Bhutan’s art, artifacts and architecture. With changes sweeping across the country, cultural objects and artifacts are disappearing as much as the knowledge of their production and use are lost. Loden has compiled over 190,000 photos of cultural objects and practices with metadata.

Making Cultural Knowledge Relevant
Our efforts of documenting and safeguarding must meet the purpose of enhancing human wellbeing in general and the welfare of the cultural practitioners in particular. To this effect, Loden has conducted proper study of Bhutans’ cultural heritage, classified cultural forms into specific categories, assessed their significance and viability, and carried out projects of implementation. The foundation has published four books and a couple hundred essays on culture, and launched projects that involved direct application of cultural knowledge. The conservation of the lake in Tali village by leveraging ancient beliefs and community practices is a good example. The Loden Foundation strives to safeguard, formulate and apply Bhutan’s rich cultural heritage towards fulfilling Bhutan’s goal of Gross National Happiness.

idohunter.unesco-ichcap.org
2020 UNESCO Category 2 Centres (based in Korea) Cooperation Meeting Held

ICHCAP held the 2020 UNESCO Category 2 Centres (based in Korea) Cooperation Meeting at the center located in Jeonju, Korea, on 4 February. The meeting was attended by representatives of three category 2 centres (Ca2Cs) active in Korea and UNESCO’s High Level Reflection Group for Strategic Transformation (also President of the University of North Korean Studies and former South Korean ambassador to the United States). The participants shared major projects of each organization for 2020, and ICHCAP and ICM especially agreed to initiate a joint publication project on traditional martial arts in commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of Korea’s admission to UNESCO. They went on to discuss the necessity of a consultative body aimed at strengthening the foundation for greater contributions to international society based on the expertise of each organization. ICHCAP has assumed the role of the Secretariat of the consultative body. During the meeting, the participants sought new joint projects and other ways of collaboration, and they will continue to work closely together through, for example, joint workshops for the launch of the consultative body of the UNESCO Ca2Cs.

ICHCAP Signed an MOU with Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage to Promote Professional Exchange

ICHCAP has entered an MOU with the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (Director Michael Atwood Mason) (hereinafter the ‘Center’) for cultural sustainability professional exchange. Under the MOU, ICHCAP will work with the Center on activities aimed to promote and raise awareness of ICH, and the MOU offers professional exchange opportunities for ICHCAP staff, allowing them to go to the Centre in Washington, D.C., to work on related research and build knowledge in the field. The two institutions have agreed to produce meaningful outcomes through collaborative project and professional exchange in the field of ICH in the field.

This MOU will be effective for five years starting from 17 January 2020. This year, ICHCAP will send its employees to the Center to strengthen the network between the two institutions, and it also plans to develop such partnership as a collaborative model for ICH.

Call for Papers on Living Heritage Series ‘Traditional Martial Arts’

The International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO (ICHCAP) and the UNESCO International Centre of Martial Arts (ICM) are welcoming papers for the Living Heritage Series—Traditional Martial Arts as Intangible Cultural Heritage from 5 February to 11 April 2020. As a UNESCO category 2 centre dedicated to ICH, ICHCAP has organized the publication project to increase the value and raise awareness of traditional martial arts as ICH. And, as the only UNESCO category 2 centre in the field of martial arts, ICM is collaborating with ICHCAP in the project to disseminate and promote the philosophies and values of martial arts from the perspectives of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The subject of this publication is “Martial Arts as Intangible Cultural Heritage.” Authors are invited to present an application and abstract before 21 April 2020. Applications will undergo a screening process, and the result will be announced at the end of April. Selected authors will be asked to submit a full paper in July according to guidelines to be provided. Final papers will be published in October 2020 as the fourth volume of the Living Heritage Series. The abstract should be approximately 500 words and reflect challenges and experiences in safeguarding and transmitting traditional martial arts as well as the significance and value of such heritage. The full paper should be between 1,000 and 4,000 words and written in English. Only articles that have not been published or posted in any other form previously will be accepted.

This call for papers is open to the general public. Authors wishing to contribute an article should submit an application and abstract via the project email address (ichcapicm@gmail.com). For more information about the call for papers, please visit the ICHCAP website.

Asia-Pacific Youth ICH Storytelling Contest Award Ceremony Held

Award ceremonies were held for the winners of the 2019 Asia-Pacific Youth ICH Storytelling Contest in countries including India, Nepal and Korea. ICHCAP announced a total of 29 winning entries in two categories (Young Practitioners and General Youth) in December 2019. Applicants from 19 countries submitted their creations for the contest, and the winners came from 10 countries.

India produced a number of winners including the Grand Prize winner. The Korean Cultural Center in India held the award ceremony, on behalf of ICHCAP, on 29 January 2020. The ceremony, hosted by Kum-yuong Kim, director of the center, was attended by Moushumi Choudhury (Grand Prize), who shared her story to become traditional Chau dance, a predominantly male dance in India; Saurabh Narang (Excellence Prize), who dealt with traditional dance of the Siddi; and Munipalli Goutham Tamrakar (Excellence Prize), who talked about the Bonalu festival of Hindus. The winners gave their remarks after they received certificates and prizes from Director Kim In Korea, the award ceremony took place on 28 January 2020 at ICHCAP in Jeonju, which was hosted by ICHCAP Director-General Keum Gi Hyung. The only Korean winner Hwadam Kwon (Special Prize) attended the event. Kwon, who has been engaged in preserving taekkyeon (a traditional Korean martial art) in college, submitted a video to express her thoughts about practicing taekkyeon and the future of the martial art. In her video titled ‘Bruise of Glory’, she said, “People say that taekkyeon is one of the traditional cultures that are dying out, but I think that all the taekkyeon training that I do now is helping to keep the martial art alive.”

In Nepal that produced five prize-winning entries will launch in March via e-knowledge center. The online exhibition of the prize-winning entries will launch in March via e-knowledge center.
Call for Papers

ICHCAP now has an open call for papers for various sections of the ICH Courier.

Topics for Windows to ICH

-VOLUME 43: Mask Dances (2020.04–2020.06)
-VOLUME 44: ICH in Traditional Building (2020.06–2020.09)

Further information about submissions is available on our website
https://ichcourier.unesco-ichcap.org/submissions/