



Coordinator for
the Safeguarding
of the Intangible
Cultural Heritage



S E M



VISUALISING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE



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Cultural Heritage**



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VIZUALIZIRANJE NESNOVNE KULTURNE DEDIŠČINE

Edited by Nadja Valentinčič Furlan
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Regional Centre for the
Safeguarding of Intangible
Cultural Heritage in
South-Eastern Europe under
the auspices of UNESCO

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INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND THE SLOVENE ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM

Since its foundation, the Slovene Ethnographic Museum has been researching themes that in the 21st century are referred to as intangible cultural heritage and which, to a large extent, correspond to the themes dealt with by ethnology. While studying knowledge, skills, folk art and creativity, customs and habits, we have paid special attention to social and spiritual culture, whereby we emphasise working with oral sources, information providers and creators, and audiovisual documentation as characteristic methods used by the disciplines of ethnology and anthropology.

Among the key emphases in ethnological museums is their treatment of the relations between people, while their main task is to study the mutual understanding between cultures and people, and the different aspects of their presentation. This is why the decision that the Slovene Ethnographic Museum should take on the role of the Coordinator for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Slovenia was an additional developmental stage in our professional work.

Within this context, as part of our diverse theoretical and applied work, special attention is given to the visualisation of intangible cultural heritage. *Documenting and Presenting Intangible Cultural Heritage On Film* was the title of a conference that was held at the Slovene Ethnographic Museum in 2014, the published proceedings of which have the same title. A proof about the topical nature of these themes is the book's translation into Chinese. In 2017, as another step towards throwing light on topical and sometimes even neglected intangible heritage themes, the museum organised an international conference entitled *The Visualization of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*¹ the result of which is this collection of papers. It emphasises selected themes and

1 In cooperation with the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe under the auspices of UNESCO and the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with the Ethnographic Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

issues connected with the visualisation of intangible cultural heritage, and draws attention also to the neglect of its visualised expression in comparison to the written. The field of ethical and copyright standards relating to audiovisual material is still not completely regulated.

The editor of this collection of papers and the initiator of these discussions, the Slovene Ethnographic Museum curator Nadja Valentinčič Furlan, says that the collection approaches the UNESCO paradigm of safeguarding and visualising through the theory, methods and ethics of visual anthropology. In the name of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum, I congratulate her for her excellent work, as well as all those who took part in and supported the project.

Dr Tanja Roženbergar

Director, Slovene Ethnographic Museum





TO MARK THE NEW PUBLICATION

The essence of our cultural heritage and its value lies in our attitude to material and spiritual remains, in the spiritual maturity of the individual and society. The materiality of movable or immovable heritage takes on a value when it is recognised as such by an individual, an expert, a lay person or group of people.

The same applies to intangible heritage. Although we have indirectly been protecting it for some centuries along with the tangible heritage, UNESCO's *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* from 2003 was an extremely important milestone. In a mere fifteen years the way of thinking of the experts and everyone else about intangible heritage and its significance has changed completely. We wish to preserve it in all its non-materiality and to document it as thoroughly as possible.

Intangible heritage is not only formally the youngest of all the categories of cultural heritage, but it is also the most alive. Its existence is the most dependent on the people who are its bearers, who pass it on through the generations as part of the culture. The ways of safeguarding it are different, more personal and more participative, connected with individuals. The same applies to its documentation, which is one of the basic measures for safeguarding, developing and presenting cultural heritage. For this reason, we have established in Slovenia a register of intangible heritage, where we would like to present the elements of intangible cultural heritage also with a representative film.

In documenting intangible heritage, film has one of the key roles. Our century is emphatically a visual time. In the twentieth century, we used to state that what was not written down, did not exist. But the new era has brought new media, which have a leading role. This new scholarly publication attempts to explain and demonstrate how sensitive their task is and what needs to be captured in order to record the dynamism of intangibility, ambients, behaviours, atmospheres, and the feelings and reactions of people. It is good

to see how the new book takes theoretical and practical starting points and develops them.

By bringing together experience and scholarly knowledge, experts from different fields shape rules, guidelines, recommendations and standards for documenting cultural heritage. This new volume represents a cornerstone for the building of standards for documenting intangible heritage, dealing with this primarily in relation to its inscription on UNESCO lists and its promotion. Since this is the European Year of Cultural Heritage, as well as the tenth anniversary of Slovenia's ratification of UNESCO's *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, it is a particularly appropriate time for us to welcome this new publication.

Ksenija Kovačec Naglič, MSc

Director General, Directorate for Cultural Heritage
Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia





PREFACE

A number of decades had to pass following the adoption and implementation of the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage* for the international community, at UNESCO's initiative, to recognise the need for a similar approach to intangible cultural heritage. The *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, confirmed by member states at the General Conference in 2003, finally filled the gap that existed regarding the recognition of oral traditions, social practices, traditional skills, craft knowledge and techniques, which extend to the use of nature and its resources, as a component of the world natural and cultural heritage.

Of course, the *Convention* alone cannot prevent this knowledge from falling into oblivion, but through its tools, probably the most recognised being the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*, it can encourage states, communities, groups and individuals to recognise their intangible heritage, safeguard it and pass it on.

Audio, photographic and film records of various events connected with what is now referred to as intangible heritage have always been a constituent part of academic, professional and popular science documentation. Without this, it would be difficult to preserve many elements of intangible cultural heritage, while many have been revived precisely on the basis of such documentation; sometimes, recognition of the significance of certain heritage and traditions simply comes too late.

Of course, documenting and illustrating intangible cultural heritage is not new, but the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* has ensured an important shift in this field, with the decision that – in contrast with nominations for the *World Heritage List* – evaluators should not go into the field, but should rather become familiar with the nominations for the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*, the *List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding*, and the

Register of Good Safeguarding Practices through descriptions, photographs and nomination films. In this way, the *Convention* confirmed the importance of audio and visual recording as the basis of documenting intangible heritage, while at the same time creating a basic framework with regard to both the content and the methodology of audiovisual documenting of intangible heritage.

When each year I watch film presentations of nominations, I realise with pleasure that they are ever more successful at presenting heritage and its bearers, that they are less promotional in nature, and increasingly let people speak for themselves about the importance of heritage for their own and the collective identity. And that, in my opinion, is the fundamental goal of the nomination films.

Marjutka Hafner,

General Secretary of the Slovene National Commission for UNESCO





VISUALISING THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE: FOREWORD

The *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* adopted on 17 October 2003 outlines the “importance of the intangible cultural heritage as a mainspring of cultural diversity and a guarantee of sustainable development”. It marks a significant change towards the development of policies for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage at international and national level. In recent years, the intangible cultural heritage has been acknowledged as an essential resource for economic, cultural, social and environmental development, and a tool to mobilize innovative and culturally appropriate responses to the various challenges of contemporary life. UNESCO also recognizes the threats to the intangible cultural heritage which arise through globalization and social transformation.

Meanwhile, digitization and new technologies provide new opportunities for safeguarding, promoting access to and the use of the intangible cultural heritage. These new challenges demand that states create measures for identifying, documenting and promoting the intangible cultural heritage on their territory, and ensure the participation of the all stakeholders in the process.

The book *Visualising the Intangible Cultural Heritage* arose from the international conference *The Visualization of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, organised by the Slovene Ethnographic Museum in cooperation with The Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe under the auspices of UNESCO, and The Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with the Ethnographic Museum at The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, which took place in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in 2017.

The visualisation of the intangible cultural heritage is an important element in the safeguarding process, not only for documenting living heritage for future generations, but also promoting and raising awareness about its role in society. This interesting collection of articles raises theoretical questions

about the process of visualising the intangible cultural heritage in films as well as in photographs, with a focus on nomination films and their development since the adoption of the Convention in 2003. The book presents good practice in the field of visual anthropology and practical recommendations for improvements to films on the intangible cultural heritage.

For me, the major contribution of the book is that most of the authors consider how important is the participation of the heritage bearers in the process of visualising their living heritage. I believe that this reading will be useful for the professionals and experts working in the field of heritage, and for the general audiences interested in the intangible cultural heritage, as well as for visual anthropologists.

Dr Mirena Staneva

Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage
in South-Eastern Europe under the Auspices of UNESCO



EDITORIAL: VISUALISING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

By Nadja Valentinčič Furlan

This editorial is rather *emic* (according to Pike), as I am an ethnologist and cultural anthropologist dealing with film as an important communication media that can capture the *emic* point of view of film subjects and transfer it to the viewers. Employed by the Slovene Ethnographic Museum as a curator of ethnographic film, I have drawn my primary theoretical sources from visual anthropology, ethnology, anthropology and museology. When our museum was appointed Coordinator for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Slovenia, I started to deal with the visualisation of intangible cultural heritage. Do I have to mention that visual anthropologists had been filming rituals, customs and work procedures way before they were denoted intangible cultural heritage?

Since 2011, I have researched the vast sphere of intangible cultural heritage, its safeguarding and visualisation, and read numerous articles, preferably critical, as I could learn more from them. I soon discovered that films on the UNESCO lists have never been highly appreciated by visual anthropologists – in fact, from the visual anthropology point of view, ten-minute videos have been a marginal field, and thus very rarely a subject of research. Nevertheless, I believed, and I still do, that these productions have the potential to become an important visual arena if enlightened by the methods and ethical values of visual ethnography and produced in collaboration with the heritage bearers, exposing their point of view. To this end, we promoted international discussion by organizing the conference *Documenting and Presenting Intangible Cultural Heritage on Film*¹ in 2014.

1 Preparing the conference, the programme board had a lively discussion which term to use. The adjective 'audiovisual' (file, document, message) refers to the dual nature of the medium comprising sounds and images, as opposed to merely visual or merely audio. 'Video' has a very strong reference to the medium; to be honest, also 'film' has the double meaning denoting both, the medium / carrier

The book with the same title (ed. Valentinčič Furlan 2015) offered a critical introduction to the UNESCO policy of safeguarding and visualising of the intangible cultural heritage, as well as insights into how theory, methods and practice of visual anthropology can support the visualisation of intangible cultural heritage and its bearers. Four articles discussed practices in producing 'videos' for nominations to the UNESCO lists and the expression 'nomination films'² was widely adopted. Thus, the book *Documenting and Presenting Intangible Cultural Heritage on Film*³ settled the basic terminology and concepts.

The monograph has reached many people engaged in the visualisation of heritage and brought information on other articles dealing with nomination films, such as *The Relation between Communities and Their Living Culture as Represented by Audiovisual Files* by Dutch ethnomusicologist Wim van Zanten (2012). We felt it is a good time to continue the discussion, inviting ethnologists, anthropologists, social scholars, filmmakers, coordinators of safeguarding heritage and heritage bearers that engage in visualisation of ICH to the international conference *The Visualization of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (Internet source 1). It was organised by the Slovene Ethnographic Museum in cooperation with the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe under the auspices of UNESCO, and the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with the Ethnographic Museum at The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences⁴. Ten papers were presented at the Slovene Ethnographic Museum in October 2017, but unfortunately, not all referees who contributed to the conference discussions provided articles for the book.

We have decided to name the book slightly differently, *Visualising the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, thus stressing the process equally as the result of visualisation, which is in line with the processual nature of culture, intangible

and the message / content, but the second one has become increasingly strong. As the conference was conceptualised so that all films on intangible heritage were being researched and following the accepted anthropological terminology, we decided to use the expression 'film'.

- 2 When editing the book, we dealt with ethnographic and documentary films on the one hand, and shorter applied filmic forms denoted as 'videos' by UNESCO, on the other. The term 'nomination film' (by Hrovatin and Hrovatin 2015) successfully embraces the specifics and purposes of such productions. I argue for 'film' rather than 'video' also due to their basic functions: the basic function of 'nomination films' is to carry knowledge, identities and meanings, while 'video', e.g. music video, art video or advertisement, mostly entertain, express artistic ideas or advertise.
- 3 The China Memory Project Centre at the National Library of China has translated the volume into Chinese, adding the subtitle *European Experience* (2018).
- 4 Our scholarly cooperation begun with the round table *Between the Visible and the Invisible: The Intangible Heritage and Museum* in Sofia in December 2016 (Internet source 2).

heritage, knowledge construction, filmmaking and producing other kinds of visual representations of the intangible heritage. Having received only five contributions from conference referees, I invited many more potential contributors, dealing with film production or film processing inside UNESCO. Two authors managed to finalise their articles on time.

The structure of the book

After the forewords and introduction the book brings contributions by authors taking part in the production of nomination films (Valentinčič Furlan, Van der Zeijden), and then continues with articles on how films are processed, used and evaluated inside the UNESCO organisational structures (Sicard, Srečković). The following article (Ivanova) is a rare contribution on the function of photographs within the UNESCO safeguarding paradigm and wider, while the last (Klekot) discusses various forms of visualisation, questioning if the knowledge and skills of factory workers can be declared intangible cultural heritage.

In the introductory article *Films on Intangible Cultural Heritage: Speaking For, Speaking About, Speaking Through, or Speaking Alongside*, I analyse the voices, authorities and authorship (according to Ruby 2000) in eight 'authorised heritage film productions'. Here, I paraphrase the concept 'authorised heritage discourse' by Laurajane Smith (2006), and apply the *emic-etic* paradigm by Kenneth Pike to analyse the main points of view in the films. I conclude that the old-fashioned top-down nomination films with extensive commentary mostly present the *etic* point of view of professionals and politicians, while participatory, collaborative and subject-generated films can capture the *emic* point of view of the heritage bearers. I find methods of visual ethnography beneficial in engaging the heritage bearers into collaborative film productions with shared authorship and responsibility, exposing the Dutch nomination film *Craft of the Miller* as an excellent case of a participatory project. Since nomination files to UNESCO ICH lists are based on text, photographs, and film, I suggest (as I did in the 2015 book) that the media are structured in a complementary way: the text satisfies numerous UNESCO requirements, and the film visualises the heritage and its bearers' views. Moreover, throughout the article, the practices of the identification of people engaged in film productions are questioned. I make my point clear by giving the names of film subjects, filmmakers and film producers, so as to meet ethical and copyright standards, as well as for the sake of holistic understanding and the metadata documentation of films.

When I congratulated the authors and producers of *Craft of the Miller*, I also invited them to write an article for the book. Albert van der Zeijden, a historian from the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage, decided to write one, partly based on communication with the filmmaker Jos Kuijer from the Amsterdamse Filmstichting. The article *A Participatory Approach to Visualising*

the Craft of the Miller analyses their film production, embedded in a theoretical framework of visual anthropology with an impact of Wim van Zanten's article (2012). Van der Zeijden, himself a member of the UNESCO Evaluation Body, researching strong and weak examples of nomination films processed by UNESCO to build his views upon the visualisation. Then, together with the Amsterdam Film Foundation filmmakers, he experimented by making some films on elements of the Inventory of Intangible Heritage in the Netherlands, adhering to their suggestion that a ten-minute film should be restricted to two or three film subjects. The visualisation of the first Dutch nomination to UNESCO was discussed inside the working group that included representatives of the Ministry of Culture, the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Guilds of Voluntary Millers. They decided the craft should be presented through the stories of three millers that received the most trust of their colleagues. The author concludes by discussing 'shared authority' (Frisch 1990), 'co-production', 'co-management' (Neyrinck 2014) and 'co-creation', concepts and practices that contribute to 'dialogical heritage' (Harrison 2013).

The other invited article was written by Hugues Sicard, an engineer in information management within the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section of UNESCO in Paris. Having been involved in the development of procedures for nomination film submissions over the last 15 years, he could shed light on the processing of the videos sent in nomination files to the Paris headquarters every March; the successful elements and films make it to the lists in November or December the following year. In his article *The Role of Audiovisual Materials in the Listing and Promotion of Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO*, he reveals that in the times of the *Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity* (2001–2005) the role of films accompanying the candidatures was evaluated higher than the role of nomination films to UNESCO lists after 2008. A very specific use of the audiovisual medium is videos documenting the free, prior and informed consent of the bearing communities. States Parties can add them to nomination files after 2010, and they, too, are then published online. The value of nomination films for the widest public is best confirmed by the fact that 460 nomination films, which comprise only one tenth of all videos published on the UNESCO YouTube Channel (Internet source 3), have on average been watched 30 times more often than other UNESCO video records. The most viewed video on *Kalbelia Folk Dances of Rajasthan* (Internet source 4) has received more than 6 million hits! Moreover, a consultant who indexed 470 elements inscribed on the three UNESCO lists reported that he provided the corresponding key concepts relying on films much more than on texts. Therefore, Hugues Sicard hopes for a more balanced appreciation of films compared to textual information in the future to achieve a more holistic approach to evaluation of ICH elements.

The article *Nomination Films for the UNESCO Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage: Trends, Opportunities and Challenges* was contributed by

ethnologist and anthropologist Saša Srećković, a member of the UNESCO ICH Evaluation Body and the director of the International Festival of Ethnological Film in Belgrade (Internet source 5). Srećković also builds his introduction on Van Zanten's article, undertaking the huge enterprise of analysing almost all nomination films from the 2017 cycle, and to make a good sample, an additional five films on elements that were enlisted to the *Register of Good Safeguarding Practices (Register)* in the previous cycle. He is satisfied with the general quality of films, especially with the improvement of the community involvement. As there are different interests and agendas attached to the *Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Representative List)*, the *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (Urgent List)* and the *Register*, he had expected to see films with different foci. However, few nomination films on elements on the *Urgent List* demonstrate the endangerment of the element, and only two nomination films on elements in the *Register* clearly present a safeguarding model and its impact on communities. As the texts still make the dominant information resource for the Evaluation Body, Srećković emphasizes that "the nomination films can provide a complementary epistemic value to that of a written word, both to the professional bodies and the general audiences".

Ethnologist and folklorist Miglena Ivanova, herself engaged in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in Bulgaria, in the article *Beyond Documentation and Illustration: Photography in the Sphere of Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, analyses the functions of photography in the safeguarding of heritage. Photographs documenting the heritage, the bearers and the transfer of knowledge are a mandatory part of nomination files, and moreover, still images occasionally testify that the bearing communities consent to the nomination of their heritage to the UNESCO lists. Based on the theory and ethics of visual anthropology, the author directs attention to the so-called 'digital divide'⁵ – growing differences in skills and usages of photographs in different societies and among various social groups. A participatory approach to taking photographs and their sharing is acknowledged in different international projects and webpages, and then studied in the framework of carpet weaving in Chiprovtsi, both in field research during the preparation of the nomination file to the *Representative List* and after the element was accepted to it. Above all, Ivanova detects a lively exchange of still images by the heritage bearers, small family businesses, and administrative, cultural and educational institutions in the local community, as well as by emigrants, on the internet, which creates a complex virtual milieu, transcending state borders. Photographic messages are understood internationally, so they can enhance not only the transmission and popularisation of heritage, but especially intercultural communication.

5 The digital divide could be researched also with regard to nomination films.

Archaeologist, ethnologist and art researcher Ewa Klekot, in her article *Ceramic Production as Intangible Cultural Heritage and its Visualisation* approaches the industrial ceramic production of the fine porcelain factory in Polish Ćmielów with a long continuity leaning on a local tradition of pottery making. Based on multidisciplinary literature and not engaged in the UNESCO safeguarding paradigm, she poses the rhetorical question if the embodied knowledge and skills of factory workers can be 'heritagised', i.e. declared to be heritage. She discusses several modes of visualisation in film, objects and exhibitions. First, she analyses the pluses and minuses of visualisation in five nomination films on manufacturing pottery and ceramics on the *Representative List* and the *Urgent List*. Based on her teaching experience, she reveals the reactions of her students after watching an old Polish black and white documentary on pottery making, which she uses as one of reflective tools to disclose the cultural construction of time. In her field research into the skills and knowledge of industrial workers, she was not a mere participant observer (participant observation is an ethnographic research method); together with ceramist Arkadiusz Szwed, she designed an artistic intervention into the ceramic production to visualise workers' embodied knowledge in the 'Human Trace' tableware. This materialised visualisation raised ambiguous reactions among the workers and factory owners when presented inside the factory. Moreover, different meanings are attached to the white porcelain products with blue fingerprints when the project is exhibited in design festivals (aesthetics) and when in ethnographic museums (also the workers' story behind the products) in Poland and internationally⁶.

Pictures and words, filmmakers and writers, viewers and readers

This book discusses the visualisation of the intangible heritage in different media, such as photography, film, material evidence with special documentary qualities and exhibitions. Still, the main focus is on the specific applied field of nomination film production with the shared responsibility of large working groups, and the value these films have for the professional and general public. Some of the authors of contributions approach the UNESCO safeguarding paradigm and nomination film production through the theories, methods, practices and ethics of visual anthropology, and some were first rooted in the safeguarding paradigm and then adopted the concepts and methods of visual anthropology. The result is that the book disseminates the most applicable concepts, methods and practices of visual anthropology to a wide circle of potential users, sometimes simplifying them, while it also facilitates an exchange of ideas, knowledge, views and experiences.

6 We enabled the Polish exhibition *People from the Porcelain Factory* to visit the Slovene Ethnographic Museum (Internet source 6) in Ljubljana in 2018, thus producing added value both to the article and the exhibition with a very original idea.

The authors successfully balance theory and empirical evidence from practice, and readers are given an in-depth insight into case studies, mostly presented through text, photographs and links to films. The majority of nomination films dealt with present the heritage and its bearers, thus close to Paul Henley's view on ethnographic film: "The centre of gravity of an ethnographic film should always be the voices of the subjects and the everyday sounds, movements and colours of their world" (Henley n. d.: 21).

Participatory and collaborative methods in visualisation are highly valued in most of the articles, which is resulting from the *Convention*, Article 15: "each State Party shall endeavour to ensure the widest possible participation of communities, groups and (...) individuals that create, maintain and transmit (...) heritage, and to involve them actively in its management" (UNESCO 2003: 7). However, the participation of heritage bearers varies from simply carrying out what was conceived by the authors (e.g. Klekot) to actually cooperating in taking decisions on visualisation and then jointly creating it (e.g. Van der Zeijden). Jay Ruby considers that visual anthropologist must be willing to assist (...) people in becoming fully functional collaborators if he or she wants to become a filmmaker empowered to speak with or alongside communities in films (Ruby 2000: 219). Similarly, filmmakers that produce nomination films and authors of other visual products should educate heritage bearers and members of working groups about the visualisation process and also how to 'read' visual products.

Paul Henley draws attention to "the potential mismatch between insider and outsider agendas in participatory filmmaking", and that there is often "more than one insider agenda that could potentially be explored through film" (Henley n.d.: 15). In filming the intangible heritage, the best solution, highlighted in some of the articles, is discussion on how the heritage be visualised and who can best represent the heritage bearers; in the case of more insider agendas, several voices are to be heard in film. In general, working groups are supposed to operate along the concept and practices of 'dialogical heritage' (Harrison 2013 quoted by van der Zeijden).

One factor that emerges from the articles is a recognition that films are sometimes not appreciated by people who mainly rely on text (e.g. Sicard, Srećković). This phenomenon has also been perceived by visual anthropologists: there is possible miscommunication between anthropologists that are rooted in textual practices, and those who mostly operate (audio) visually. Cristina Grasseni observes that there is an epistemological dichotomy between a text, which is open to transparent analysis, and a picture, which allows endless interpretations Grasseni 2011: 21). Maybe this duality explains why some researchers and evaluators prefer to discern data and meanings in texts rather than in films. And yet, is it possible that they simply do not have enough practice in watching and analysing audiovisual messages?

Sarah Pink sees visual anthropologists as a “community of practice” who deepen knowledge, sharing a passion and a set of questions about a common topic (Pink 2006: 4). Shall we eventually realise that, in this fragmented world, we are less and less understandable to other “communities of practice”? Can writing about the audiovisual help build bridges to professional communities rooted in other media? Can in the sphere of intangible heritage ‘translations’ across the media facilitate better communication of ‘visual people’ and ‘word people’?

Drawing now from the third field, museology, we are well aware that we have to address several types of exhibition visitors, according to their prevailing channels of perception and processing of data: visual types learn by watching, audio types prefer to listen, kinetic types best remember movements, gestures, touching and emotions, not to mention that olfactory types rely more on smell and taste; there is also the digital type that learns best by reading and processing large quantities of data. In reality, people are different combinations of all the above, therefore good (museum) interpretation covers more (ideally all) senses. This is of course valid for any communication process and any learning exchange. If the nomination text is probably best understood by the digital type, photography by the visual type, and the nomination film addresses the visual, the audio and the kinetic channels at the same time, they together communicate on four channels; thus, the readers-viewers can obtain rich multisensory information from nomination file as a whole, as well as on the UNESCO portal.

The book *Visualising Intangible Cultural Heritage* tries to bridge specific readings and media channels, hoping to mediate between the members of the ‘textual’, ‘visual’ and ‘audiovisual’ communities, widening mutual understanding. I thank all of those who cooperated in creating this volume and those who will read it. Once the book is released, the authors and editors lose control of how it is understood and interpreted; however, if we encourage the exchange of knowledge, experiences and views on the role and value of visualising the intangible cultural heritage, the book has achieved its purpose.

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FILMS ON INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE: SPEAKING FOR, SPEAKING ABOUT, SPEAKING WITH, OR SPEAKING ALONGSIDE?

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Jay Ruby's observation (2000: 203) that "social knowledge is accepted as always tentative – the result of a negotiation between the seeker and the object of study", holds true for filmmaking and also for intangible cultural heritage. Following the example of Laurajane Smith (2006), the author distinguishes between "authorized heritage films" and "subordinate heritage films". Concentrating on the first category, she analyses several cases of nomination films with regard to "voice, authority and authorship" (Ruby 2000) and Kenneth Pike's *emic-etic* paradigm. She argues that nomination films should focus on the *emic* point of view of the bearers on their heritage, while *etic* argumentation of professionals and politicians is given in heavily coded texts of the nomination file; thus, both media can actually become complementary.

Key words: visualisation, intangible cultural heritage, nomination film, ethnographic film, visual anthropology, filmmakers, film producers, shared authorship, *emic*, *etic*

Introduction

"Social knowledge is accepted as always tentative – the result of a negotiation between the seeker and the object of study" Ruby (2000: 203). Jay Ruby's point of view is consistent with constructionist paradigm that was introduced by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann. In the book *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (first published in 1966), they argue that all knowledge, and in particular everyday knowledge, is derived from interactions and social practices, and at the same time maintained by them (Berger and Luckmann 1988: 27).

I pay tribute to Jay Ruby, borrowing his title *Speaking For, Speaking About, Speaking With, or Speaking Alongside* (2000) to draw attention to whose voices are heard in nomination films for UNESCO, who represents the heritage and the bearers, and who decides how the film is structured. These questions are my point of departure in the analysis of eight "authorised heritage films" – I derived the expression from the "authorised heritage discourse" by Laurajane Smith (2006), which outlines power relations. Applying Kenneth Pike's *emic-etic* paradigm¹ to analyse nomination films, I claim that old-fashioned top-down films mostly present the *etic* point of view of professionals and politicians (especially if visualising the text of the nomination file), while films made by heritage bearers or in collaboration with them largely capture their *emic* point of view of their heritage. I argue that the vivid presence of heritage bearers, revealing their views and identities, can make nomination films an essential counterpart to descriptive, analytical, and heavily coded texts, both in the evaluation process of nomination files and on the UNESCO webpage.

Intangible cultural heritage and its visualisation

The UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2003) has had many positive outcomes: that the attention is directed towards intangible and folk culture, not just to monuments and high culture; that even remote and marginal communities can come into the spotlight; and that it leads to very intense discussion among theoreticians, practitioners and professionals. There are also many contradictions, such as that the *Convention* safeguards heritage that might not be endangered at all; that it promotes cultural diversity, yet at the same time, through unified registration procedures and safeguarding regimes, leads to standardisation of heritage at the global level (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004, Smith 2006, Kreps 2009, Hafstein 2012).

1 American linguist and anthropologist Kenneth Pike introduced it in 1954. In anthropology, it stresses "the different perceptions of reality of various cultural groups" and it is "the principal conceptual tool" for "understanding other cultures" (Headland 2004: 292).

According to Valdimar T. Hafstein, in the process of heritagisation, UNESCO experts, governmental bodies, non-governmental organisations and professionals formulate heritage policy, and instruct heritage bearers about safeguarding regimes and evaluation of heritage, which often alienates the heritage bearers from their practices, encroaches upon their interrelations, and changes their views of the past and their identities. Therefore, intangible cultural heritage can only be considered bearing in mind the hierarchy of power relations (Hafstein 2012: 507–508). Laurajane Smith claims that social meanings, power relations and ideology are embedded in language and reproduced through it. Discourses in which we define concepts, research and debates build understanding, communicate meanings, guide our discussion and influence our behaviour. Smith defines the dominant heritage discourse, including the academic one, as “authorized heritage discourse”, while on the other side she places the “subaltern heritage discourse” of the heritage bearers (Smith 2006: 4–7).

I will now concentrate on the visualisation of the intangible cultural heritage: when establishing the system for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, UNESCO envisaged (audio)visual documentation of “oral traditions and language; performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship”². Moreover, the elements nominated to the lists of intangible cultural heritage have to be visualised by photographs³ and films; and the latter will be the focus of this article. Among 470 elements inscribed in the *Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* (*Representative List*), the *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding* (*Urgent List*), and the *Register of Good Safeguarding Practices* (*Register*) until 2017 (see Internet source 1), only three heritage elements⁴ are not presented through film.

We can ask if there is any such thing as “authorised heritage films” and “subaltern heritage films”. All nomination films sent to UNESCO as part of the nomination file are “authorised heritage films”, since they were approved by the States Parties, hopefully in agreement with the heritage bearers. And

2 Domains of intangible cultural heritage as defined in *Convention* (UNESCO 2003, Article 2/2).

3 I do not feel qualified to evaluate photographs; however, it is clear from my article that I value highly still images in the visualisation of texts. I mostly chose photographs depicting people engaged in working processes, customs and rituals, as to me this is the visual core of intangible heritage.

4 Two from Mali, inscribed to the *Representative List* in 2009 (reported by Marius Tukaj from the Paris technical crew in an email dated 21.9.2015) and one from Peru, inscribed in 2010 (information by Hugues Sicard, see his article in this book). Video has been a mandatory constituent part of nominations to the *Urgent List* and *Register* since 2009, while for the *Representative list* it became mandatory in 2013 for 2015 and later nominations.

yes, there are also many subject generated films and indigenous films⁵ that are not taken into account in the nomination process, so they can be denoted “subaltern heritage films”. Here, I will focus on the “authorised nomination films”, while the whole spectrum of films on a particular heritage element has been evaluated elsewhere; to mention just two recent examples, Beate Engelbrecht (2015) analysed a wide range of films on house feasts in Tana Toraja, Indonesia, and Shina-Nancy Erlewein studied audiovisual representations of Kutiyattam Sanskrit Theatre, India, in her doctoral thesis (2014).

Of course, there is a great variety of ways how nomination films can be produced, who is included in the production process and what power positions they hold. I have borrowed Jay Ruby’s title *Speaking For, Speaking About, Speaking With, or Speaking Alongside* (2000), to draw attention to whose voices are heard in nomination films for UNESCO, who represents the heritage and the bearers, and who decides what will be filmed in the field, and how the film narration will be constructed. Paraphrasing Ruby (2000), social knowledge captured in the film is the result of a communication between film subjects and filmmakers. In ethnographic films, careful consideration is given to participatory and collaborative methods, and to a code of ethics; but we do not know how many nomination films were enlightened, until recently, by understanding of visual ethnography. The great challenge of nomination film production is thus how not to make heritage bearers a mere ‘object of research’ and instead allowing them to become equal partners as film subjects and joint creators.

UNESCO recognises the “the communities, groups and sometimes individuals”⁶ as the bearers, guardians, implementers and transmitters of intangible cultural heritage, who play the most important role in the identification, management and preservation of their heritage (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004: 53, Blake 2009: 50; Erlewein 2015: 29). Thus, their inclusion in film production and any kind of representation is also necessary (Erlewein 2015: 33–35). This holds true for the visualization of the intangible cultural heritage in principle, but how is it in reality?

Nomination films

In the collection of articles gathered in the monograph *Documenting and Presenting the Intangible Cultural Heritage on Film* (ed. Valentinčič Furlan 2015), we came to the conclusion that films for UNESCO lists are a very specific film genre (Hamar and Voľanská 2015: 69), appropriate for the

5 I will mostly use the denotation ‘subject generated films’ for films produced by the heritage bearers, as the term applies to all such films made anywhere in the world. ‘Indigenous films’ is a narrower term, as it refers to films by indigenous people in states with two or more strata of inhabitants with a complex hierarchy of power relations.

6 As defined in the 2003 *Convention* (UNESCO 2003). I mostly refer to them as ‘heritage bearers’.

“UNESCO narrative scheme” (Hrovatin and Hrovatin 2015: 81, 78), thus we widely accepted the label “nomination films”.

In the early years, the prevalent type of nomination films was modelled after television news and tourist promotional films. Then UNESCO recommended, in *Aide-Mémoires* (Internet source 2, Points 118–122), “that films should contextualise the shown heritage rather than advertise it; that they should offer an authentic image of the heritage element rather than a staged or directed representation; that films should use English or French subtitles rather than being dubbed; and that the communities, groups and individuals should talk about their heritage themselves rather than relying on third-person narration” (Valentinčič Furlan 2015: 102–103). This has led to some improvements, but old-fashioned top-down films are still found on the UNESCO portal (Internet source 1).

To give two very different examples of nomination films on elements accepted to the UNESCO lists in 2017, I have chosen one taking a typical top-down approach and one that is an excellent example of a participatory or inclusive approach. The film *Mongolian Traditional Practices of Worshipping the Sacred Sites* (Internet source 3) is characterised by third-person commentary, based on the text of the nomination file, while moving pictures are subordinated to words. We do not hear any bearer’s voice and not much of the genuine soundscape of the element; we do not know if the heritage bearers were asked how the film story should be conveyed. The film was produced by The Research and Information Centre for Sacred Sites, Mongolia, but no data on the filmmakers is given.



Figure 1: Sacred site worshipping practice, Mongolia. From the UNESCO webpage, © Ayush Duurenjargal, 2007.

By contrast, there is a very good balance and great coherence of images and sounds in the nomination film *Craft of the Miller* (Internet source 4). The work and knowledge of millers is shown in moving images including the bearers' explanations filmed in the same context. A strong counterpart to the words are the sounds of the working processes and natural elements, such as wind and water, while no off commentary⁷ or music are added. A small minus is that the names of millers are not given, nor the names of the filmmakers; the closing credits state only that the film was produced by the Amsterdam Film Foundation.



Figure 2: The craft of the miller, the Netherlands. From the UNESCO webpage, © Huisinga Fotografie, 2016.

If the first film offers an outside or *etic* point of view on the heritage element and the bearers, the second one is an inside or *emic* one. Or, to use Ruby's words, the first film is "speaking for and about" the heritage and its bearers, even instead of them, while the second one is "speaking with and alongside" them, or even better, through the bearers. Albert van der Zeijden reported that in the Dutch Centre for Intangible Heritage they discussed with the filmmakers what

7 I use this expression for commentary written by a professional and read by a speaker not seen in the film; synonyms are 'third person commentary', 'third person narration'; in any case, they mostly denote *etic* and even patronising interpretation of the heritage.

in their view constituted a worthwhile film to present to UNESCO. They decided it should be the millers themselves who told the story about their craft⁸.

Visualisation of intangible cultural heritage in Slovenia

Visualisation of the elements in the Slovenian Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage is conducted by the Coordinator for the Safeguarding of the ICH in Slovenia, which since 2011 has been the Slovene Ethnographic Museum⁹. We first carry out a survey on existing film production and, in the case of quality films, we ask filmmakers and producers if they agree that their film be used as a characteristic video of the element in the Slovenian register. We give priority to films produced by heritage bearers or local communities; a good example is the documentary film *Baking Poprtniki* (Internet source 5). The film was produced by the local Parnas, Society for Culture and Tourism Velike Lašče,



Figure 3: Milka Debeljak from Gornje Retje modeling dough decoration, Photo Metka Starič, 2013.

8 Email dated 1. 3. 2018. Van der Zeijden then prepared an article, see next chapter.

9 Before it had been the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology at the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

and then shortened to 10 minutes¹⁰ for the Register. We respect the local community's view regarding how their heritage be represented, so we tolerate some off commentary, added music or artistic specifics that we usually avoid in our film production.

If there are no suitable existing films¹¹, we organise new filming, employing a combination of observational and collaborative methods. An example is *Making Paper Flowers* (Internet source 6), depicting four paper-flower makers from the Moravče Valley. The ladies spontaneously commented on working procedures, as they very often present their knowledge and techniques in workshops at local schools and in fairs all over Slovenia.



Figure 4: Branka Bizjan making paper flowers. From the Slovene Register of ICH, © S. Čurak, 2013.

- 10 Back then, we could finance the reediting, while now we simply publish the whole film on the webpage, respecting the integrity of the copyrighted work. Since 2012, we have been testing the optimal durations of films: at the beginning, we agreed to a suggestion from the Ministry of Culture to make 5-minute films, but we soon decided to adhere to the UNESCO policy of up to 10 minutes for new productions; however, existing films are mostly published on the webpage in their original length, as the viewers can either watch the whole film or just part of it.
- 11 We use films produced by heritage bearers, museums, institutes and university departments.

When filming for the national Register, we prefer to present one group or one rounded event, rather than filming a series of groups or a multitude of events to edit a collage. We promote complementarity of texts and films on the webpage of the Coordinator for the Safeguarding of the ICH: the text “describes an ICH element, its history and territory, listing the bearers and defining safeguarding measures, while the video directly depicts the element and its bearers, allowing them to express their points of view” (Valentinčič Furlan 2015: 105). All the filmmakers and producers sign a statement that they transfer the material copyrights¹² to the Ministry of Culture (the manager of the Register of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Slovenia) and to the Coordinator for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Production of nomination films on Slovene heritage elements

Regarding nomination films for UNESCO, our first hands-on experience dates back to 2013/14, when we cooperated in the early stages of production of the film *The Škofja Loka Passion Play* (Internet source 7). The film, produced



Figure 5: Night procession in the centre of Škofja Loka, Slovenia. From UNESCO webpage, © Tomaž Lunder, 2015.

12 However, they keep the moral rights. We are very attentive to give metadata on film and filmmakers on the Coordinator’s webpage (see Internet sources 5, 6, 9 and 12) and in articles (see Filmography).

by the Municipality of Škofja Loka, presents the Passion play as a mobilisation of hundreds of people from the medieval town and surrounding villages, taking part in acting and numerous supporting activities. The nomination film employs a fairly balanced combination of statements by the bearers and off commentary. An interesting detail about this film production is that the “bloody” scenes and the whipping of Jesus Christ were edited out, after two members of the working group found out at the session of the Intergovernmental Committee in Paris that UNESCO recommends avoiding violent messages and weapons in any representation (see Internet source 2, point 120).

Being rather critical of films on the UNESCO webpage, in 2014 we organised the conference *Documenting and Presenting ICH on Film* to open up discussion among practitioners, visual anthropologist, professionals, theoreticians, filmmakers and film producers dealing with visualisation of ICH. With our new knowledge, we have monitored production of Slovenian nomination films for UNESCO in 2015/16 for the 2017 cycle, and cooperated actively in preparing two films for the 2018 cycle.

We saw the first version of film *Door-to-Door Rounds of Kurenti* (Internet source 8) in late 2015, and were rather surprised that footage was filmed in November, in an attempt to reconstruct the “good old times”. Furthermore, the film made use of extensive off commentary and even jazz music. We recommended to the local film producers that they document the authentic¹³ Shrovetide custom in February 2016, and free the typical soundscape of the Kurenti bells from the jazz and dense commentary. The representatives of the producer, the Bistra Scientific Research Centre in Ptuj, were hesitant about new filming, they would rather have reedited the film, replacing some ‘reconstructed’ shots with authentic ones¹⁴ and some off commentary with short statements by *Kurenti*. Unfortunately, the latter were taken from various TV reports, which did not contribute to the coherence of the film.

Based on this experience, we suggested cooperating with the bearers and the working group in preparing future nomination films from the outset until the nomination file is sent to UNESCO. It is most effective to discuss the film concept in the preproduction phase (when still on paper), less to make changes during the production phase (additional filming), and the least in the postproduction phase (in the editing studio).

13 UNESCO opposes the use of the term “authentic”, while in visual ethnography it is widely used to denote actual living practices in the field as opposed to rituals that are staged, directed or reconstructed for the filming (which should be revealed in ethnographic film).

14 From the film *Obhodi kurentov / Shrovetide Parade of Kurenti* (Internet source 9), produced by the Slovene Ethnographic Museum in 2012/13. We were surprised that almost 25.000 people had seen the 5-minute film since 2013 (it is published on YouTube and embedded in the webpage of Coordinator of ICH). Public interest increased in December 2017, when *Door-to-Door Rounds of Kurenti* was accepted to the UNESCO *Representative List*.



Figure 6: *Kurenti* in action. From the UNESCO webpage, © Andrej Brence, 2011.

When the decision was taken in 2016 that *Bobbin Lacemaking in Slovenia* was to be nominated the following year, the working group¹⁵ proposed to reuse footage of the series *Bobbin Lace in the Lime of Time (Klekljana čipka v risu časa)*, produced by Television Slovenia in 2015. We invited the scriptwriter and director Magda Lapajne to make the 10-minute nomination film *Bobbin Lacemaking in Slovenia* (Internet source 10), based on the recommendations of UNESCO, and exposing the *emic* point of view. Having 14 hours of footage available, we agreed to select shots of a lace-making school, seven lace-making societies, two drawers of patterns, and a designer of textiles and clothes. The film shows the lacemaking itself, how knowledge is passed on in schools, societies and at home; many women and two men reveal what lacemaking means to them personally and for their society. Due to competition between the two strongest lacemaking regions, we negotiated how to balance the representation, stressing that only aiming for the same goal would bring success. The decision was taken that the most famous lace festival in Idrija was not to be shown, as there was no footage

15 Formed from the representatives of the Ministry of Culture, the Coordinator for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Association of Lace Makers and regional or city museums. In the first place, the decision for the nomination came from the first two bodies, although all partners were very passionate during the process.

on the counterpart one in Železniki. There is no off commentary and no music added, as the sounds of bobbins are the most significant and beautiful soundscape possible. The film subjects are identified by their names, their roles in lacemaking societies or schools and place of their activities. The closing credits give the names of the film makers, two programme editors¹⁶, and the technical adviser for the nomination film.



Figure 7: The Idrija Lacemakers Society. From the Slovene Register of ICH, © B. Uršič, 2008.

In the same year, together with Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Switzerland, Slovenia took part in the multinational nomination *Art of Dry Stone: Knowledge and Techniques* (Internet source 11). Slovenia sent three films (*Maintenance and Construction of Dry Stone Wall*, *Moving the Little Stone House at Medvejek*, and *Dry Stone Walling*, see the last in Internet source 12) to the Spanish production company Mira Audiovisual Vidéo edition. The Spanish received very diverse footage and films, mostly of dry stone walling in different locations, and in one case just a 'dry' explanation by two men standing beside an old stone wall of how the work used to be done. They edited the joint film *Dry Stone: Knowledge and Techniques*, sending it

16 This reveals the inner organisation of the Slovenian National TV station (see Filmography); however, we have not yet been attentive to stress also the cooperation of the working group.

to all partners in eight countries via WeTransfer. They coordinated suggested improvements and gathered data to produce the closing credits. Not all our suggestions could be taken into account, e.g. the names of the speakers are not given in the film, as not all countries could provide them. The film uses some off commentary and piano music to 'glue' the sequences together. The structure is based on chapters and twice the names of all participating states are given over the background of a stone wall. Despite the compilation of existing recordings, the film is visually very rich; better results could be achieved if new filming was done in all countries according to the same concept, and preferably by the same film crew.



Figure 8: Repairing a dry stone wall in the village of Matavun, Slovenia. From the UNESCO webpage, © Darja Kranjc, 2012.

This insight into multinational nomination and joint film production has been very precious, as Slovenia cooperates in other plans for joint nominations to the *Representative list*.

Voice, authority and authorship in nomination films

Jay Ruby has opened questions of voice, authority and authorship (Ruby 2000: 196) in ethnographic films. Regarding nomination films, these questions have not yet been asked. Due to the imprecise instructions, the early nomination films were often based on extensive commentaries by experts,

either given personally to camera, or read by a professional speaker, not seen in the film. In visual anthropology, this type of film is denoted as 'illustrative' (MacDougall 1978: 412-414) or 'expository' film (Barbash and Taylor 1997: 17; Postma 2012: 35). However, if nomination films visualise the text of the nomination, they are basically 'descriptive' films.

At the other pole of nomination film production we rarely find a genuinely ethnographic film, as there are so many parties and points of view incorporated in discussions regarding what a nomination film should be like, which aspects should be emphasized, and who should represent the heritage bearers in the film. A nomination film is almost never a subject generated film, except when the film has been made prior to the nomination process. Collaborative film productions with 'sharing authorship' (Ruby 2000: 208) or 'shared authorship' (Borjan 2013: 26, Erlewein 2015: 32), multivocality and reflexivity (MacDougall 1992: 31) can create conditions that allow for the generation of new knowledge (MacDougall 1992: 39), instead of plain exchange of existing data.

Nomination files and films are usually prepared by a large working group of heritage bearers, researchers, politicians, filmmakers and film producers. It is good if this body includes a visual anthropologist or somebody with knowledge of visual ethnography. Visual anthropologists have substantial experience and well established methods in engaging film subjects in cooperation, moreover, they have supported the development of subject generated films and indigenous media (see MacDougall 1978, 1992; Ruby 2000; Grimshaw 2008; Henley n.d.; Erlewein 2015).

The only subject generated film mentioned in this article is the documentary *Baking poprtniki*, as it was made spontaneously, prior to the invitation to become a characteristic video of the element in the Slovene Register. The film *Bobbin Lacemaking in Slovenia* was produced in a collaborative manner with shared responsibility of all the parties to the nomination process, yet this is a very specific case, as it was edited from existing footage: we could jump from planning (preproduction) directly to editing (postproduction). The production of the Dutch nomination film *Craft of the Miller* was collaborative from the very start, through the phases of preproduction, production and postproduction.

Conclusion

UNESCO has not paid much attention to film producers in the instructions (Internet source 13), *Aide-Mémoires* (Internet source 2) and *Cession of Rights* forms (Internet source 14). In closing credits of the nomination films,¹⁷ it is sometimes difficult to understand who the filmmakers and film producers are, and who commissioned the nomination films, e.g. Ministry of Culture, National commission of UNESCO, state agency or regional authorities. As these bodies decide whom to entrust with the filmmaking, they have a substantial influence on the visualisation of intangible heritage and its bearers.

In the early years, the coordinating bodies and working groups in States Parties commissioned films from advertising agencies and production companies. The nomination films were usually based on the shortened texts of nomination files, which were then read by professional speakers, and 'illustrated' by aesthetic moving pictures in the editing studio. Thus, many films were in fact a visualisation of the written part of the file, representing the external, *etic* view of professionals and advisers. They had literally 'translated' the text into the visual form, merely recycling the knowledge. By contrast, I believe that it is more productive to visualise the heritage and the bearers, promoting their point of views. Visual anthropologists and sensitive filmmakers can facilitate an *emic* point of view of heritage bearers through collaborative film production with shared authorship and responsibility. Nomination films with the vivid presence of heritage bearers, expressing how the heritage constitutes their identity, have the power to become an essential counterpart to the descriptive and analytical, even bureaucratic texts of nomination file.

In the monograph *Documenting and Presenting the Intangible Cultural Heritage on Film*, Mirela and Darije Hrovatin wrote that nomination films pursue two goals: "to (re)present a cultural tradition in social, geographical, historic and typological context, and to convince the examiners that the element is worthy of inclusion according to the criteria of the list for which the element was proposed" (Hrovatin and Hrovatin 2015: 81). However, having done visual research into intangible heritage and its visualisation, and having taken part in production of nomination films, I believe that reconsideration is needed. I want to argue that nomination films can get higher value and better visibility if they pursue only the first goal, mediating the *emic* point of view of the bearers on their heritage, while the professional argumentation is left to the written part of the nomination. Thus, texts and films can actually become

17 On the UNESCO webpage, data on authors and producers are in some cases given in great detail, and in some they are completely absent. The copyrights are sometimes attributed to an individual author, sometimes to the film producer or to a responsible state body, and sometimes to UNESCO.

complementary modes on the UNESCO portal and in the evaluating process¹⁸ carried out by the Evaluation Body.

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A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH TO VISUALISING THE CRAFT OF THE MILLER

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The article focuses on participatory approaches towards ethnographic filmmaking of the intangible cultural heritage. The case study presented is the film *The Craft of the Miller*, part of the first Dutch nomination to the UNESCO *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. Nomination videos must comply with a prescribed format and length. Moreover, UNESCO calls for a bottom-up approach and a strong involvement of the communities. The article offers some reflections on the dilemmas faced while making the nomination film *The Craft of the Miller*. The working group for its production was constituted of representatives of the Ministry of Culture, the Dutch Centre for Intangible Heritage and the Guilds of Voluntary Millers. The craft itself was visualised from the perspective of the millers. The author argues that this fits well with recent developments in the discipline of visual ethnography that calls for more reflexivity and a greater involvement of the heritage bearers in collaborative or participatory filmmaking.

Keywords: intangible cultural heritage, UNESCO, visual ethnography, participatory film

Introduction¹

One of the obligations for nominations for the intangible heritage lists of UNESCO is that they should be accompanied by a video film of 5-10 minutes. As stated in UNESCO's latest instructions for nominations to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Representative List)*,

the video should represent different aspects of the element in its current state, focussing in particular on its role within the community concerned, how it is transmitted and any challenges it faces. (...) When preparing videos to accompany nominations, States are invited to employ, to the greatest extent possible, the approach of allowing the communities, groups and individuals concerned with an element to speak about it on their own behalf, rather than relying only on third-person narration, and to have them reflect practices and expressions of intangible heritage in their normal context (Internet source 1, points 15 and 16).

When the Dutch nomination for *The Craft of the Miller Operating Windmills and Watermills* (Internet source 2) was prepared in 2014-2015, there was not much reflection published on how to make such a video. Of course, there was literature on ethnographic film, such as the practical guide book by anthropologist Sarah Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography* (2014), writing about ethnographic filmmaking as a dialogue between applied and academic research and practices. But more specific literature on videos for the UNESCO lists was lacking, with the exception of Wim van Zanten's *The Relation between Communities and Their Living Culture as Represented by Audiovisual Files*, presented to the First ICH Researchers Forum in Paris in 2012.

Van Zanten analysed the audiovisual files supplied with the 19 items that were added to the *Representative List* in November 2011. He was very positive about some of the videos. According to him, videos can present information which cannot easily be described in a text. In his view, a video for the UNESCO lists should not be aimed at promoting tourism, but should focus on showing the relationship between the community and its element of living culture. The film should not be made by an artist who presents his own vision of the living culture and is not interested in how the community experiences it. Van Zanten also reflected on the use of *voice over* and music accompanying the video, which in his view should be avoided (Van Zanten 2012: 87-92).

In 2014, both Wim van Zanten and I lectured on a symposium on intangible heritage and film that was part of the *Craft in Focus* festival in Amsterdam,

1 This article builds on discussions with documentary filmmaker Jos Kuijer of the Amsterdamse Filmstichting (Amsterdam Film Foundation). I would also like to thank the Guilds of Voluntary Millers, without their cooperation the video could not have been made.

organised by Wendy van Wilgenburg, a cultural anthropologist specialised in films about the crafts. My reflection of visual ethnography benefited greatly from discussions with Wendy van Wilgenburg and Wim van Zanten. In the Netherlands, a strong tradition in visual ethnography is concentrated at the Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology of Leiden University, especially its Visual Ethnography programme (see Postma and Crawford 2006). However, my own involvement in filmmaking is somewhat different: starting as a historian writing about visual culture, mainly about photography as a source for historical research (Van der Zeijden 2004), I now work at the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage and teach Intangible Heritage Studies at Utrecht University, coordinating a film production for the *UNESCO Convention for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2003).

Experimenting before *The Craft of the Miller*

When it became clear that the Dutch government wanted to nominate for the *Representative List*, the Dutch Centre for Intangible Heritage started experimenting with filming some of the elements of intangible heritage in the Dutch inventory. The Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage is responsible for the implementation of the *Convention for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (Convention)* in the Netherlands, including drawing up an Inventory of Intangible Heritage (Internet source 3). Filmmakers Jos Kuijer and Caspar Haspels from the Amsterdamse Filmstichting were interested in making the films. They were trained at the Netherlands Film Academy in Amsterdam, specialising in documentary filmmaking. Since the Eighties, they have produced over thirty nonfiction films for public broadcasting companies in the Netherlands. Thus, their background is not so much ethnographic filmmaking but producing documentaries for television, a totally different craft than researching cultural practices and documenting them as part of a scientific research. What I liked in their approach is their great curiosity regarding what people do and what drives them. The first two joint film experiments were one about the annual flower parade in the village of Zundert (Internet source 4), the other about the religious procession of Sjaasbergergank in the Province of Limburg (Internet source 5).

In the discussions with filmmakers Jos Kuijer and Caspar Haspels, I was able to build on my experience as a member of the UNESCO Evaluation Body in 2015, which offered me in-depth experience in evaluating the intangible heritage nominations and accompanying videos. I presented some, in my view, exemplary video files to Kuijer and Haspels. Regarding the Spanish Riding School nomination, I contrasted the 2013 video *The White Ballet* (Internet source 6) with the later version *Spanish Riding School Vienna*, evaluated in 2015 (Internet source 7). To me, the first film was a promotion of a great show much admired by tourists that failed to present the experiences

of the communities involved, while the new video focused more on the experiences of the practitioners. My preferred 2015 video was the *Tinian Marble Craftsmanship* (Internet source 8) from Greece. It presents a tour of a local ethnologist and folklorist interviewing all the different stakeholders involved, from young apprentices in the schools to the marble sculptors themselves, busy working on their marbles and explaining their craft. I have presented this video as an exemplary one to the filmmakers of the Amsterdamse Filmstichting.

For the Zundert film, the filmmakers wrote a script, for which the starting point was a selection of three heritage bearers who could cover the different aspects of the craftsmanship and will be portrayed while practising it. The Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage and the filmmakers both felt, that the film should visualise what is happening in the present and should also convey to the viewers various meanings that the community attaches to this element of intangible heritage. What we felt also is that in a documentary style nomination film there should not be too much 'distraction'. This was not a commercial or a promotional video, for instance to attract more tourists. We of course used no musical score that would not have originated from field recordings. A specific challenge was the UNESCO demand that documenting should not lead to a 'freezing' or musealisation of the tradition, but rather "present intangible cultural heritage as living heritage in constant evolution", as stated in *Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2008: 23, article 109b). Intangible cultural heritage should be presented in an open-ended way, in a dynamic fashion which gives room for further development or safeguarding of intangible heritage.

The heritage bearers should present the story themselves, not just explaining what they are doing but also the cultural meaning behind their craft. A specific challenge for the film on *Flower Parade in Zundert* was that rather than focusing on the parade itself in the streets of Zundert, we felt the emphasis should be on visually documenting the preparations. The flower parade takes a whole year of preparation for the many volunteers involved. These volunteers spend their summer months in their herald's tent, working at welding iron, sculpting styrofoam, and being creative with papier-mâché and small-scale models. Because of the limited budget, we could only afford two days of filming, one during the summer months in the tent where the small scale models were presented, and the other in September during the actual parade itself, where two possible contenders were followed. According to Kuijer and Haspels, a film of only ten minutes should be restricted to three or four storylines, that is to say three or four characters reflecting on their craft while practising it. They built on their experience as professional filmmakers: five or six characters would be too much to identify with in such a short film. For the sake of variation, the characters also need to be complementary; good casting of film subjects offers various perspectives of what the filmmakers and the community want to convey in film.

The community associations came up with the names of people to be interviewed, people with drive and a complementary story. The Zundert film² was well prepared with the support of Paul Bastiaansen, the main organiser of the flower parade. In the view of the filmmakers of the Amsterdamse Filmstichting, documentary filming is not about reconstruction but about creative use of the camera, sound, light and editing, in close cooperation with the main characters.



Figure 1: The cart with Vincent van Gogh made from flowers on the flower parade, Zundert, 2015, © Stichting Bloemencorso Zundert.

The Craft of the Miller

Thus, when the Dutch Ministry of Culture selected *The Craft of the Miller* as the first Dutch nomination to the UNESCO *Representative List*, the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage was already well prepared and took the lead in the formation of a working group. All the Guilds of Voluntary Millers were represented, alongside a representative from the Dutch Ministry of

2 The videos are presented on the YouTube channel and embedded into the webpage of the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage (Internet source 3).

Culture and two representatives of the Dutch Centre for Intangible Heritage³. During our first meeting, Jos Kuijer and Caspar Haspels were introduced to the representatives of the millers and these community representatives were asked what story they would like to communicate in the film. Even more importantly, they were asked who could represent the heritage with some zeal and sense of purpose.

Telling a story with images, you need a script to structure your film in specific key scenes that are important to communicate the story. How do these millers practise their craft? Which are for them the essential elements of their craft? What skills are involved? How do they pass on their skills to future generations? And, of great importance from the UNESCO perspective: what does it mean for them to be a miller?

The filmmakers suggested portraying three different millers practising their craft. Ideally, one would introduce the specific skills involved in the milling of the grain, another would explain the specific skills involved in operating a 'poldermolen' – windmill, flushing away the sea water from the parts of the Netherlands situated below sea-level. And it would also be great to find a young apprentice, who wanted to become a miller. Flour miller Maarten Dolman was the first obvious candidate as a representative of the Guild of Traditional Flourmill Millers. He works at a mill in the centre of IJsselstein,



Figure 2: Maarten Dolman is starting his daily work in the morning. From the UNESCO portal, © Amsterdamse Filmstichting, 2016.

3 Editor's note: See the names of people and bodies they represent given in Filmography.

being one of forty professionally active millers earning a living at the mill. Actually, the film opens early in the morning, with Maarten preparing his mill for its daily work.

The miller operating a 'poldermolen', Fred Oudejans, was also easily found. Here, the challenge was to film him on a stormy day to visualise what he does to prevent the sea water flooding the land. Last but not least, was young apprentice Christa Bruggenkamp, who was presented to the filmmakers by the Frisian Millers Guild. Apart from her age and gender, her strength was that she had a sense of purpose and was full of ideas about the mill, which she was going to take over from an elderly miller. She wants to transform the mill into a meeting place, where people could have lunch etc. The film concludes with Christa presenting her business plan for the mill, thus bridging the past with the future.

When we presented the draft version of the film to the working group, the millers commented that the documentary film should also include a miller at a watermill. In comparison with the windmills, there are not so many mills in the Netherlands operating on water energy. But because of the different skills involved, in their opinion such a mill should be included in the film. Since this new mill should be incorporated in one of the three storylines in the film, it was decided that Christa should visit such a mill in Eindhoven, in the southern



Figure 3: Maarten Dolman explaining his craft to school children in his mill in IJsselstein. From the UNESCO portal, © Amsterdamse Filmstichting, 2016.

parts of the Netherlands. It is part of her training to get acquainted with different types of mills.

Another comment, this time from the Ministry of Culture, was that there should also be some mention about the broader meaning of the craft of the miller, the heritage aspect. With a declining number of people earning their livelihood from the miller's craft, millers today play a role in transmitting cultural history; they must be able to welcome visitors, taking them on tours, and explaining the background of their craft. It was decided that the filmmakers would once again visit Maarten Dolman's mill in IJsselstein, this time filming a class of school children wanting to know more about the historical background. Receiving local school kids is now part of Maarten's work. These final adjustments would not have been possible without a slight increase in the budget that only provided for three days of filming. Nomination video production required good preparation and quite some flexibility. In this way, most of the requirements agreed on by the Dutch Ministry of Culture and the Dutch Centre for Intangible Heritage were met.

Documentary style

The film production was supervised by the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Ministry of Culture. The filmmakers played an important role in creating a script with the three storylines, doing the filming and editing the film. They selected images and scenes to present these stories in a satisfactory way for the Evaluation Body and the Intergovernmental Committee, which were possibly not familiar with this tradition of the craft of the miller. The communities concerned were involved in the working group and thus in the whole production process. The film is clearly presented from the perspective of the millers, filmed in their ordinary natural and cultural context, while working in the mill.

When editing the film we discussed how to introduce the main characters. We decided not to include their names, because this was not a personal presentation, but a representation of a specific type of miller. Of course, this decision could be argued for or against. The final version was shown first to the millers presented in the film and then to the working group that prepared the nomination file for UNESCO. All the members of the Guilds of Voluntary Millers were informed during member meetings where I also did presentations to meet the UNESCO obligation that these communities should give their "prior and informed consent" to the nomination (see R4 in *Operational Directives*, UNESCO 2008: 6). However, they saw the film after their "prior and informed consent" was delegated to their representatives in the working group.

The film scenes are all about interaction: for instance, in the scene where Christa Bruggenkamp is learning the craft from two elderly millers. Or in the scenes with Maarten Dolman, where we can see his interaction with his son

and school children. Last but not least, filming is also interaction between the millers and the filmmakers.

An engaged visual anthropology

What can we learn from the example of visualising *The Craft of the Miller* in a more general sense? First, that the preparation of a nomination video is a complex process in which all the stakeholders should have a say, as demanded in the UNESCO instructions. The UNESCO approach asks for community involvement, and therefore we formed a working group. Community involvement is not simply about their “prior and informed consent”, it is also about presenting the craft from their perspective, and letting them tell their own story. The method of the interview suits this purpose much better than a more authoritarian *voice over* by an outside expert. A *voice over* suggests an ‘outsider’ perspective, while we wanted to present the inside perspective by someone deeply involved in the craft (compare Valentinčič Furlan 2015: 102). This not only enlivens the film, it is also in line with the bottom-up approach of UNESCO. It is also important that the millers can explain what their heritage means to them, how and why it gives them “a sense of identity and continuity” (UNESCO 2003, Article 2/1).

Participatory film and participatory video

Most literature on visual ethnography is about documenting or researching anthropological topics. In collecting data, visual ethnography can be an equivalent of the field notebook. It can also be a way of presenting research in a monographic documentary (Omori 2006: 119). Most textbooks call for a reflective approach to the methodologies that are used in visual anthropology (e.g. Pink 2014). An ethnographic film is always an interpretation. Filming is ‘framing’, a long deliberation on what to leave out and what to include, and in what way and from what perspective.

In the early ethnographic filming, the researcher had a steering role, while already in 1975, David MacDougall introduced participatory cinema (MacDougall 1975), which was seen as an encounter between a researcher and the studied community (Worth 1980: 17, as cited in Valentinčič Furlan 2015: 99). The outsider / insider perspective is of course at the core of most anthropological research and one of the reasons that there is more attention paid to what is called ‘collaborative’ or ‘participatory’ research. This means involving the communities researched in formulating the research questions, and giving them a say in the presentations of the research outcomes.

As Shina-Nancy Erlewein has put it, the UNESCO *Convention* calls for a democratic, participatory approach “involving enduring and intensive dialogue among community and other participants of the film as well as the access

to preproduction, production and postproduction processes, and access to the final film” (Erlewein 2015: 33). Making a nomination film for UNESCO implies specific moments of “shared authority”, a concept introduced in the nineties by the American historian Michael Frisch (1990) in the context of public history. It describes the trend to involve non-professionals in all kinds of projects, including museum projects. In the context of ICH safeguarding, the Belgian intangible heritage expert Jorijn Neyrinck introduced the concepts of “co-production” and “co-management” (Neyrinck 2014: 333–334) that have gained much popularity in recent years. I add ‘co-creation’, as the film *The Craft of the Miller* was a joint creation involving all the stakeholders.

What is important from the UNESCO perspective is to empower the ‘communities, groups and individuals’ that practice intangible heritage. Sarah Pink coined the expression “collaborative / participatory video”, stressing the “empowerment” of the participants by “handing over the camera” (Pink 2014: 114–117)⁴. The Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage is already experimenting with this approach, organising workshop sessions for the communities represented in the Dutch Inventory, that are led by documentary filmmaker Wendy van Wilgenburg. Because of technological advances, video making has become much more accessible than in the past. The UNESCO *Convention* calls for these redefined approaches of ethnographic filmmaking, with a bigger role of the heritage bearers. At the same time, it is perhaps too much to ask the communities involved to produce an official nomination video for UNESCO lists, as the video is not just about presenting the community perspective, but it should also convince the members of the Evaluation Body and eventually the Intergovernmental Committee. The production of such film requires a professional filmmaker who understands the filming process, who recognises the essential drama needed and who knows how to structure a creative story in a way that may capture the imagination of the viewer.

For a nomination video, it is always important to find the right balance among the desires of all parties engaged. What does the community want to communicate? What about the Ministry? We have seen that the millers attached much value to the presentation of a complete picture with different types of mills and the various techniques used in them. The Ministry of Culture, on the other hand, wanted to highlight the heritage aspect, the transmitting of knowledge about cultural history. An overarching goal of the film production was how to present all these aspects in a satisfactory way for UNESCO, in which the actual involvement of communities is paramount. As shown in this article on the case of nomination film production, participatory approaches call for experimenting with what Rodney Harrison, a scholar of critical heritage studies, has called “dialogical heritage” (Harrison 2013: 204).

4 See also Pink 2006: 96–101.

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THE ROLE OF AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS IN THE LISTING AND PROMOTION OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE BY UNESCO¹

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Since 2000, UNESCO has developed mechanisms for the listing of intangible cultural heritage, which has raised a major interest all over the world. States nominating elements have to submit videos in the candidature files in addition to written texts, which is unique to all UNESCO programmes and Conventions. Based on public and internal documents, the author analyses the role played by videos in the examination of files, establishing that it was decisive during the initial years, while later videos became relatively marginal compared to written texts, although they offer a rare opportunity to hear communities speaking about their heritage. After describing technical processing of videos and publication strategies, he reveals that videos are essential for the indexers and general public. He hopes that UNESCO evaluators will feel increasingly comfortable in fully taking into account the wealth of information provided in nomination videos which encounter an exceptional success online with more than 30 million views.

Keywords: intangible cultural heritage, UNESCO, nomination, film, video, lists

1 The ideas and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the view of UNESCO.

Videos – key elements in intangible cultural heritage listing

Several UNESCO Programmes and Conventions grant international distinctions to member countries by means of listing mechanisms, such as the *Memory of the World* programme for documentary heritage, the *Geoparks* programme and *Man and the Biosphere* programme for geographical areas, and two UNESCO conventions concerning cultural heritage: the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (UNESCO 1972) with its well-known *World Heritage List* and the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2003) with three lists – the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* (*Representative List*), *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding* (*Urgent Safeguarding List*) and the *Register of Good Safeguarding Practices* (*Register*).

Listing can be sought through the submission of specific items, which are mainly textual documents; the examination procedures are very heterogeneous. Only the procedures developed for listing under the 2003 *Convention* include a film, usually referred to as ‘video’, as mandatory element for evaluation and awareness-raising purposes². The procedures developed for that *Convention* were heavily inspired by the experiences of the UNESCO programme *Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity*³ (*Proclamation*, Internet source 1). It is important to review the discussions and experiences of the proclamation period (2001–2005) for better understanding of current practices under the 2003 *Convention*.

The author of this contribution has been involved since 2003 in developing, adjusting and implementing procedures concerning the submission, processing and use of nomination videos. After having been interim Head of the Governing Bodies Unit, he is currently Knowledge Management Specialist in the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section. The present paper provides insights into how UNESCO has processed nomination videos over the last 15 years, what role they have played in the examination of nomination files, and how they have been used after the inscription of the intangible cultural heritage they present. It relies on public access documents but also internal notes.

Procedures in place for the *Proclamation* programme (2001–2005)

The first document guiding the submission of candidatures to this programme, *Proclamation of Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity: Implementation Guide* (UNESCO 2000), specified that “each submission

2 “Audiovisual documentation and representation of cultural practices and expressions is part and parcel of UNESCO safeguarding strategies”, commented Shina-Nancy Erlewein (2015: 26).

3 As observed also by Hamar and Voľanská (2015) and Hrovatin and Hrovatin (2015).

of candidature will include the necessary documentation for its evaluation, including maps and photographs, slides, audio and audiovisual recordings” (UNESCO 2000: 5, point 8). This document also described an international assistance mechanism to assist submitting states in covering the costs of preparing candidature files, including the production costs of a video⁴.

From January to March 2001, the UNESCO Secretariat received candidatures for the first round of the *Proclamation* programme and transmitted all the material received to the NGOs that had been selected to make a scholarly and technical assessment of the files. The Secretariat collected the evaluation reports and transmitted them to the international Jury, who submitted recommendations to the Director-General of UNESCO to proclaim or not to proclaim the elements (UNESCO 2000: 8–9).

In April 2001, the Secretariat sent a circular letter to all submitting States requesting a 15-minute video “for presentation to the members of the international jury”. The videos provided were of heterogeneous technical quality, content and length⁵. The members of the jury were significantly impacted by the videos that they watched before starting their debates on each file (internal minutes of the meeting). During their deliberations, they equally referred to the NGO evaluations and to the information contained in the videos (Internet source 2).

In September 2001, after the first *Proclamation* of 19 cultural practices and spaces, the jury met in Elche, Spain, to discuss its experiences in order, among broader objectives, “to define detailed selection criteria in view of the Second *Proclamation*” and “to improve the procedures of the jury meetings” (Internet source 2, page 2). The jury, while often regretting the poor technical quality of the images and, sometimes, the excessively tourist orientation of some of the videos they had screened, decided to maintain the collective screening of videos as a basis for its deliberations (Internet source 2, page 10). As a result, the document *Guide for the Presentation of Candidature Files* (UNESCO 2001) that was used for the second and third *Proclamation* rounds required that the candidature files should comprise, in addition to a completed candidature form and other documentation material, “a professional-quality video document (...), of no more than 10 minutes (...) screened to the members of the jury during their deliberations” (UNESCO 2001: 9). The jury also requested that the Secretariat issue guidelines for the preparation of

4 Over 70 % of the candidature files, mainly originating from developing states, benefited from this mechanism; the amounts provided were between 5,000 and 20,000 US Dollars (the 2003 *Convention* internal database). In related contracts, the Secretariat systematically included a line covering the production costs of a documentary video.

5 In a few cases, States provided the Secretariat with longer videos, and the Secretariat edited the material in cooperation with the UNESCO internal audiovisual studio.

the 10-minute video. In 2002, data sheet *Video Document to be Included in the Proclamation Candidature File* specified technical requirements and provided detailed instructions on the four-part scenario of videos: description, exceptional value, endangerment, plan of action (Internet source 3, page 2).

These specifications were transmitted to nominating States for the second and third *Proclamation* and had a looser submission schedule, contributing to an overall improvement in the technical quality and content of the audiovisual material received. It also helped the Secretariat to ensure timely circulation of videos to the NGOs and to each jury member prior to their meeting (VHS tapes in 2003 and DVDs in 2005). However, many States submitting files for the *Proclamation* of 2003 and 2005 faced major difficulties when trying to follow requested scenario. The resulting videos often followed a choppy narrative which was the result of the tension between the four-part scenario imposed and the narrative desired by the communities and the States to present the element holistically.

Video specifications for 2003 Convention listing

The *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* was adopted in 2003 and entered into force in 2006, which ended the *Proclamation* programme. In conformity with Article 31 (UNESCO 2003: 11), the 90 elements proclaimed *Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity* in 2001, 2003 and 2005 were incorporated to the Convention's *Representative List* in 2008.

In 2008, the General Assembly of States Parties also adopted the first set of *Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2008), which included the modalities of inscription of elements on the Lists established by the Convention. In July 2008, the UNESCO Secretariat published the nomination forms and instructions for new inscriptions: form ICH-01 for the *Urgent Safeguarding List* and ICH-02 for the *Representative List*. Ever since, the Secretariat has adapted these forms every year; the latest can be consulted online (Internet source 4), and all previous versions are also archived (Internet source 5).

The UNESCO Secretariat was guided by the experiences of the *Proclamation* programme to address the issue of audiovisual materials to be submitted with nomination files. Taking into consideration that no financial preparatory assistance was foreseen for nominations to the *Representative List*⁶, the Secretariat decided to 'require', for nominations to the *Urgent Safeguarding List* (Internet source 5, see Form ICH-01-2009, page12), and to 'strongly

6 In contrast to submissions for the *Urgent Safeguarding List*, and for the former *Proclamation* programme.

encourage', for nominations to the *Representative List*, the submission of a 10-minute video for evaluation and visibility purposes (Internet source 5, see Form ICH-02-2009, page 11). The specifications for these videos were limited to technical aspects (format, resolution and carrier) and did not impose any scenario (Internet source 5, see annexes of forms ICH-01-2009, page 14).

Evolution of video requirements since 2009

The 2003 *Convention* was ratified at high speed and most States Parties have had a keen interest in proposing elements of the ICH present on their territory for inscription on the lists. For the first cycle of inscriptions, the States Parties submitted to the Secretariat 111 nominations for inscription on the *Representative List* and 12 for the *Urgent Safeguarding List*. These files were processed by the Secretariat, evaluated by specific evaluators⁷, and examined in September 2009 by the Convention's Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (the Committee). Even though submission of the video for the *Representative List* was optional, and there was no financial assistance, only two files⁸ out of the 111 did not include a video. In the next round, which ended in November 2010, one file⁹ failed to include a video. From then on, all the files submitted for the *Representative List* included a video. Upon the suggestion of the evaluators¹⁰, the Committee decided, in 2012, to make the submission of a video mandatory for this list, too (Internet source 6, see document ITH/12/7.COM/Decisions, Decision 7.COM 11, point 18.e, page 34).

Initially, the specifications did not include requirements regarding languages. Several of the videos submitted in 2009 and 2010 were submitted entirely or partially in local languages, which made it difficult for the evaluators to evaluate the nominated elements properly. From 2011 on, the instructions favoured the submission of videos with "soundtrack(s) (...) in original languages", where "subtitles in English and/or in French if the soundtrack is not in one of these languages" (Internet source 5, document ICH-01-2011-EN-ver-02-1, see Annex on page 12). In a few cases, the lyrics of the songs were not translated, which was explicitly regretted by evaluators and by the

7 The evaluation of nomination files has been undertaken by different instances: the Subsidiary Body for nominations to the *Representative List* from 2009 to 2014; individual evaluators in 2010 and 2011, the Consultative Body from 2012 to 2014, and the Evaluation Body, from 2015 until now. For simplification, these instances will be generally referred to as 'evaluators' in this article.

8 *Manden Charter, Proclaimed in Kurukan Fuga and Septennial Re-Roofing Ceremony of the Kamablou, Sacred House of Kangaba*, both by Mali.

9 *Scissors Dance* by Peru.

10 "The 2012 Body found these videos to be highly useful in many cases during its evaluation (...). [The Committee] may (...) wish to make these videos obligatory" (Internet source 6, see Document ITH/12/7.COM/11+Add.3, page 9).

Committee.¹¹ The Secretariat is now making sure that the entire video is made accessible with English or French subtitles. It is specified in the instructions and it is part of the technical completeness check; states are required to resubmit the videos, if they do not conform.

The last significant changes in the 10-minute video instructions addressed the content of the videos. In 2012, it was recommended that the “video should represent different aspects of the element in its current state, focusing in particular on its role within its community, its transmission processes and any challenges it faces” (Internet source 5, Instructions for *Representative List*, the 2012 cycle, see point 13). In 2015, the instructions were supplemented: “The use of archive images and of images featuring exclusively objects or landscapes should be avoided. States Parties are encouraged to be certain that there is a close correspondence and a coherency between the description of the element presented in the audiovisual materials and the information included in the nomination form.” (Internet source 5, Instructions for *Representative List*, the 2015 cycle, point 15). The participation of communities was stressed in the following point: “When preparing videos (...), States are invited to (...) allow the communities, groups and individuals concerned with an element to speak about it on their own behalf, rather than relying only on third-person narration, and to have them reflect practices and expressions of intangible heritage in their normal context” (Internet source 5, point 16).

Nadja Valentinčič Furlan, who studied the development of UNECO specifications on the videos, noted that “UNESCO’s latest recommendations include some fundamental guidelines of visual anthropology” (Valentinčič Furlan 2015: 105).

Technical requirements and content-related instructions on the videos had a positive effect. In 2013, the Consultative Body expressed its appreciation of the videos of five nominations out of twelve.¹² In 2015, the evaluators “noted that some States Parties made commendable efforts to produce high quality and informative videos” and the Committee commended videos of five files.¹³

11 In 2015, the Committee suggested that the State Party “provides the translation of lyrics while promoting the element on an international scale in order to foster mutual understanding beyond national and language boundaries” in the case of *Epic Art of Gorogly* by Turkmenistan (Internet source 7, see document ITH-15-10.COM-10.b+Add_EN, decision 10.COM 10.b.30, point 5, page 40). In the same document, the translation was required also for three other videos.

12 To give the two best examples here: “There was broad agreement within the Body that the videos submitted by Guatemala for *Paach Ceremony* and by Kenya for *Enkipaata, Eunoto and Oling’esherr: three male rites of passage of the Maasai community* stood out, offering clear descriptions of the element and its context, vivid images and evocative music” (Internet source 8, see document ITH/13/8.COM/7a + Add_EN, point 31, page 7). The first element was accepted to the *Urgent Safeguarding List* in 2013, while the second one was not.

13 See decisions 10.b.4, 10.b.6, 10.b.7, 10.b.17 and 10.b.19 (Internet source 7, see document ITH-15-10.COM-10.b+Add_EN).

The actual specifications and recommendations regarding the videos to be submitted in the nomination files can be found in the most recent version of the nomination forms and instructions¹⁴, in the most recent reports of the Evaluation Body and in recent decisions of the Committee.

The technical processing of videos: standardization, evaluation, publication and long-term storage

Each year in March, the 2003 *Convention* Secretariat receives around 70 nomination files with videos and filmed consents of communities. Video documents are provided electronically¹⁵ or as copies on different carriers¹⁶. The nominations and all documents attached are registered in the Knowledge Management System¹⁷ of the 2003 *Convention* which has functionalities including digital asset management, workflow and content management system.

An analysis is made of the video files received, data on all the key technical characteristics (formats, memory size, resolution, subtitles, soundtracks) are stored, and a master version is produced in mpeg4 (codec H.264), keeping the original resolution. Very limited editing is done on the master to fix eventual technical issues, such as correction of the framing and ratio, deletion of technical video boot, readjustments of sound levels, and adjustment of subtitles to improve the readability.

The instructions encourage the submission of videos in original languages with subtitles in English or French, in separated files rather than incorporated

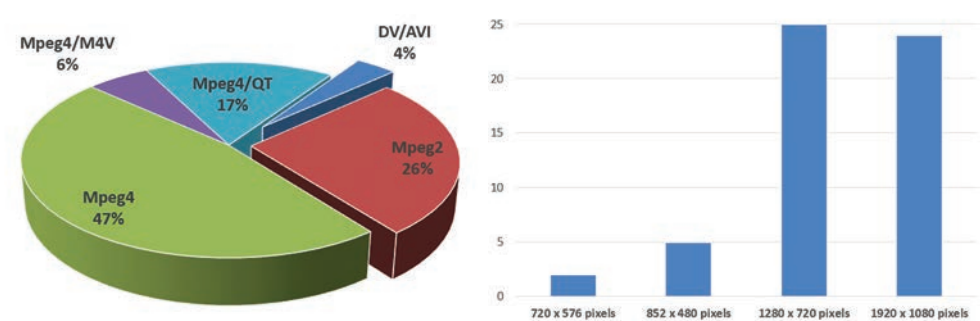


Figure 1: The 2019 cycle videos by format and resolution (H. Sicard).

14 Forms ICH-01 and ICH-02 (Internet source 4, documents ICH-01-2020-Instructions-EN and ICH-02-2020-Instructions-EN).

15 Through UNESCO file transfer system *Filedepot* (Internet source 9), WeTransfer, Dropbox, YouTube.

16 USB keys, DVDs, external hard drives; the submission of tapes is becoming rare.

17 The current system, in PHP/MySQL, has been internally developed since 2006. It references more than 40,000 documents and 10,000 photos.



Craft of the miller operating windmills and watermills

2,513 views

LIKE DISLIKE SHARE ...



UNESCO

Published on Dec 6, 2017

ANALYTICS

EDIT VIDEO

UNESCO: Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity - 2017

URL: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/01265>

Description: The craft of the miller operating windmills and watermills involves the knowledge and skills necessary to operate a mill and maintain it in a good state of repair. Millers now also play a key role in transmitting the related cultural history. Mills, and therefore the miller's craft, play a significant social and cultural role in Dutch society. Various safeguarding measures are undertaken, and the Guild of Volunteer Millers, established in 1972, offers training and ongoing support to anyone interested in the craft.

Country(ies): Netherlands

© 2016 Amsterdamse Filmstichting

Duration: 00:10:00 - Support: USB key (0126500003)

Figure 2: Publication of videos on YouTube: the Craft of the Miller with metadata (Internet source 13).

into the image¹⁸. However, most of the videos are submitted with an English soundtrack or synchronisation, less than half actually include English (rarely French) subtitles, and only in few cases these are provided in separated files.

¹⁸ The submission of subtitles in separate .srt files allows technical adjustment (bigger font, stronger contrast, etc.) and to publish the videos also in their original language without subtitles.

Before the evaluation process, versions in a lower definition¹⁹ are loaded onto UNESCO servers and the video files are included on the public interface presenting the *Files under process* (Internet sources 10 and 11). Upon the actual inscription of the elements, the videos are systematically made public on the UNESCO YouTube Channel (Internet source 12). They are loaded in the highest resolution, along with corresponding metadata (title, description of the element, copyright details) to contextualize them, in particular in view of their possible embedding in external websites. The UNESCO Secretariat is considering to insert standard introductory visuals with the 2003 *Convention* emblem, list name, country and year of inscription (possibly starting from 2018 or 2019).

The Secretariat of the 2003 *Convention* initiated the creation of the UNESCO YouTube channel in 2006 since the technical facilities available at UNESCO web page at the time would not have supported heavy streaming flows. However, they were also made available on YouTube to favour awareness raising about the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage among various audience; youngsters in particular are more likely to find them on this popular platform than while browsing the UNESCO website.

Meanwhile, the facilities of UNESCO evolved, and all the videos of inscribed elements are now also made available through the UNESCO *Multimedia Archives* (Internet source 14). This ensures long-term storage as well as a complementary means of dissemination, especially among educational institutions that frequently use resources from this repository (see the section Use of the videos after inscription).

The particular case of videos featuring consents of communities

A key criterion for inscription on the lists of the 2003 *Convention*, stated in the *Operational Directives*, is that “the element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or (...) individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent” (UNESCO 2008: 5–6, see criterion U4 for the *Urgent Safeguarding List*, and R4 for the *Representative List*). The Intergovernmental Committee “has always welcomed a wide range of evidence to demonstrate the free, prior and informed consent of communities and encourages States Parties to effectively use audiovisual materials to demonstrate such consent” (Internet source 8, document ITH/13/8.COM/Decisions, see decision 8.COM 8, point 16 on page 30).

However, only a few States have provided such evidence and the number of files including filmed consents is not increasing²⁰; this is surprising since

19 At this stage, films are produced in a reduced size (420 x 270 px) to ensure their accessibility to all the evaluators, including to those having a limited internet access.

20 The number of files containing a filmed community consent by cycle of submission: 2010 = 3; 2011 = 4; 2012 = 2; 2013 = 2; 2014 = 3; 2015 = 5; 2016 = 9; 2017 = 7; 2018 = 5; 2019 = 5 (source: The 2003 *Convention* internal database).



Figure 3: Video featuring the consent of the bearers of the Rituals and Practices Associated with Kit Mikayi Shrine, submitted for inscription by Kenya in 2016 (Internet source 15).

the production of video materials has become very affordable and filmed evidence convinces the evaluators of the effective consent of concerned communities. Such videos procure the only opportunity for community members to address themselves directly to the evaluators and to the Committee, often in an enthusiastic way²¹.

The role of videos in the evaluation of nomination files

Videos played a central role in the evaluation and final decision regarding the *Proclamations*, but what about the evaluation of files for listing under the 2003 *Convention*?

In 2009, UNESCO received 121 videos as part of 123 nominations for the inscription into the *Representative List* and the *Urgent Safeguarding List*. The treatment of all these was technically not trivial. When the evaluators met to decide on their working methods, they “requested that the optional videos accompanying most of the nominations be made available” to them (Internet source 17, document ITH/09/4.COM/CONF.209/13 Rev.2, page 3). Thus, from the beginning of the lists of the 2003 *Convention*, the evaluators have systematically taken into consideration the videos submitted in the files. However, contrary to the meetings of the jury of the *Proclamation*, no collective and systematic screening of the videos has been done either during

21 See for instance filmed consent of Slovak communities in the file on *Multipart Singing of Horehronie* (Internet source 16).

the meetings of the evaluators, or during the Committee session when the nominations were examined; the evaluators have watched them individually.

After the first inscriptions in 2009 and 2010, the role played by videos for the evaluation of nominations was explicitly discussed by the evaluators in their documents. They considered videos “to be important complements to the written nomination” (Internet source 18, document ITH/11/6.COM/CONF.206/8, page 8) and “to be highly useful in many cases during its evaluation” (Internet source 6, document ITH/12/7.COM/11, page 9). However, from 2012 to 2014, the evaluators and the Committee affirmed on several occasions that video documentation cannot be a substitute for information that should be included in the form. “The [evaluators] cannot replace information contained in the form with that appearing in the video (...), even if the latter would be more convincing” (Internet source 8, document ITH/13/8.COM/7, page 7). “The video is not intended to present essential description or argumentation that is lacking in the text” (Internet source 8, document ITH/13/8.COM/7a, page 7).

The 2015 Committee session marked a turning point. While an amendment was proposed on a draft decision of the Committee to insist on the importance of including the information in the “proper place” (see recordings in Internet source 19), a number of Committee members, including Brazil, Ethiopia, Hungary and Tunisia, took the floor to insist that the nomination form and the video film should be considered as complementary. The amendment was withdrawn after an intervention by the delegation of Estonia highlighting the “problem (...) of making judgments upon living practices, living environments, people and their lives based [only] on written documents” (Kristin Kuutma²² in Internet source 20).

This emphasis was reinforced in 2016, when the evaluators considered “documentation material, including (...) videos, as essential information to take into account in [their] evaluation, together with the information provided in a nomination form itself” (Internet source 21, see document ITH/16/11.COM/10, point 24, page 7). In 2017, they stated that “videos serve as the compulsory form of visual documentation supporting nomination files” and “can be used to evaluate the status of an element thanks to the additional insight provided by video formats” (Internet source 22, document ITH/17/12.COM/11, point 25, page 7).

22 She was the Chairperson of the first Subsidiary Body (2009) that contributed in defining the methodology of evaluation of nomination files during the first cycle of inscription.

Nomination videos: a fundamental resource to understand inscribed elements

Nomination forms are divided into sections and fields according to the information expected for the evaluation of nominated elements against the set criteria of inscription to each list or register. Moreover, the type of language adopted by submitting States in the form is often influenced by the very detailed instructions. It is challenging for the States and communities to elaborate a coherent narrative within the form. As a result, the nomination form does not easily convey to the reader the essence of the cultural practice being nominated.

The 200-word descriptions of elements included in the decisions of the Intergovernmental Committee to inscribe an element on one list or the other, are widely distributed online and provide a useful overview. However, a 200-word text elaborated by the Secretariat for inclusion into a heavily codified working document is not likely to echo the atmosphere, nor fully present the key aspects that characterize the element.

While recommendations are provided on the content of nomination videos, submitting States can in all freedom determine the scenario for the nomination video and build a coherent narrative. As favoured by the instructions, the videos increasingly feature community members who speak about their heritage, using their own words and expressions.

At the end of 2017, the UNESCO Secretariat started to systematically index all inscribed elements against the concepts of the UNESCO Thesaurus (Internet source 23) to offer the possibility of navigating within the cultural diversity

Concepts

Primary

Craft workers (92)

Food processing (3)

Traditional technology (37)

Secondary

Agricultural products (2)

Cereals (9)

Drainage (1)

Flour (2)

Hydraulic engineering (1)

Mill (1)

Non-age specific (113)

Non-gender specific (154)

Water (11)

Wind power (1)

Craft of the miller operating windmills and watermills

Netherlands
Inscribed in 2017 (12.COM) on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

The craft of the miller operating windmills and watermills involves the knowledge and skills necessary to operate a mill and maintain it in a good state of repair. With a declining number of people earning their livelihood from the craft, millers today also play a key role in transmitting the cultural history of the practice. There are currently approximately forty professional millers; together with volunteers, they keep the miller's craft alive. The Guild of Volunteer Millers has around 105 instructors in the field, and 11 Master Millers are now active in the Netherlands. Mills, and therefore the miller's craft, play a significant social and cultural role in Dutch society and have an iconic value, contributing to a sense of identity and continuity. Various safeguarding activities are undertaken, including training, support and capacity building, educational activities in schools and traineeships. Traditionally, the miller's craft was transmitted from master to apprentice but since the establishment of the Guild of Volunteer Millers in 1972, almost 2000 volunteers have obtained a miller's qualification; anyone interested in the craft can apply for training. The Guild offers millers support in keeping their knowledge up-to-date, for example through excursions to mills, evening theory classes, conferences and meetings.



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Figure 4: Concepts associated with the element Craft of the Miller Operating Windmills and Watermills (Internet source 24).

contained in the lists. UNESCO hired a consultant experienced in indexing, with an educational background in linguistics, literature and cataloguing. On the basis of the data provided in summaries, nomination texts and videos he had to analyze the 470 elements inscribed to identify, for each of them, up to 20 content-related concepts. At the end of his mission, he explained that in nearly all cases the video proved to be the most useful source of information for understanding the element and providing corresponding concepts.

The use of the videos after inscription

There are altogether 4,403 videos from all five sectors of UNESCO (Education, Natural Sciences, Social and Human Sciences, Culture, Communication) loaded on the YouTube UNESCO Channel²³, among which are also videos of inscribed ICH elements. Out of the 40,181,200 video views from the creation of this channel in 2006 to 28 June 2018, around 29,500,000 views concern videos of inscribed elements (source: Google Analytics). In other words, a video featuring intangible cultural heritage is likely to be viewed 30 times more often than other UNESCO videos (recorded interviews, speeches and sessions or promotional videos on UNESCO programmes).

The monthly visibility reports from UNESCO regularly place ten videos featuring inscribed intangible cultural heritage elements among the top ten views of the month on the UNESCO YouTube channel (Internet source 25), including in the most recent report available (March 2018). However, the distribution of views is very uneven: the 10 most frequently viewed intangible heritage videos total 18,818,586 views (62 %).

These figures confirm the veracity of the evaluators stating that “videos [are] the most visible part of the nomination [files]” (Internet source 26, document ITH/14/9.COM/10+Add.3-EN, point 67, page 16). Currently, UNESCO is using nomination videos exclusively for their publication on the webpage and YouTube. However, UNESCO is regularly solicited by third parties wishing to use these videos in exhibitions or for educational purposes. Due to the *Cession of Rights*²⁴, UNESCO authorizes any usage of the videos on inscribed elements that contributes to the general awareness about ICH and the importance of its safeguarding.

23 Here, the main channel is considered (Internet source 12); UNESCO additionally runs YouTube channels in French and Spanish languages, but they are unevenly maintained.

24 The *Grant of Rights* form provided along with videos authorizes UNESCO to “sublicense third parties to use the material(s), in whole or in part, solely for non-profit educational or public information uses” (Internet source 4, see form ICH-07-video-20171026-EN, point 2).

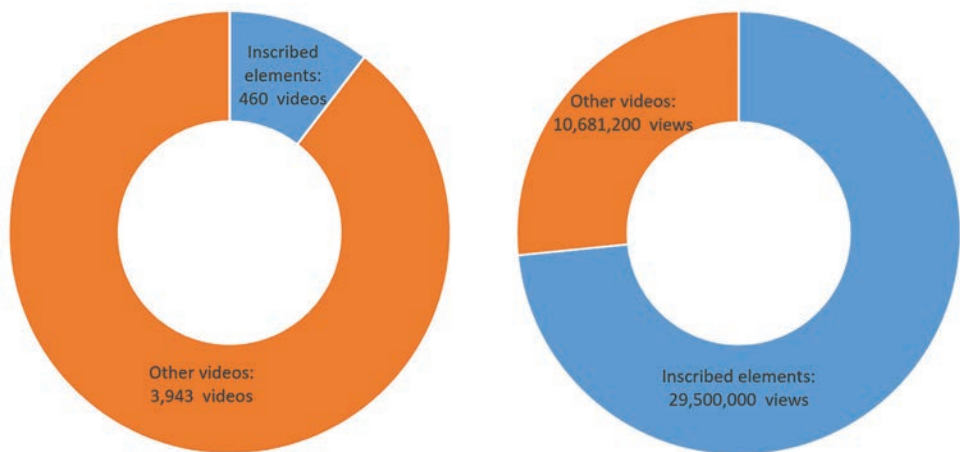


Figure 5: YouTube UNESCO Channel statistics: the share of intangible cultural heritage videos among all videos; the share of the views of ICH videos among the views of all UNESCO videos (H. Sicard).











| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Kalbelia Folk Songs and Dances of Rajasthan | The Polyphonic Singing of the Aka Pygmies of Central Africa | Traditional Brass and Copper Craft of Utensil Making (...) | Baul Songs | Kabuki Theatre |
| 6,337,208 views | 4,384,322 views | 2,455,257 views | 1,870,445 views | 1,024,694 views |
| Nov 5, 2010 | Sep 26, 2009 | Oct 15, 2014 | Sep 26, 2009 | Sep 28, 2009 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Shrimp Fishing on Horseback in Oostduinkerke | Georgian Polyphonic Singing | Oral and Graphic Expressions of the Wajapi | Daemokjang, Traditional Wooden Architecture | Gagaku |
| 907,174 views | 592,138 views | 445,991 views | 412,739 views | 388,618 views |
| Nov 27, 2013 | Sep 28, 2009 | Sep 26, 2009 | Nov 5, 2010 | Sep 26, 2009 |

Figure 6: The ten most viewed videos since the creation of the UNESCO YouTube Channel are all featuring elements inscribed on the lists of the 2003 Convention (source: Google Analytics).

Conclusion

From the beginning, the listing of intangible cultural heritage has required the submission of audiovisual materials, as opposed to other UNESCO listing systems. However, from 2000 to 2017, the role of videos in the evaluation of nomination files has varied greatly. The statement from the 2011 cycle that “even the best video cannot substitute for a clear and effective text” (Internet source 18, document ITH-11-6.COM-CONF.206-INF.7-EN, page 9), demonstrates how difficult it is for audiovisual materials to reach the same level of consideration as attributed to written documents. This mostly refers to internal evaluation processes, however, the public use proves that videos are very efficient in depicting living cultures and oral traditions.

In line with the spirit of the 2003 *Convention*, the current standards of ethics and the insights of visual anthropology, submitting States provide videos in which communities mostly speak about their heritage on their own behalf, in their own words and languages, within their context and, as much as possible, in a holistic way. These are very important issues, extremely difficult to convey in the text of the nomination form. In most cases, these complex information carriers, called ‘videos’ – or should we rather use the more respectful term ‘film’? – do inform about the meaning of intangible heritage for the communities concerned. By their very nature, they are not organized according to the segmented and technical criteria of inscription that are found in the nomination form, nor expressed in UNESCO language.

One hopes that the developments witnessed in the 2016 and 2017 evaluation cycles will contribute to a more balanced approach and that evaluators will feel more comfortable in really taking into account the wealth of information provided in nomination films. UNESCO is becoming increasingly aware of the great potential of nomination films that can “raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage, and of ensuring mutual appreciation thereof” as the purpose of the *Convention* is defined (UNESCO 2003: 2, Article 1c).

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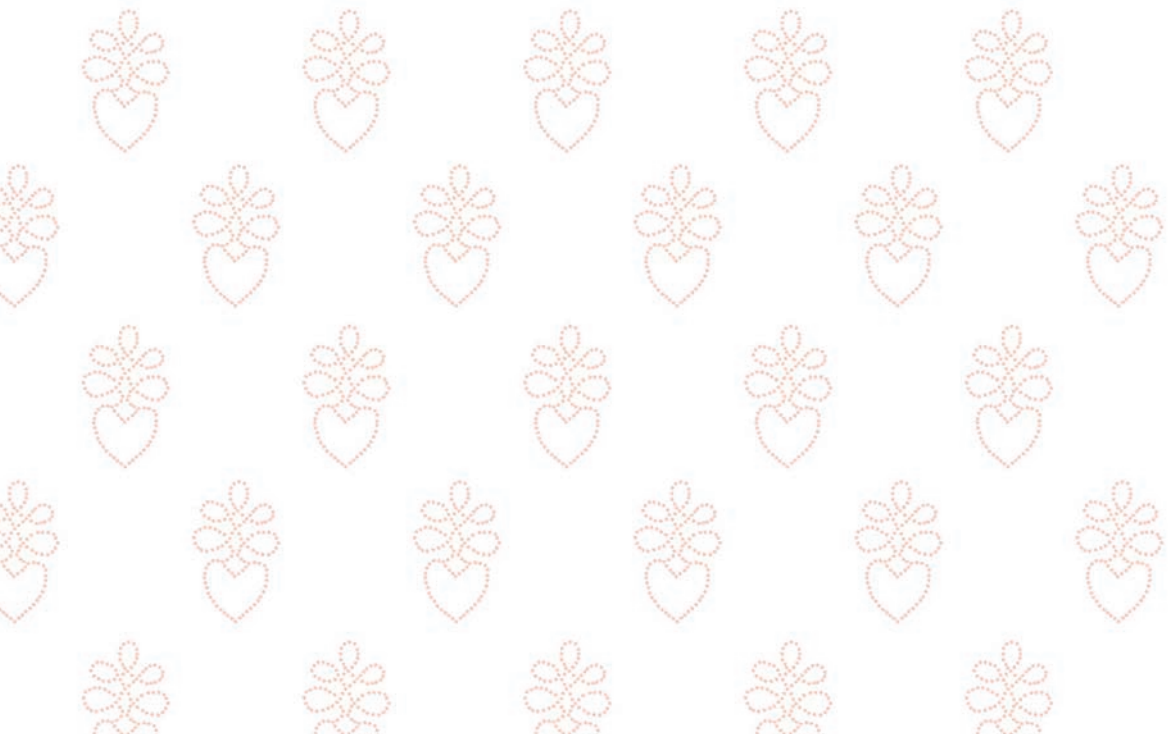
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NOMINATION FILMS FOR THE UNESCO LISTS OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE: TRENDS, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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Films that accompany nominations for the UNESCO lists of intangible heritage have recently gained an unprecedented visibility as works carrying the potential for quality products of visual anthropology. The cognitive value of nomination films is being increasingly recognized, but in the process of evaluation of nominations they are placed in the role of products intended to complement other nomination documents. Analysing nomination videos from the 2017 cycle, the author concludes that they demonstrate certain common characteristics, such as details of relevant practices, community participation and verbal testimonies on one hand, and filmmakers' editing decisions on the other. Nomination films are not expected to involve great artistic freedom, but rather to focus on complementary information to nomination files, supporting a better insight into the nominated heritage element.

Key words: nomination, film, video, UNESCO, intangible cultural heritage, lists, evaluation, visual anthropology

Introduction

The discipline of visual anthropology has recently encountered a series of opportunities for worldwide visibility outside of expert circles, thanks to the renowned UNESCO lists of intangible cultural heritage as the realisation of the 2003 *Convention for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2003). Although a strong driving force behind the phenomenon of UNESCO lists is probably the interest of the States Parties to the *Convention* for political representation, possible benefits for visual anthropology and ethnographic films should not be underestimated. People and communities supporting relevant cultural phenomena are highly motivated to demonstrate their identities through intangible cultural heritage elements, with the concomitant pride and joy. In my opinion, film presents the most suitable medium for exhibiting these living cultural traditions.

There are different interests and agendas attached to the UNESCO intangible cultural lists. Documentary films that belong to the mandatory material of the nomination dossiers carry various meanings that work at different levels of awareness, but they do not contribute to the overall impression of the members of the UNESCO Evaluation Body about the nominations. To be precise, these films have not considerably influenced the decisions on whether the nominations as whole satisfy the criteria for including new elements on the UNESCO lists. The relevant decisions and recommendations of the Evaluation Body still lie in the realm of written text and explanations provided in the nomination forms. Appended photographs and films are regarded rather as tools, but nevertheless, they supply the complementary cognitive data for the members of the Evaluation Body.

This paper deals with the perceived trends in making the nomination videos in line with the usual requirements for audiovisual documents accompanying the nomination. The survey is based on video films of the 2017 cycle of nominations. There are three lists for which video serves as an appended documentation and 42 new elements were altogether inscribed in 2017: 34¹ new entries in the *Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* (*Representative List*), 6 entries in the *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding* (*Urgent List*) and 2 entries in the *Register of Good Safeguarding Practices* (*Register*)². Since there would have been only two videos examined in this case, I decided to extend my review of films supporting the nominations to five entries for the *Register* in 2016.

In my evaluation, I rely on the paper by musicologist Wim van Zanten, *The Relation between Communities and Their Living Culture as Represented by Audiovisual Files* (2012), in which he analyses the quality of the films

1 In the article, I refer to 27 films on elements in the *Representative List*.

2 Texts, photographs and videos on all ICH elements are available on UNESCO webpage (Internet source 1).

accompanying the nominations to the *Representative List* in the 2011 cycle. I have focused also on the films accompanying the multinational nominations prepared by two or more States Parties. Additionally, I have considered the differences in conceiving the videos for all three different nomination mechanisms.

Unfortunately, the members of the Evaluation Body rarely comment on the nomination films. Having served as a rapporteur of the Evaluation Body in the 2017 cycle, I found only negligible comments on films while later reading the written evaluations and transcripts of oral discussions. In fact, the only substantial mention of films in this context is to be found when a video was perceived to have added information missing from the nomination form (the case with the Azerbaijani nomination film, Internet source 17). Thus, these are my own observations of the nomination films, influenced by my position in the Evaluation Body and my interest in attaining an insight into the values of the films as such.

General observations

The nomination films necessarily demonstrate certain characteristics and structure³, such as the enactment of the element, the work process, a short history of the element using archive material, community participation, natural and social environment, verbal testimonies by heritage bearers and professionals, etc. It is desirable to respect the natural flow of the action as much as possible (Van Zanten 2012: 89), while one has to keep in mind the requirement for duration of 10 minutes at maximum. In practice, in an optimal case, this would amount to two or three short albeit continued sequences.

I intend to show that the quality of nomination films in the 2017 cycle, compared to those from the 2011 cycle, has improved. Some technical shortcomings are still present, and the reasons may be partially found in the modest budget for production of videos in some countries.

The basic UNESCO instructions on the production of nomination videos have not changed much (Internet source 2, see Instructions and Forms); however, the *Aide-Mémoires* (Internet source 2, see *Aide-Mémoires*)⁴ have been produced, being permanently complemented to improve the nominations and the films. We can assume that the production of films has shifted in line with the *Aide-Mémoires*, Van Zanten's observations (2012) and the collection of articles in the book *Documenting and Presenting Intangible Cultural Heritage*

3 Considerations on the relevant film contents are available in the text by Nadja Valentinčič Furlan (2015: 105).

4 *Aide-Mémoire for Completing Nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List for 2016 and Later Nominations* (points 108-112, pages 48-49) and *Aide-Mémoire for Completing the Representative List for 2016 and Later Nominations* (points 118-122, pages 52-53). These documents have been drafted by collective efforts.

on Film (ed. Valentinčič Furlan 2015), based on visual anthropology. For example, compared to earlier nomination cycles, in 2017 we have seen fewer videos suitable mostly for tourist promotion of a country; most films focus on the particular element of intangible cultural heritage.

The Evaluation Body has not reported on exemplary films in the 2017 cycle, but the exemplary nomination dossiers as a whole⁵ were mentioned in the *Report of the Evaluation Body on its Work in 2017* (Internet source 3). In the future, the Evaluation Body could also consider highlighting quality films that could serve as good practice for other countries.

Films related to the Representative List

While luckily the majority of nominations proved to be successful in this nomination cycle, I would like to pinpoint the films that are in my view exemplary works *per se*. All the films dealt with in this article are accessible on the UNESCO website dedicated to intangible cultural heritage, under 'Lists' (Internet source 1). I shall first refer to the videos from the *Representative List*, the most popular resource among the three lists.

According to *Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2008), the element must fulfil the following five criteria to be inscribed to the *Representative List*: R1 The definition of the element along with its social functions for concerned communities, identification of bearers and modes of the element transmission; R2 How the nomination would contribute to the visibility and general awareness of the element, as well as its contribution to cultural diversity and human creativity; R3 The existing and planned safeguarding measures to ensure the element's viability; R4 Community participation and consent to the nomination; R5 Inclusion of the element in an in-country inventory⁶ (UNESCO 2008: 5-6).

The Swiss film on the *Basel Carnival* (Internet source 4) is quite informative, visually attractive, and all aspects of the event are presented in a good production. *Craft of the Miller Operating Windmills and Watermills* from Netherlands (Internet source 5) is shown in a film with a convincing narrative related by the practitioners themselves, and with the practical benefits clearly explicated. Film on *Ritual Journeys in La Paz during Alasita* from Bolivia (Internet source 6) offers a vivid picture of custom full of spontaneous utterances by bearers, pervaded by wit and humour, with the voice over

5 Those were: *Craft of the Miller Operating Windmills and Watermills*, *Traditional System of Corongo's Water Judges*, *Door-to-Door Rounds of Kurenti*, and *Basel Carnival* (Internet source 3, see Report of the Evaluation Body on its work in 2017, document ITH-17/12.COM/11-EN, point 21, page 6).

6 Any particular inventory with this purpose drawn up on the territory of a State Party is eligible for evaluation.



Figure 1: Lanterns in Basel Carnival, Switzerland. From the UNESCO webpage, © Fasnachts-Comité, 2016.

being sufficiently discreet. *Traditional Art of Shital Pati Weaving of Sylhet* from Bangladesh (Internet source 7) is presented with striking details from the environment, offering a good balance between directed and spontaneous actions, with the clear and thorough explanation of the element. Videos on the *Traditional System of Corongo's Water Judges* from Peru (Internet source 8) and *Organ Craftsmanship and Music* from Germany (Internet source 9) may also count as exemplary cases.

The level of video production does not oscillate considerably among the States Parties to the 2003 *Convention*, so it is a pleasure to conclude that the majority of other films in this cycle also leave good impressions. Some works elegantly incorporate details of the work process, such as the films *Artisanal Processes and Plant Fibers Techniques for Talcós, Crinejas and Pintas Weaving of the Pinta'o Hat* from Panama (Internet source 10) or *Craftsmanship of Estremoz Clay Figures* from Portugal (Internet source 11). Some of them portray an authentic and spontaneous atmosphere with a low directing input, such as the video from Panama, *Khaen Music of the Lao People* from the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Internet source 12), *Kumbh Mela* from India (Internet source 13) or *Punto* from Cuba (Internet source 14). The video on Cuban music tradition shows a relaxed approach, yet provides sufficient verbal testimonies. Similar statements, describing the element's function for

communities, are to be found in the film *Sega Tambour of Rodrigues Island* from Mauritius (Internet source 15).

As regards the function of the video to confirm the item of living heritage, the vast majority of films include masses of supporting communities or audiences. Pride and enthusiasm for an element are usually visible, the only doubt may be raised by the level of film directing. For example, the Italian video *Art of Neapolitan Pizzaiuolo* (Internet source 16) possesses certain shortcomings, such as quickly changing short shots as if promoting pop music⁷ and some degree of acting⁸. Also the video *Dolma Making and Sharing Tradition, a Marker of Cultural Identity* from Azerbaijan (Internet source 17) applies some feature film elements and staged scenes.

In all the films, the issue of community awareness about the identity value of an element is regularly supported by short interviews offering individual statements by prominent practitioners and community members.

Good films introducing relatively numerous historical references, but balanced by living testimonies on the part of practitioners and communities, certainly include *Uilleann Piping* from Ireland (Internet source 18) and *Chogān, a Horse-Riding Game Accompanied by Music and Storytelling* from Iran (Internet source 19). The film from Iran, and *The Art of Bả Chòi in Central Viet Nam* (Internet source 20) incorporate good portrayals of complex intangible heritage elements and their social meaning for the communities.

The film *Al-Qatt Al-Asiri, Female Traditional Interior Wall Decoration in Asir, Saudi Arabia* (Internet source 21) may be also regarded as an appropriate educational resource. The artistically bare background offered by the video *Kolo, Traditional Folk Dance* from Serbia (Internet source 22), is an interesting approach to focus spectators' attention on the dancers and their movements. As there is no visible audience, the social context is lost, but luckily we can see it in other parts of the film. "For the performing arts the interaction between performer and the audience is an essential element" (Van Zanten 2012: 91).

A specific case of transfer from one UNESCO list to another is the 2017 nomination *Xoan Singing of Phú Thọ Province, Viet Nam* (Internet source 23), with the somewhat lengthier part of the film dedicated to the transfer of knowledge about the element. Since the nomination is about a successful safeguarding effort, this ultimately led to the transfer from the *Urgent List* to the *Representative List*.

As regards purely cinematic properties, the video *Rebetiko* from Greece (Internet source 24) offers good dramaturgy and gradual building of the

7 This kind of shortcoming was already identified by Wim van Zanten (2012: 88).

8 Acting sometimes appears charming, especially if coupled with a statement that the element represents "an act of social redemption" for many members of the community, but it does not contribute to the authenticity of the presented situations.



Figure 2: Offerings to Cam Temple to request permission for organising Spring Festival and singing Xoan. From the UNESCO webpage, © Phú Thọ Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Viet Nam, 2016.

narrative about this music and dance expression. The interviewees are identified with their names, performing roles, and also by their occupations that are sometimes not directly related to the element, and thereby the film probably indicates how widespread *Rebetiko* is.

There are cases showing high-end art production, such as the film *Konjic Woodcarving* from Bosnia and Herzegovina (Internet source 25). There is also a tendency towards branding of craft products and exclusivity, which is not entirely in the spirit of the *Convention for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*.

A somewhat lower quality of production is seen in the videos *Zaouli, Popular Music and Dance of the Guro Communities in Côte d'Ivoire* (Internet source 26) and *Nsima – Culinary Traditions of Malawi* (Internet source 27). In the first of these, the structure does not appear to be inventive, cuts are visible and there is an over-lengthy presence of one interviewed practitioner (the 'talking head' approach). The latter video offers too much information about making the *nsima* food, therefore it is hard to keep the same level of attention throughout the film.

In some places, there is still a tendency to repeat the text from the nomination form in the film itself. Video should complement the textual information from

the form and not duplicate it, just to cite one of the rare comments made by the Evaluation Body members⁹. Another observation regarding consenting to the nomination: sometimes we get the impression of an artificial film production when community members address UNESCO (or Director General in person) inviting them to accept the nomination and approve its inclusion in the lists.¹⁰

Multinationals files and films

Although multinational files allow films of up to 20 minutes, to date UNESCO has received no 20-minute films. There were three multinational nominations in the *Representative List* and one to the *Urgent List* in the 2017 cycle.

The film about *Spring Celebration, Hidrellez* (Internet source 28), coproduced by The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, uses no interviews or off commentary, and provides short explanations in subtitles. This is an uncommon approach, but the film credits are missing, so it remains unclear who undertook such an authorial creation with an unusual use of contemporary music¹¹ that gradually builds up the film dramaturgy.

In *Cultural Practices Associated with the 1st of March* (Internet source 29), nominated by Bulgaria, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova and Romania, the video shows the practices on different occasions, along with an interesting use of archives. However, the downside of making films with the participation of four countries is visible: the related segments are unbalanced and the narrative is somewhat awkward. At the beginning of the film, the map of Europe with dense text scrolled over it appears messy and clumsy, distracting the attention of viewers. It is not clear why Smetana's *Moldau* is heard as music background¹².

More convincing is the video accompanying the nomination *Art of Crafting and Playing with Kamantcheh / Kamancha, a Bowed String Musical Instrument* (Internet source 30) by Iran and Azerbaijan. The Iranian part of the film provides a clear explanation of the element's significance for communities. The Azerbaijani part is shorter, but more effective from a dramaturgical point of view, conveying the making of an instrument and commitment to the instrument generated within an intimate family circle.

9 See also *Aide-Mémoire for Completing the Representative List for 2016 and Later Nominations* (Internet source 2, point 122, page 53).

10 Editor's note: On the particular cases of separate videos featuring consents of communities see the article by Hugues Sicard.

11 As an ethnomusicologist, Wim van Zanten pays a lot of attention to the relation of original soundscapes of the element and added music in films. He writes that the addition of contemporary, 'national' or composed music in the editing process competes with the original soundscape of the event, obscuring it (Van Zanten 2012: 91).

12 See previous note.



Figure 3: Decoration of Kamancha with national elements. From the UNESCO webpage, © Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Azerbaijan, 2016.

Films related to the *Urgent List*

The criteria utilised for the *Urgent List* are to some extent identical to those of the *Representative List*,¹³ except criterion U2 and partially U3. The former considers the immediacy of threats to the viability of the element and the need for urgent safeguarding. The criterion U3 is for this mechanism directly related to threats identified in U2 and the States Parties are expected to present a detailed safeguarding plan, along with a budget and precise timeline of actions (see UNESCO 2008: 5).

To my disappointment, the films provided for this list do not differ essentially from the ones made for the *Representative List*. Moreover, some shortcomings are to be perceived in almost every one of them. The video *Al Azi, Art of Performing Praise, Pride and Fortitude Poetry* from United Arab Emirates (Internet source 31) is a bit static, there are no subtitles of what people are actually singing and reciting. In addition, great masses of

13 Just as in the case of the *Representative List*, criterion U1 of the *Urgent List* serves to identify the element. Likewise, criterion U4 considers the community involvement in the nomination and criterion U5 serves to examine if the element is included in the national inventory.

people perform the element, therefore we may ask if the tradition is really endangered, or is it more the case that spontaneous tradition is replaced by more sophisticated theatrical and media productions, being incorporated into national events (see text in Internet source 31).

The video *Colombian-Venezuelan Llano Work Songs* (Internet source 32) includes exciting sequences and fast-changing shots. It is not clear from the film content why the tradition is endangered, except perhaps by the use of a few images of fields with industrial plants and oil and gas production in one segment of the film (6.40-6.55).

The film *Dikopelo Folk Music of Bakgatla ba Kgafela in Kgatleng District* from Botswana (Internet source 33) does not reveal much of the context. Offering static shots, the film is not particularly inventive in its structure. The video *Mongolian Traditional Practices of Worshipping the Sacred Sites* (Internet source 34) introduces nice shots of Mongolian landscapes, along with a continuous narrative borrowed from the nomination form. The film *Whistled Language* from Turkey (Internet source 35) presents some appealing demonstrations of practice, although we mostly see 'talking and whistling heads' in a local festival of whistling.

The question here is why the films failed to visualise the threats for the respective traditions identified in the nomination forms. Is there a certain discomfort in presenting one's own heritage as endangered in film? Perhaps



Figure 4: Natural and cultural surroundings of the Llano work songs. From the UNESCO webpage, © Centro de la Diversidad Cultural, 2016.

it is not easy to accommodate the entire drama in the only 10 minutes available, although the emergency situations of endangerment may inspire filmmakers to develop dramaturgies. Could the use of animation or elements of docudrama resolve the issue in a better way?

Films related to the *Register of Good Safeguarding Practices*

The criteria for the *Register of Good Safeguarding Practices* were conceived differently than the ones for the first two lists mentioned. The nominations have to present the relevant methodologies of applying safeguarding measures. What the content needs to provide is the background and the objectives of the project or programme as matched against the purposes of the 2003 *Convention*. The nomination has to reveal the territorial scope of the methodology, its effectiveness and susceptibility to assessment of results, community involvement and their willingness to disseminate experiences (see UNESCO 2008: 6). The procedures of evaluation of these nominations are still not precisely developed.

The video *Bulgarian Chitalishte (Community Cultural Centre): Practical Experience in Safeguarding the Vitality of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (Internet source 36) introduces primarily the history of methodology – logically so, since the programme has already proved quite successful at the national and international levels over the past 150 years.



Figure 5: Cultural activities in Bulgarian community centre. From the UNESCO webpage, © Ministry of Culture of Bulgaria / Tsvetan Nedkov, 2013.

The video *Margilan Crafts Development Centre, Safeguarding of the Atlas and Adras Making Traditional Technologies* from Uzbekistan (Internet source 37) offers a sequence of nice shots and photographs, although it is a bit static. Again, there is too much information in the film that is hard to follow.

I also reviewed five films on elements included in this *Register* in the 2016 cycle. The video *Community Project of Safeguarding the Living Culture of Rovinj / Rovigno: The Batana Ecomuseum* from Croatia (Internet source 38) portrays a successful revitalisation effort, with carefully selected narrative and imagery, accompanied neatly by local music, while the essential aspects of methodology are duly explained. The video *Festival of Folklore in Koprivshtitsa: A System of Practices for Heritage Presentation and Transmission* (Internet source 39) also presents the Bulgarian nomination file. It shows historical footage from different festival editions with the variety of folklore forms, while the model itself and cross-territorial dissemination of the programme are not quite clear. Moreover, the speaker's style is much too bureaucratic. The video *Oselvar Boat – Reframing a Traditional Learning Process of Building and Use to a Modern Context* from Norway (Internet source 40) seems to be too much focused on a narrow community around the guild, though the effect of the revitalisation that started in 1997 is indisputable. Also here, the model of safeguarding practices is not indicated.

The video *Regional Centres for Craftsmanship: A Strategy for Safeguarding the Cultural Heritage of Traditional Handicraft* from Austria (Internet source 41) may serve as an exemplary one. The awareness of benefits of the joint effort widely pervades the film, the model is well explained, as is the outreach to different communities. The video *Safeguarding of the Folk Music Heritage by the Kodály Concept* from Hungary (Internet source 42) champions the model where products of elite culture are made accessible to broad masses through this particular method of music education. The prevailing content of the film, with the historical background to the work of Professor Zoltan Kodaly, is justifiable in this context.

Additional note on community participation

The anthropologists Francesca Bayre, Krista Harper and Ana Isabel Afonso (2016: 12) raised the issue of participatory visual methodologies in visual ethnography, which is the practical part of visual anthropology. Intangible heritage is considered as close to the communities as possible, but this is often not the case with film productions. In the analysed nomination films, the heritage bearers most probably participated as film subjects and the directing was carried out by professional filmmakers. The function of bearers and practitioners was thus limited to consenting to the element value and respective nomination. There may have been community members who

participated in the production of film more actively, but such indications are missing in film credits.¹⁴

In the so called indigenous media (Borjan 2013: 178-190, Erlewein 2015: 33) the community members not only influence all relevant decisions on the content and the form of the film, they produce the film completely on their own. We have not seen any such cases among the nomination films in the 2017 cycle.

Regarding ethical questions, Wim van Zanten proposed that the concerned community members should see the film before the State launches it along with the nomination dossier, and to be asked if “they find themselves and their element of living culture properly represented by this film, including the music” (Van Zanten 2012: 92). Visual anthropologists regularly present ethnographic films to film subjects and take into consideration their responses, before going to the public. There is no indication that this would be realised in any of nomination film productions¹⁵. It is worth considering including the idea in future UNESCO guidelines or *Aide-Mémoires*, and participatory, collaborative films should be promoted.

On audiences

The visibility of nomination films has been very much enhanced by publishing them on the UNESCO website and on YouTube. If these resources contribute so much to the broad outreach of films, we might naturally ask ourselves who the audiences are, and, even more interestingly, who the audiences may yet be. Van Zanten mentions young people and their teachers, those concerned with cultural policy, and many non-native speakers of English or French (Van Zanten 2012: 90). Furthermore, the concerned community members can definitely be added to this list. However, we could also add documentary filmmakers and their audiences, museum curators, researchers, scholars, students in the humanities and social sciences, visual artists and students of art academies, media representatives, and – why not – tour operators.

Conclusion

It may be asserted that certain improvements of nomination films have been achieved over the past few years. Some recommendations made by Wim van Zanten (2012) and the *Aide-Mémoires* have been implemented in most of

14 Tamara Nikolić Djerić reported on the production of the film *Community Project of Safeguarding the Living Culture of Rovinj: The Batana Ecomuseum*, where community members were included in the selection of archival footage and music (Nikolić Djerić 2015: 91); but this is not stated in the closing credits of the film (see Internet source 38).

15 Editor's note: Van der Zeijden reports on such case in his article.

the films, such as the visible relationship between intangible cultural heritage elements and their communities. Likewise, the videos now seldom tend to be directly aimed at tourist promotion, as was common in the past. We may perceive new pathways for more innovative production of nomination films.

In addition to the overall evaluation of the nomination films on the heritage elements in the 2017 cycle, I tried to indicate a few issues that can lead to practical improvements of nomination films in the future. This particularly applies to the development of the necessary functional differences between nomination films for the two lists and the register of the 2003 *Convention*.

The UNESCO lists of intangible cultural heritage certainly offer many opportunities for the exposure of works of ethnographic documentaries and the deliberations of visual anthropology,¹⁶ especially, if nomination films continue to profit from the methods and ethics of visual ethnography. Even though films within the framework of the 2003 *Convention* mechanism tend to exist in a relatively predictable content and structure, there is still plenty of room for their improvement for the greater benefit of heritage and its bearers, as well as of film viewers.

Unfortunately, it was detected that nomination films do not have a far-reaching impact in the evaluation of the nomination files – the dominant information resource for the members of the Evaluation Body still is the written word. While it is discouraging that the Evaluation Body does not recognise the significance of cinematic medium in the process of evaluation, there are opportunities for moving forward. “Audiovisual material offers the advantage of presenting a more holistic view of what is at stake, such as movements, spoken words, music, other social interactions, natural surroundings, etc.” (Van Zanten 2012: 89). Whereas the written text can better convey conceptual subtleties and theoretical issues, a video can better illustrate living practices, along with the human interrelationships they foster, the general atmosphere around them and the identity of the communities involved. Thus, nomination films can provide a complementary epistemic value to that of a written word, both to the professional bodies and the general audiences.

16 As Van Zanten put it, “The task of filming of ICH items should be given to people with knowledge about what I call anthropological filming” (Van Zanten 2012: 88-89).

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BEYOND DOCUMENTATION AND ILLUSTRATION: PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE SAFEGUARDING OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

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The paper outlines the specifics of the use of photographic images in the safeguarding of intangible heritage within the context of the 2003 UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. These key issues remain poorly researched, both in general and in the context of the digital shift. The author outlines the role of photography for the documentation and visualisation of intangible cultural heritage and presents good practices from South-East Europe, as well as from other regions of the world; they go beyond mere documenting and allow for the use of participatory methods, for inclusive approaches or for better communication with the communities concerned.

Keywords: intangible cultural heritage, documentation, photography, participatory methods, good practices

Introduction¹

Less than a decade ago, at the Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Abu Dhabi, the Zimbabwe delegation stated that, for economic reasons, the countries in Southern Africa considered the mandatory photos and video in the nominations to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* as not worth the effort (Internet source 1, Document ITH/10/5.COM/CONF.202/4, paragraph 392, page 57). Today, despite of the fact that digital photography is still unaffordable in certain parts of the world, either for financial reasons or because of the so-called digital divide², digital technologies and photography in particular have become normative tools and economically viable resources for the documentation of intangible cultural heritage (Hennessy 2012: 37).

Below, I will outline the role of the photographic technology for the documentation and visualisation of intangible cultural heritage in the last decade. I will also present several good practices from South-East Europe, as well as from other regions of the world, which go beyond mere documentation.

Photographic documentation of intangible cultural heritage

For centuries, photography has been used as a data collection method in the humanities, the social sciences and recently also in the cultural heritage sector. Analysing Walter Benjamin's way of theorising through the concept of the optical unconscious, Fiona Summers explains why even in the digital age, with its wide possibilities for manipulation of photographic images, we still rely on photography as a source of documentation. She states that "the camera records what the eye might have seen but that the conscious brain could not fully absorb or retain and as such the eye could not consciously perceive" (Summers 2012: 458).

Because of its specific nature, intangible cultural heritage is not easy to document and illustrate. It is practiced in particular localities and often at particular moments in time. The Korean *Guidebook for the Documentation of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2011) even notes that it cannot be viewed

- 1 The article was written within the project *Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage – Analyses, Documents, Practices* (№ ДН 09/17), financed by the Bulgarian National Science Fund.
- 2 Alexander J. van Deursen and Jan A. van Dijk state that nowadays, even in the developed countries, despite the advent of the digital media and their introduction into all aspects of everyday life, the digital divide is deepening. The physical access might be closing in certain respects, but other digital divides have begun to grow because of the differing skills and unequal daily use – thus, "as higher stages of universal access to the digital media are reached, differences in skills and usage increase" (Van Deursen and van Dijk 2014: 1).

whenever we might wish. It becomes “visible when the techniques and artistries are performed by transmitters under special transmission conditions, such as when festivals are held, when performances are presented on a stage, and when handicrafts are being created” (Guidebook 2011: 26). Furthermore, intangible cultural heritage includes elements belonging to several different domains – oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, traditional craftsmanship, and knowledge and practices concerning the nature and the universe. Each of these domains has its specifics that have to be taken into consideration when doing photographic documentation (Guidebook 2011: 92; Alivizatou-Barakou et al. 2017: 147-148). Last, but not least, intangible cultural heritage adapts and changes in line with its socio-cultural context (Erlewein 2015: 27). Thus in this sphere each piece of qualitative visual documentation is a valuable achievement.

In the last five years, many efforts have been focused at national and at international level for the improvement of both photographic and other methods of visual documentation, as well as for the successful reuse of the images for the purposes of safeguarding. Here I have to mention the new technical, ethical and other requirements (see Internet source 2) for the preparation of nominations to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Representative List)*, for the *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (Urgent List)*, as well as to the *Register of Good Safeguarding Practices (Register)*. They are directed also to better representation of the successful nominations on the UNESCO intangible cultural heritage website (Internet source 3), as well as to the improvement of the photographic documentation at the national level and within the communities concerned.

Probably the best examples are the creative use of photographic documents in the community run *U'mista Cultural Centre* (Internet source 4), the use and reuse of participatory photography within *The Oral Traditions Project of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre* (Mohns 2011), and the wiki approach designed to provide photographic illustrations for the *Scottish Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (Internet source 5). However, photography offers many other interesting, useful and still unexplored possibilities for the more effective involvement of the communities concerned in the safeguarding process; it promises better understanding of the local visual cultures with their specific influences on the processes of documentation and promotion of intangible cultural heritage, and provides creative ways for the encouragement of intercultural understanding.

Using photography to enhance intercultural communication

With the advent of visual anthropology in the 1970s and 1980s, it became clear that in many parts of the world photography done “within the dimensions of protocol and human taste” was not simply a “readily

understandable form of investigation”, but also “an open form of recognitions which people can thoroughly accept and understand” (Collier and Collier 1986: 27). In the last decade, despite the fact that local visual cultures show considerable differences, the global exchange of digital photos has proven that they are quite successfully shared “across potential barriers of spoken language, literacy and varying degree of computer expertise” (Summers 2012: 459). These specifics of photographic images open ample opportunities for their successful use in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage for the purposes of the enhancement of intercultural communication. As a result, it is hardly surprising that photographic illustrations are regularly and successfully used while promoting intangible cultural heritage at the international and regional level.

Since 2014, creative expressions of community consent for the nomination of elements to the *Representative List* and *Urgent List* have been thoroughly encouraged. This has brought forth several specific ways of declaring community consent, such as handwritten documents, creative writing, calligraphic pieces, etc. Of course, the native forms signifying consent and involvement can vary considerably across the globe. Sometimes they are similar to the written statement followed by a signature characteristic of the contemporary bureaucratic world, but sometimes quite different. Thus in 2017, within the Peruvian nomination of *Traditional System of Corongo’s Water Judges* (Internet source 6) for inscription to the *Representative List*, consent was given, among other ways, by word of mouth at special





Figures 1 – 3: Photos documenting the Consent of Communities accompanying the *Traditional System of Corongo’s Water Judges* nomination. From the UNESCO webpage, © Ministry of Culture of Peru (Ministerio de Cultura de Perú), 2014.

gatherings of the tradition bearers. The occasions were photographed and the images were added to the file containing the other statements of consent (Internet source 7, see R 4; Internet source 6, see Consent of Communities).

The specific forms of community consent in the nomination *Colombian-Venezuelan Llano Work Songs*, (Internet source 8) for inscription to the *Urgent List*, are also of interest as they contained statements written in the conventional bureaucratic style, but also creative written testimonies, fingerprints and palm imprints. In Colombia in particular, the “process of collecting consents was registered photographically in its entirety in order to validate the information” (Internet source 9, see U 4; Internet source 8, see Consent of Communities – Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Consent of Communities – Colombia). Thus in the nominations by Peru and by Columbia and Venezuela photographic images of people giving their consent to nominations were used to mediate between worlds where such personal engagements are confirmed in different ways³.

Photographing and implementation of participatory approaches of safeguarding

Still cameras are now quite cheap, making possible the exploration of a number of participation approaches in visual studies – mainly ones connected to health care and education. Yet, as Gunilla Holm rightfully argues, participatory approaches are not simply connected with putting cameras in the hands of the subjects of study. The experiments have to be carefully organized by the researcher. He or she is also responsible for the serious taking into consideration of complex ethical requirements; in particular, anonymity is not achieved easily if the image includes a person’s face (Holm 2008). A number of initiatives and cases with the involvement of participatory approaches in the sphere of safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage have been described in the recent years – either related to video and cinema, blogging and creation of special hypertexts functioning as Internet sites, or even ones presupposing complicated digital multimedia and multisensory projects. These technologies have been mainly helpful for the visualisation of intangible cultural heritage, but they have also been used in non-formal education, for the enhancement of the transmission of the intangible cultural heritage to the next generation, in community run initiatives, etc. In addition, Christopher Robbins mentions that “digitization can help to close the generation gap caused by the digital divide between generations in Indigenous societies” (Robbins 2010: 118).

3 Here I present some good practices used recently to certify community consent. At the same time, although much needed, comprehensive evaluation of the mandatory photographs, as well as of the numerous non-mandatory ones, accompanying the nomination files for inscription to the UNESCO lists goes far beyond the scope of the article.



Figure 4: Young weaver from Chiprovtsi teaches her daughter to weave, Chiprovtsi, February 2013 (photo Mila Santova).

My own experience clearly shows that even the simple use of a digital photographic image as a stimulus for the enhancement of the interviewing can be quite helpful. In early 2013, together with Prof. Mila Santova and Dr. Iva Stanoeva, I visited the small town of Chiprovtsi with the purpose of preparing the nomination of Chiprovtsi carpet weaving for inscription to the *Representative List* (Internet source 10). We made an attempt to find recent photographic images (preferably in a digital format) which could document and illustrate the process of transmission of the weaving skills from mother to daughter. None was found, so we took one ourselves.

This photograph was further discussed with the representatives of the local community, which helped us to learn that the transmission of the skills from mother to daughter, which was the primary way of transmission for the previous generation, is nowadays comparatively rare. Instead, non-formal ways of transmission, as well as a transmission from grandmother to granddaughter, are now quite common. We further discussed the image with the family which hosted us for the duration of our stay in Chiprovtsi and discovered that they possess another very interesting photographic image.



Figure 5: Weavers in front of a loom, Chiprovtsi, December 2012 (photo Zornitsa Kunchova).



Figure 6: Carpets at the celebration of the Holiday of Chiprovtsi near the ruins of Gushovski monastery, Chiprovtsi, September 2010 (Historical Museum of the town of Chiprovtsi).

It was taken the previous year, documenting for family reasons the weaving of a big carpet by four women sitting side by side at the loom – a valuable opportunity, as clients nowadays rarely order such big carpets.

This family photo is even more valuable because in such cases the established weavers use the opportunity to exchange experience and to learn from each other⁴. Last, but not least, there was no way to print the image on the spot, so while showing the image on the monitor of our still camera, we somehow evoked the memory about an almost forgotten CD. It contained beautiful photographic images documenting a whole installation made to promote the carpets as the pride and the symbol of Chiprovtsi during the celebration of the town holiday several years ago.

Circulation of photographic images in the social media, promotion of intangible cultural heritage and processes of identity formation

The ubiquity of photographic images and the technologies for their production and circulation have made them central in the contemporary global culture (Summers 2012: 447). In addition, still images are deeply interwoven in our everyday practices, including those of identity formation (Van Dijck 2008: 58, 60). Most personal photos are now digitally produced images, which are typically stored in big quantities and then shared within our social networks, including those using social media (Summers 2012: 451). At the same time, the social media enhance substantially the exchange of digital images. In the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, social media offer excellent opportunities for a wide popularisation of particular elements on a day-to-day basis, allow for the incorporation of the images connected to them into the active communication between practitioners or within the community concerned, and satisfy specific needs of identity formation. Especially in Bulgaria, photos resulting from the documentation of intangible cultural heritage or ones documenting different initiatives for its promotion are often shared in the social media while the sharing of similar written statements or video clips is less popular.

My own observation in the last three years on the processes of publishing, sharing and liking photographic images connected to Chiprovtsi carpet weaving indicates that the local community increasingly uses Facebook in order to popularise its valuable art of weaving, but also for the purposes of personal and collective identity formation. The representatives of the community often upload and share such images on their personal profiles (Internet sources 11, 12); as well as on the profiles of the most important local administrative, cultural and educational institutions (Internet sources 13, 14); on the profiles of the small, family run local carpet companies (Internet

4 For a comprehensive description of the various practices of transmission of weaving skills in Chiprovtsi, see Ivanova (2017: 68-70).

sources 15, 16, 17); or share them within some of the local discussion groups (Internet sources 18 and 19). As a rule, each image is further liked and/or shared by dozens – both within the local community, and within a much wider audience in Bulgaria and abroad. Certain images have hundreds and in exceptional cases even thousands of likes and sharings. This circulation, which started in the end of 2014 and in the beginning of 2015 to celebrate the inscription of the element to the *Representative List*, has already become habitual. It includes images of weaving, carpet patterns, looms and other instruments, photos documenting different cases of promotion of the craft or showcasing of weaving skills, as well as photos documenting the processes of transmission of the skills to the next generation.

Together with their captions and comments, the photos demonstrate real concern for the safeguarding of the element, and deep respect for the master weavers, as well as for the craft as the pride and the symbol of the city. Sometimes the images are also related to different safeguarding initiatives aimed at coping with challenges or difficulties. As far as the personal accounts and the accounts of the small enterprises are concerned, the photos related to Chiprovtsi carpet weaving alternate and show many resemblances. They might be mixed with different types of family photos⁵, with photos connected to different social activities, as well as with advertisements circulated to reach the customers of the carpets or other people interested in their patterns, quality and mode of production.

All this goes to show that some of the images, which were initially produced by the local community for the purposes of documentation of the element as to serve its safeguarding, were further reused to signify personal identities and local belonging. At the same time, the opposite is also true – some of the photos taken for family, social and commercial reasons effectively visualise the element and its safeguarding as part of the everyday life of Chiprovtsi.

Conclusion

Easy to produce and comparatively cheap, digital photos are regularly used for the visualisation of intangible cultural heritage. The images might eventually end up simply as documentation, but often they are further reused in a more complex virtual milieu – for example on different safeguarding sites, multimedia projects, etc. At the same time, there are also a number of cases when photographing contributes to the processes of safeguarding in additional ways. More often than not, these initiatives are based on the participatory approach and presuppose different forms of invention or creative use. In this context, they are effective and affordable safeguarding tools which allow to involve the practitioners and the communities concerned in the processes of safeguarding of their own intangible cultural heritage.

5 For the nature of family photography see Rose 2016, Pauwels 2008 and Belaj 2008.

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CERAMIC PRODUCTION AS INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ITS VISUALISATIONS

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The contribution considers issues of the visualisation of intangible cultural heritage, focusing on ceramic production, potentially 'heritagised' as traditional knowledge and a skilled activity. It discusses the available audiovisual material concerning ceramics in the UNESCO lists of intangible heritage. Some observations on challenges that the visualisation of ceramic making process presents are followed by a brief discussion of possible reasons for the 'heritagisation' of the skills and knowledge of industrial workers engaged in ceramic production in a fine porcelain factory. Finally, the article explains the way of visualisation of the work and knowledge involved in the industrial production of porcelain in Ćmielów chosen by the author and carried out in cooperation with a ceramist.

Keywords: ceramics, visualisation, heritage, industrial work, embodied knowledge

Introduction

According to the rules of nominations to the UNESCO *Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Representative List)* and the *List of Intangible Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (Urgent List)*, the State Party preparing the nomination should provide visual and audiovisual material as a mandatory part of the appended documentation (Internet source 1). In this way, the visualisation of intangible cultural heritage is meant to be part and parcel of its safeguarding strategies. Ceramic production as a set of craft skills and traditional knowledge can qualify as intangible heritage on the basis of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2003). Its Article 2, point 2 states that the intangible heritage is manifested in six domains, among them "(d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; (e) traditional craftsmanship" (UNESCO 2003: 2).

In this article, after some thoughts on the way intangible heritage can be understood on the basis of the 2003 *Convention*, I would like to confront it with visualisations concerning ceramics available as elements in the UNESCO lists of intangible heritage. My reflection on visualising ceramic production designated as intangible heritage will be followed by some observations on challenges that the visualisation of ceramic making process presents, as well as a brief discussion of possible reasons for heritagisation of the skills and knowledge of industrial workers engaged in ceramic production in a fine porcelain factory in Poland. Finally, I will explain the approach I have taken to visualising the work involved in the industrial production of porcelain.

However, at this point I would like to clarify my own position. Combining my work as a professional anthropologist and ethnographer¹ with making pottery as an amateur at a friend's ceramic design studio, I am urged to create a vocabulary suitable for describing the processes of which I am a part. At the same time, my position as an anthropology teacher in a design school requires that I provide some reflective tools, which would be helpful to students in their task of designing in ceramics. Apart from that, the way I decided to combine ethnographic fieldwork in a factory with an intervention in the production process, designed by a ceramist and resulting in production of a unique visualisation of human work in industrial conditions, situates my entire research in yet another context, between art and anthropology. Thus, the position I take is the one of participatory engagement rather than participant observation.

1 My research in the Ćmielów Porcelain Factory, Poland, has been financed by the grant 0264/NPRH4/H2b/83/216 accorded by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education within the framework of the *National Program for Development in the Humanities for 2016–2018*.

Intangible heritage: Heritage as a process

"Cultural heritage does not exist, it is made", Regina Bendix states, declaring her constructionist approach, shared by the author of this article. "From the warp and weft of habitual practices and everyday experience – the changeable fabric of action and meaning the anthropologists call 'culture' – actors choose privileged excerpts and imbue them with status and value. Motivations and goals may differ, but the effort to ennoble remains the same" (Bendix 2009: 255). In her book *The Uses of Heritage* (2006), Laurajane Smith argues that the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* was supposed, at least to some extent, to challenge the shortcomings of the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (UNESCO 1972). According to Smith, the concept of heritage promoted by the 1972 *Convention*, is informed by values and cultural meanings that often speak to or represent European, Western narratives and experiences of nation and class. What she also observes is that the heritage discourse explicitly promotes the experience and values of elite social classes. In consequence, the *Convention* becomes a tool for authorising, safeguarding and broadcasting these meanings and values (Smith 2006).

The policies resulting from the 1972 *Convention* were reflected upon in the 1990s and led to a series of documents promoting a multicultural approach to heritage, in the early 2000s. The most important of them is the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (and *The Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, UNESCO 2005), which challenged the heritage hierarchies. Terms like 'masterpiece', or 'treasure' (cf. Hafstein 2009), as well as 'universal value' have been omitted from its texts, which underscores the crucial role of a 'living tradition', identified either as skills or traditional cultural expressions being practised and passed on. This points at the necessarily participatory character of intangible heritage and its cohesive function. The 2003 *Convention* uses the term 'safeguarding' instead of 'protection', which means departing from the notion of fixed and frozen heritage in favour of heritage understood as a process of continuous development and transmission of skills, practices and knowledge.

The 2003 *Convention* is based on a non-essentialist notion of culture and a dynamic concept of heritage. Shina-Nancy Erlewein nicely wraps it up in dichotomies, writing in her article on visual documentation of intangible cultural heritage that "intangible cultural heritage is traditional and contemporary, it adapts and changes in line with changing socio-cultural environments and is constantly in a state of becoming" (Erlewein 2015: 27). The multicultural character of heritage affirmed in the 2003 *Convention* is emancipatory: subaltern, peripheral systems of values gain the same importance as the dominant value system of elites and colonisers. The *Convention* itself is based on the anthropological concept of culture rooted in cultural relativism, which means that humanity constructed as a community

(the political goal of the United Nation Organisation and its agendas, UNESCO among them) gets enriched with the diversity of different value systems expressed in diverse forms of heritage.

However, the same 2003 *Convention*, copying one of the 1972 *Convention's* practices, introduced the rule of inventorying and established the lists, intended as tools for safeguarding and promoting the modes or types of heritage not included in the 1972 *Convention*. Hence, if the 1972 *Convention* tried to carry out the UNESCO agenda on the ground of the modern utopia of universal values, the 2003 *Convention* aims at a post-modern utopia of relativism, but without resigning from the modern tools. Listing itself, akin to other modern modes of collection and display, as museums and exhibitions, is based on the same mechanisms of selection, decontextualisation of a heritagised element and its recontextualisation within the context of a list. Valdimar Hafstein points to the affinity of heritage listing with “various modern spectacles on international scale [...], much like the world exhibitions, the World Cup and Miss World. It can be characterised as a sort of cultural Olympics” (Hafstein 2009: 97).

The modern tools of heritage safeguarding, developed within what Smith terms as “authorised heritage discourse” (Smith 2006: 4), consist of inventorying, documenting and conservation. The first two create textual and visual representations of heritage; the third means physical intervention carried out according to the doctrine of conservation and the state of the art. Both the rules of representation and the doctrine were formulated on the ground of a strong visual bias of knowledge construction in the modern West; also the musealisation of heritage originally meant repression of all the senses except from sight. For this reason, the documenting techniques of visual representation of heritage have developed as techniques of the observer. However, as the intangible heritage is not so much about objects, nor about observing, its participatory and processual character calls for a more participatory and process-focused approach (Erlewein 2015: 33–34).

Intangible cultural heritage, ceramics and visualisation

Visualisation of the participatory and largely embodied character of intangible heritage has proved a real challenge (cf. Erlewein 2014, who writes extensively on the topic). According to the requirements of the inventorying and listing process, the entries in both lists of intangible cultural heritage contain visual documentation in the form of ten still photographic pictures and a 5-10 minute edited video² provided by the State Party proposing the nomination

2 Due to its specifics, later defined as ‘nomination film’ in the collection of articles *Documenting and Presenting Intangible Cultural Heritage on Film* (ed. Valentinčič Furlan 2015).

(Internet source 2: 47–49³; Internet source 3: 52–53⁴). The UNESCO Committee has not yet provided comprehensive guidance on the content or approach to be used in the videos, but has addressed the question on several occasions. It pointed out that the video should not be targeting tourists, should present the complexity of the element instead of a couple of its most picturesque features, and “contextualize the element, rather than advertise it” (Internet source 2: 48; Internet source 3: 52). Furthermore, the Committee considered it is “important that viewers can appreciate the social function of the element”, and recommended that the filmmakers “employ to the greatest extent possible the approach of allowing the communities, groups and individuals concerned with an element to speak about it on their own behalf, rather than relying only on third-person narration” (Internet source 2: 48–49; Internet source 3: 53).

The *Representative List* has three entries related to manufacturing pottery and ceramics, plus there are two entries in the *Urgent List*. The three entries in the *Representative List*, namely the *Traditional Firing Technology of Longquan Celadon* (2009, Internet source 4), the *Craftsmanship of Horezu Ceramics* (2012, Internet source 5), and the *Traditional Craftsmanship of Çini-Making* (2016, Internet source 6), have films narrated in voice over. The interventions of speakers involved with the documented practices are used as illustration or confirmation of what the commentary has just explained. In all three cases, the film has background music that is totally unrelated to the image, while the soundscape of documented places and processes is absent. The music relates the element to the nation state behind the nomination and is intended to convey ‘the properly national atmosphere’. With the Longquan entry we get ‘typical’ Chinese music, sounding traditionally Chinese to the international audience; with Romanian Horezu ceramics we are served jolly tunes from the Pan flute; and with the Çini-making there is a mixture of ‘traditional Turkish’ and piano tunes.

The first sentences of the commentary establish the continuity between the most distant history, or even prehistory, and the contemporary tradition of ceramic production nominated for the list. At least half of the time, the films present various finished objects, both musealised and commercialised, produced with the use of techniques submitted to heritagisation and nominated for the list. The editing is generally dynamic – relatively short takes of differentiated content are mixed: they present decontextualised single objects; people engaged in the process of ceramic making or decorating; still lifes composed of artistically arranged objects; the workshop; the objects offered in a market or a shop, or made use of in the most staged way, such as

3 See *Aide-Mémoire for Completing Nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List for 2016 and Later Nominations*, points 108–112.

4 See *Aide-Mémoire for Completing the Representative List for 2016 and Later Nominations*, points 118–122.

a beautiful young lady drinking coffee from a Çini cup. When the process itself is presented, the focus is on the hands or the face of the maker, and rarely the whole body at work is shown. However, what is crucial in pottery making is the internal sense of the whole body, as the potter has to share the stability and the balance of their own body with the mass of clay they are shaping.

There are two elements on the *Urgent List: Earthenware Pottery-Making Skills in Botswana's Kgatleng District* (2012, Internet source 7), and *Bisalhães Black Pottery Manufacturing Process* (2016, Internet source 8). It comes as a surprise how different the films are from the three films on the *Representative List*. There is no music and no voice-over; instead, there are the sounds of the work environment and the speech of the practitioners explaining to the filmmaker what they are doing and why. The production process is shown in a continuous sequence of stages from the clay preparation to the finished product, with relatively long takes and limited editing. The entire bodies of the potters at work are shown, not only the hands, and the gestures used in the process of ceramic production are captured. Also, the material they are working with is shown in an evocative way, as experienced by the makers both during its preparation and in the making. It is as if the films in the two lists were based on completely different sets of rules. Obviously, the two pieces from the *Urgent List* are much closer to what can be read in the UNESCO instruction for the nominating parties.



Figure 1: Earthenware pottery-makers in Botswana's Kgatleng District. From the UNESCO webpage, © by S O Rampete / Bakgatla ba Kgafela, 2011.



Figure 2: Piling up the pottery in the kiln, in Bisalhães, Portugal.. From the UNESCO webpage, © by Paulo Araújo, 2015.

Visualising the process of making ceramics and through it the skills and knowledge of the craftspeople involved is not an easy task. There is an old Polish documentary on pottery making, *Garnki ze Studzianego Lasu*⁵, made by the National Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw in 1968. It conveys the slow pace of village pottery making. Once I showed it to ethnology students attending the course on folk art and craft. At the end of semester in the evaluation questionnaires, I got a remark that the class was indeed very interesting and enjoyable, except that I had shown an incredibly long film on pottery. The documentary in question is twenty minutes long; my classes were ninety minutes each. On the basis of this remark, we can say the film was successful in conveying the temporality of ceramics. When I teach the first grade design students on cultural construction of time and ask them if they can think about anything that cannot be speeded up, one of the first answers I get is “the pot will not dry more quickly”; and “its firing cannot be quickened”, they usually add.

5 The Pots from the Village of Studziany Las, black-and-white 16mm film. See Filmography.

In my opinion, it is one of the best classes they learn from a compulsory ceramic course they take at the beginning of their curriculum: there are things that take as long as they take and cannot be speeded up. The same can be said about preparing and kneading clay – a part of the process the design students do not learn during their first grade classes, because it would consume too much time of their six-week course. The temporality of ceramics makes one question some basic concepts used for constructing our experience of the material, and at the same time, it is one of the most difficult things to convey visually. Yet another aspect is that a freshly made pot dries as long as it needs in the particular conditions: the weather, the clay and even the number of people in the workshop, the time they spend there and the activities they pursue, all play a part. The 'readiness' for firing is checked mostly by touch, not by sight – the vessel has to be 'leather-hard'. Making ceramics involves mainly embodied and situated knowledge – and it is this knowledge and skills that, according to Article 2 point 1 of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage*, are to be protected by making them into heritage. However, pottery is about creating pots – the objects; they are the sense of the skill, but not the heritage per se. The challenge consists in visualising them as resulting from the skills and knowledge, in processualising them.

A ceramic factory and intangible cultural heritage

The question of visualising the skills of ceramic making became my personal challenge in a quite different setting from what any film on intangible cultural heritage will show. During fieldwork in the Ćmielów Porcelain Factory, Poland, I quickly realised that many tasks performed by the shop floor workers required complex skills. Observing the factory in motion at different times of the day and night, talking to the workers and interviewing some of them in a more structured way, combined with my own experience in making porcelain and pottery convinced me that there are skills and knowledge involved as sophisticated as those of an artisan. Why, then, can the potter's handicraft be thought of as intangible heritage while the manual work of a worker at a ceramic manufacturing plant cannot? In deindustrialising the West, industrial buildings, emptied of installations, have been heritagised or rehabilitated and reused for other purposes, often related to cultural production.

However, factory work has rarely been conceptualised as heritagisable. We are prone to romanticise (and in consequence upgrade) manual skills engaged in a workshop, but not in a factory, even within the same field of ceramics. In my opinion, the skills involved in industrial production of ceramics could be considered as heritagisable, and even more in the particular location of Ćmielów I researched. The character of these skills and knowledge, as well as the over two-hundred-year presence of the factory as the main employer for the local community plus its formal (industrial ceramic vocational school)

and informal educational activities (transfer of knowledge) make them an important part of workers' identity. Why should the intangible heritage be limited to non-industrial situations and societies? The 2003 *Convention* does not exclude factory labour from its scope, just as the 1972 *Convention* does not exclude industrial heritage. However, it took some time before industrial building heritage first entered the *World Heritage List*⁶, and apparently it also requires some time and reconsideration before the skills involved in manual industrial work can be considered heritagisable.

Heritagisation, or identification of heritage, being "an ingredient of late modern lifeworlds" (Bendix 2009: 254), is a cultural practice which turns "what is value-free and obvious into something of special value" (Bendix 2009: 265). The mainstream concept of factory work is based on the construction of agency and the hierarchy of knowledge grounded in the Cartesian separation of body and mind, as well as justified by the logic of capital, labour and ownership of the means of production. Whereas what my fieldwork made me realise was that the workers seem to be less alienated from their products and much more knowledgeable about them than is Hannah Arendt's *Animal laborans* (cf. Arendt 1998). In *The Human Condition*, Arendt neatly separates "animal life" from the "human world", which allows her to construct a hierarchy of human skills and knowledge. According to this hierarchy, the *Animal laborans*'s activity or labour is merely life-sustaining, while the individual, creative, world-building work of *Homo faber* is a touchstone of humanity. The characteristics of factory work I observed are in contrast with Arendt's neat hierarchy and the popular image of a human automaton labouring at a Fordist assembly line. They seem much closer to the image of Richard Sennett's skilled and knowledgeable craftsmen, engaged in a continual dialogue with materials, tools and machinery (cf. Sennett 2008).

This paper does not aim at declaring the factory work it describes intangible heritage (for further studies would be needed to do so), but rather at opening up a discussion on intangible heritage in the context of industrial production. Nor is it my ambition to propose a clear-cut solution to the problems which the visual documentation of ceramic production has to face. The set of concepts and tools I used in the particular case of the factory in Ćmielów has not been discussed in order to promote them as candidates to the UNESCO toolkit, but as a modest contribution to reflection on visualising the industrial production of ceramics.

Making particular segments of culture acquire cultural heritage status is highly political. "The identification of intangible cultural heritage is not only fundamental to its safeguarding but it also addresses a deeply political issue

6 Among the 1073 entries in the *World Heritage List*, there are only 7 sites of industrial heritage; the earliest is the 1986 British entry of *Ironbridge Gorge*, a symbol of the Industrial Revolution located in the place where it actually began (Internet source 9).

as to what and whose intangible cultural heritage is to be given value by the process” (Blake 2009: 50).

The Ćmielów Porcelain Factory is located in a Polish region with a long pottery tradition. Nowadays, it is one of the few fine porcelain factories still operating in Europe. Established in 1804 as a faience manufactory by a local landowner, it was organised according to a model that was widely adhered to by Polish aristocracy-owned enterprises. Production was based on local resources of clay and peasant serfs who provided the manpower, while the know-how was imported. In the case of Ćmielów, it came from Prussia and other German states. The factory was sold to the princely family of Drucki-Lubecki and started producing fine porcelain ware in 1838 (Kołodziejowa, Stadnicki 1986: 11–12). Family-owned until 1920, it was transformed into a stock company and went public in 1921, after Duke Aleksander Drucki-Lubecki sold the war-damaged installations to Polski Bank Przemysłowy in Lwów. In spite of economic problems, in the 1920s and 1930s the Ćmielów production became one of the best-recognised brands of Polish tableware (Jurczyk 2008: 37).

Having been nationalised in 1946, in the 1990s it went through the uneasy process of privatisation, which resulted in the splitting of the enterprise into a small manufacturing enterprise functioning as a private limited company in the middle of the town of Ćmielów and the factory proper operating on its outskirts. Nowadays the factory in Ćmielów, associated with yet another porcelain factory⁷, is owned by a stock company. For several generations, the factory has been one of the main employers for the population of Ćmielów and its surroundings. During the People’s Republic of Poland, the factory also offered vocational schooling (the vocational boarding school attracted young people from much farther away). The factory employs over 380 people on the production line of fine porcelain, with the kiln section working on a three-shift system, and the rest on a single or two-shift system. Nowadays, the population of Ćmielów amounts to around 3,000, while the entire Ćmielów community (*gmina*) is 7,500 (Internet source 10). With the collapse of industry in the area during the 1990s, the factory remains one of the most important employers in the regional job market.

The factory production process is mostly mechanised but not automatised, except for the plate pressing and glazing. The rest of the porcelain ware has to be either slip-casted by hand, or pressed in semi-automatic machines requiring constant human collaboration in the process. All the machinery has to be fed and unloaded by hand. In the case of plate production, people are needed to feed the glazing automatic machine with the wares that had been previously dusted, and to de-glaze the bases of the wares coming out

7 The factories in Chodzież and Ćmielów had been historically associated since 1924, when the company from Ćmielów bought the one in Chodzież, but they were nationalised as separate entities.

of the machine. At different stages of production process, the carts with the products are pushed by the employees who circulate between the body-forming section, biscuit firing and glazing. The production process is divided into stages, which are separated into tasks according to the classical rules of the division of labour. However, many of the tasks require dexterity and expertise that is difficult to achieve.

The process of fixing the porcelain form, either by slip-casting or pressing, translates to forcing matter to slow down its constant changing so that humans can perceive it as arrested into something stable and unchangeable. This requires dealing, step by step, with something liquid, flexible and dynamic. It also means waiting, and knowing how long to wait. Working with the fresh cast or freshly pressed-out body requires a particular mode of attention that allows for performing very well-calibrated body movements and positions. These sequences of situations involving bodies and substances add up to a particular kind of knowledge. The highly skilled factory workers are proud of their skills and aware of their value, but are reluctant to talk about it. However, a female worker, one of the most skilled casters, told me that she felt deeply upset when a person she had passed some of her skills and knowledge on decided to leave the factory.



Figure 3: Casting unit. Ćmielów Porcelain Factory, 2016 (photo Ewa Klekot).



Figure 4: Loading a carriage for biscuit firing. Ćmielów Porcelain Factory, 2016 (photo Ewa Klekot).



Figure 5: Decoration unit. Ćmielów Porcelain Factory, 2016 (photo Ewa Klekot).



Figure 6: Production line: working with cobalt-stained gloves on. Ćmielów Porcelain Factory, 2016 (photo Ewa Klekot).



Figure 7: Exhibition of the 'Human Trace' tableware. Ćmielów Porcelain Factory, 2017 (photo Ewa Klekot)



Figure 8: A worker from the slip-casting unit posing with her portrait during the exhibition in the factory. Ćmielów, 2017 (photo Ewa Klekot).



Figure 9: The transference on the bottom of a 'Human Trace' cup: 9 people have touched this piece during its production and 380 people altogether work in the production line (graphic design by Bartosz Grześkowiak, photo by Arkadiusz Szwed).

Visualising the worker's touch

"Intangibility of that which has been ennobled requires – logically – mechanisms of making it tangible, so as to fully profit from the new status" (Bendix 2009: 263). Raising awareness of the heritage potential of the factory work required making it not only visible, but tangible, to make it present rather than to illustrate it. The idea could take material shape only with my ceramist colleague and collaborator in this project, Arkadiusz Szwed. He designed a way of visualising the process of production of porcelain tableware in the product itself. The tableware set was manufactured in a factory production line by the workers wearing gloves with their fingertips dipped in cobalt salts. The traces of their touch remained almost invisible until firing, when they appeared on the porcelain body, as cobalt turned dark blue. In this way, the porcelain tableware kept the touch of workers' hands, revealing the role of the 'human factor' in industrial manufacturing. The cobalt trace became a documentation of the workers' skills rather than their representation. Manufacturing of what we dubbed the 'Human Trace' tableware and the exhibition organised in the factory were intended to elicit the workers' reactions to the researcher's interpretation of their work and workplace, potentially questioning the common sense appreciation of the different types of work, skills and knowledge. The exhibition was located in a production hall, with plaster moulds stacked all around, on the route of those coming to start their shift and those leaving after they have finished theirs.

The portraits⁸ elicited much more of the workers' attention than the porcelain set. Some of those portrayed gladly posed with their images for yet another picture showing that they had been a part of the exhibition (see Figure 8). The factory crew scrutinised the information about the manufacturing of the 'Human Trace' tableware, provided in the form of a diagram illustrated with small photographs, and discussed with us some of the details. They also liked the idea of the transference placed at the bottom of each piece, explaining how many workers had touched it during the manufacturing process (see Figure 9). The 'Human Trace' tableware was greeted with ambiguous reactions, though. Many factory workers, visitors to the exhibition, felt uneasy confronted with the aesthetics of celebrating "dirty stains" on what should stay immaculate and clean.

Then the set, accompanied by photographs of its manufacturing process and the portraits of some members of the factory crew, was presented outside of the factory in different design- and culture-related places to a different public. The text accompanying the 'Human Trace' tableware set and the portraits explained the idea of the project, and the diagrams provided details both on the manufacturing of our set, and the overall production process in the Ćmielów Porcelain Factory. Porcelain items tend to be treated either

8 At the request of the factory, we left the portraits in Ćmielów and nowadays they can be seen on display in the main staircase of the factory production buildings.

as collectibles or pieces of design, appreciated mostly for their aesthetic qualities, with relatively less attention paid to the manufacturing process and the social construction of their meaning.

Our project was to question this common perception of porcelain. Obviously, the response to the exhibitions in the design-related venues⁹ was different than in museums. In the former context the information that it was not for sale, nor that was it meant to be a prototype usually came as surprise, as the common reading was that the cobalt traces on the tableware were more to enhance its value as a product, rather than to be a part of the process that factory-made porcelain is. On the other hand, for the museum¹⁰ audiences the factory and its workers were of interest mostly as involved with the history of porcelain production in Poland. However, also the objective of the project to question the manufacturing process by revealing it in its products was greeted with interest by at least some visitors.

The knowledge required in ceramics is mostly bodily, not visual, and the intangible heritage is not so much about objects, nor about observing, but about the participation and the process. The manufacturing of the 'Human Trace' tableware set in the factory production line was participatory by definition, as the heritage bearers, namely the factory workers, participated; the processual character is revealed in the way the traces of cobalt salts mark the presence of human hands at different stages of the production process.

In my opinion, an exhibition is by no means a better way of documenting and visualising the ceramic production than a film, but it is more participatory and a more processual way of knowing: it requires the body of the visitor to move, change direction, feel the space and materiality of all the actors. Ideally, it would also require them to think with their bodies. I have seen visitors placing their fingers on the dark blue marks on the porcelain bodies, as if they were checking the position of the worker's hand, or repeating its movement for themselves to understand it better; to get to know it through their hands. The visitors are not allowed to touch the objects in the exhibition, but with this in mind, what they did was to put their hand very close to the dish, almost touching it, and covering the stains on the porcelain with their own fingers.

Recognising the roles of all types of knowledge and skills involved in porcelain manufacturing can contribute to a better understanding of all the actors in the process of its social construction and encourage more critical reflection while using the finished product, and finally pave the way to the acknowledgment of factory work as a valuable cultural asset, worthy of heritagisation.

9 The 'Human Trace' tableware was exhibited at Reykjavik Design Week 2017, Concordia Design in Poznań 2017, Łódź Design Festival 2017, Designblok International Design Festival in Prague 2017 and Plzeň Design Week 2017.

10 The project was exhibited at the Museum of Palace of King John III in Wilanów, Warsaw, in 2017; at the Ethnographic Museum in Kraków in 2018; and at the Slovene Ethnographic Museum in Ljubljana in 2018 (Internet source 11).

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Filmography

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Being always in the process of (re)defining its research theories and methods, cultural anthropology observes and responds to newly emerging social contexts and cultural practices, and so this volume is a significant contribution to the analysis of the most recent state of UNESCO policies and activities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. The volume offers new insights in the field of visual anthropology by discussing the specifics of anthropological thinking and new technological demands, and by (re)considering the inclusion and roles of various stakeholders in the production of nomination files and films for the UNESCO intangible heritage lists. The authors raise numerous questions and provide guidance for future research.

Dr Mirela Hrovatin

