



## DOCUMENTING AND PRESENTING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE ON FILM



koordinator varstva  
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## DOCUMENTING AND PRESENTING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE ON FILM

**DOKUMENTIRANJE IN PREDSTAVLJANJE  
NESNOVNE KULTURNE DEDIŠČINE S FILMOM**

Edited by Nadja Valentinčič Furlan  
Ljubljana, 2015





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## Documenting and Presenting Intangible Cultural Heritage on Film

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## UNCOVERING THE ROLE AND IMAGE OF FILM

The monograph *Documenting and Presenting Intangible Cultural Heritage on Film* published in late 2015 by the Slovene Ethnographic Museum raises various topical issues in the field of ethnology, (visual) anthropology, heritage and museology. Attention is focused on ways of documenting and presenting intangible heritage; on editing film collections in museums; on research methods and the use of new technologies and internet tools; on the safeguarding of audiovisual material and its accessibility; and on the value and wider communication of the immaterial within museum presentations. This opens up many ethical questions and the issue of copyright. The articles in the monograph discuss these themes in depth, analysing them and formulating useful guidelines for future work. These guidelines can serve as assistance to researchers, as well as offering help to bearers of the intangible cultural heritage, since a nomination for inscription on one of the UNESCO lists or its register of the intangible cultural heritage must also include a film presentation.

Moreover, the new findings make an important contribution to the definition and understanding of the modern museum and its role in contemporary society. Questions relating to the immaterial "aura" of a material museum object and a clearer definition of an "immaterial object" widen the traditional concepts of museum materials. They move away from materially oriented museum work to a socially oriented museum mission and a wider conceptualisation of museum exhibitions. In connection with this, an important fact for museums is that on the basis of the information revolution human experience is changing, with modern society's heritage becoming completely immaterial and intangible, and with "electronic artefacts" becoming a part of collections. This is why in museums new technologies are no longer only a model and an approach, but are becoming the content itself.

Another telling fact is that the more recent orientations in visual anthropology have been marked by the participative cinema, which can be compared to the increasingly noticeable stress on the participative or inclusive museum, which



emphasises that memories are documented with the help of local people. The invitation to the general public to participate in museum work and inclusive museum activities during different phases of work supplement the educational role of museums that was emphasised in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The monograph *Documenting and Presenting Intangible Cultural Heritage on Film* has an additional significance for the Slovene Ethnographic Museum. Since 2011, it has been carrying out the activities of the Coordinator for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, being heavily involved in this field. The findings and examples of good practice presented in the monograph thus provide excellent support for the work of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum in this area, as well as for all other similar institutions active in safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage around the world.

**Tanja Roženberger**

Director of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum





## FOREWORD

The UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, together with the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* and the UNESCO programme for the protection of documentary heritage *Memory of the World* form a triangle within the scope of which human heritage is identified and safeguarded at the global level. It is probably no coincidence that intangible heritage was the last to receive international status at the global level and protection within the framework of a convention, since it involves customs, practices and traditions – phenomena that live and develop, as well as change and, sadly, from time to time also die; just like the world around us and we in it.

This live happening is difficult to capture within the framework of a convention and rules for its implementation, so it is particularly important how individual countries tackle the difficulties connected with the identification, safeguarding, dissemination and promotion of the intangible cultural heritage. All a convention can do is to establish certain general standards, rules and tools, while individual countries have to develop their own mechanisms for the identification and safeguarding of particularly important elements at both national and international level. Of course, we must be constantly aware that the intangible cultural heritage and heritage in general is safeguarded for us, rather than for inscription to this or that list.

Documenting the intangible cultural heritage is an important part of the process of its identification and safeguarding which is, due to the nature of this heritage, a particularly demanding task. That is why I am exceptionally pleased by this publication, since it opens up various professional and ethical questions, offering a series of possible answers and drawing attention to examples of good practice. I am certain that it will contribute to a better understanding of the problems and challenges we face in the audiovisual documentation of intangible heritage.

**Marjutka Hafner,**

Secretary General of the Slovenian National Commission for UNESCO





## **EDITORIAL: INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND FILM**

**Nadja Valentinčič Furlan**

In September 2014 the Slovene Ethnographic Museum in Ljubljana organised an international conference *Documenting and Presenting Intangible Cultural Heritage on Film* with two goals: to consider possible theoretical and methodological approaches to the audiovisual documentation and presentation of intangible cultural heritage; and to discuss current practices, issues and possible solutions to the visualisation of intangible cultural heritage within the UNESCO framework of safeguarding that heritage. In this context, visual anthropology was the discipline with the most extensive practice on documenting of culture and its representations. Ethnologists and visual anthropologists who are concerned with visual research into culture were invited, as well as experts and practitioners from the states parties involved in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and making films about it. Thus nine ethnologists, anthropologists and filmmakers discussed both theory and practice.

This monograph offers seven papers by nine authors. They range from theoretical-analytical-methodological (Erlewein, Engelbrecht), to descriptive (Tari), to those that discuss the visualisation of intangible cultural heritage within the UNESCO framework at an empirical and theoretical level (Hamar and Voľanská, Hrovatin and Hrovatin, Nikolić Đerić, Valentinčič Furlan). As the authors report on the visualisation of intangible cultural heritage in their own countries, certain introductory material is repeated, but the contributions were left intact so as not to jeopardise the flow of the authors' ideas, their selection of data and their method of interpretation.

Instead of a neutral editorial preview of the contributions we introduce the UNESCO policy of safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, including its visualisation, and the role of visual anthropology, first in theory and then in practice. The authors' most important findings are highlighted and synthesized in a comprehensive review of the subject matter.

## Cultural heritage and UNESCO

The widespread term "cultural heritage" was introduced after World War Two by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The need for the safeguarding of cultural heritage arose from the fear of it being destroyed by wars, natural disasters or other negative influences. UNESCO's *Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* from 1972 (Internet source 1) was aimed at the protection of the material heritage, such as cultural monuments, historical buildings and natural sites. By December 2015, 1031 heritage elements had been included in the *World Heritage List* (Internet source 2), of which there were four times more examples of cultural heritage than of natural heritage, and an additional 1631 elements on the *Tentative List*.

In 1992, UNESCO created the *Memory of the World Programme* (Internet source 3) in order to ensure that documentary heritage is not forgotten, to preserve it and to make it as widely accessible as possible. The programme includes 324 elements of all types of documentary heritage: manuscripts, documents, maps, letters and books, audio, photographic and film<sup>1</sup> records and extensive collections of diverse documents. UNESCO supports universal accessibility through the digitisation of the material and the publication of information on the internet, in books and on DVDs. The *Memory of the World* thus protects the content (the intangible part) of documentary heritage, while the institutions safeguard the original documentation, archive and library material on the original carriers (its material part).

Globalisation, industrialisation, social change and economic processes, such as the exploitation of the natural and cultural environments of indigenous peoples, led to heritage destruction, decline, loss or abuse, which is why there appeared aspirations to also protect intangible cultural heritage. It is well known how quickly the languages of indigenous peoples around the world are dying. A typical example of the abuse of heritage is the appropriation of the knowledge of the aboriginal peoples about medicinal plants by large pharmaceutical companies, which have patented the natural active substances as their intellectual property and marketed them at great profit. Therefore, the UNESCO initiative also included engaged evaluation, preservation and protection of the cultures of the whole world. (Čeplak Mencin 2004: 246-247).

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1 The film documents include the films by the Lumière brothers, *Metropolis* by Fritz Lang and *The Wizard of Oz* by Victor Fleming, a collection of ethnographic films by John Marshall and Ju/'hoan (Smithsonian) and The Language Archive at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics with audiovisual documentation of 200 world languages.



## Intangible cultural heritage

The expression “intangible cultural heritage”<sup>2</sup> was widely implemented in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century with the programme *The Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity*, 2001 (Internet source 5). The UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* from 2003 (Internet source 6) defines it as “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage” (ibid., Article 2/1), specially emphasising transmission from generation to generation, re-creation as a response to the social environment, the natural world and history, and a sense of identity and connectedness with previous generations (ibid). Safeguarding is defined as “measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage”(ibid., Article 2/3). The states parties to the Convention (163 so far) are bound to take the necessary measures to ensure the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage in their territory in cooperation with the bearers (ibid., Article 11).

In practice, many activities at the national level are directed at entering intangible cultural heritage elements into national registers, which ensures their fundamental safeguarding. Many bearers of the heritage are quite satisfied with that, while others, often together with local or regional museums, local authorities or national politicians, want to make their heritage internationally known by entering it on the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Representative List)*, the *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (Urgent List)*, or in the *Register of Best Safeguarding Practices*. Between 2008 and 2015, 391 elements were inscribed to all three (Internet source 7), most on the *Representative List*.

Researchers and critics have noted that intangible cultural heritage is connected with “a system of values, a set of practices, a formation of knowledge, a structure of feeling and a moral code” (Hafstein 2012: 504), while at the same time involving the active and diverse management of heritage through the convention and legislation, lists and registers, protocols and safeguarding measures, which is highly institutionalised and directed from above (Slavec Gradišnik 2014: 12, 16). Juraj Hamar and Ľubica Volanská (according to Bitušiková) draw attention to the paradox that UNESCO, as a

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2 One of early uses of “oral and intangible heritage” can be found in UNESCO’s document *Decisions Adopted by the Executive Board at its 155 Session* from 1998 (Internet source 4).

guardian of cultural heritage against globalisation, supports a global vision of the cultural heritage (Hamar and Voľanská in this book, 64). In recent years some researchers have described the UNESCO heritage safeguarding system with the expression “the world heritage arena” (*The World Heritage Arena*, Brumann 2012: 6; *Global Heritage Arena*, Alvizitaou 2012: 78) or as “vertical integration of vernacular culture” (Hafstein 2012: 508, 510).

UNESCO recognises that the “the communities, groups and sometimes individuals” who are the bearers, guardians, implementers and transmitters of intangible cultural heritage play the most important role in the identification, management and preservation of their heritage (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004: 53, Blake 2009: 50; Erlewein in this book, 29). Shina-Nancy Erlewein speaks in favour of greater participation of the bearing communities and groups in decision-making processes about heritage and in its (audiovisual) representing inwards and outwards. She emphasises that the *Convention* focuses on the processes of the evolving, developing, (re)creation, preservation and transmission of the intangible cultural heritage rather than on its manifestations, which is why heritage is the subject of constant negotiation (Erlewein, 28, 34).

Her observation is confirmed in practice: when entering elements in the national registers and the UNESCO lists and register, the bearers and researchers achieve new insights and evaluations of the intangible heritage; sometimes much negotiation is needed among the bearers themselves, as well as with the researchers (and sometimes even with local politicians, institutions or individuals who feel called upon to decide about heritage), as to what are the most important and characteristic aspects of the heritage, who are its bearers and what should the safeguarding measures be.

With regard to the nominations for the lists of the intangible cultural heritage and the register, UNESCO, in addition to the written part of the nomination, also demands a visualisation of the heritage elements through photographs and videos<sup>3</sup>. From the very beginning, UNESCO has recognised the importance of the film presentations of the nominated elements of intangible cultural heritage; the *World Heritage List* and *The Memory of the World Programme*, on the other hand, envisaged only written and photographic presentation. “The audiovisual representation and documentation of cultural practices and expressions is part and parcel of safeguarding strategies for intangible cultural heritage” (Erlewein, 26).

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3 UNESCO introduced this practice in *The Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity* programme, where 90 elements were included between 2001 and 2005. In 2008, they were simply transferred to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* (Internet sources 5 and 7).

## Film documentation and (re)presentation of culture and heritage

At the practical level, film (re)presentation<sup>4</sup> of intangible cultural heritage within the framework of UNESCO safeguarding is growing, but there has been little reflection on the theoretical and methodological level. In the early years, the UNESCO recommendations and requirements defined the content, length and technical characteristics of the films and demanded the cession of rights, but said nothing about the production methods, film styles or target audience. Films were created under very diverse production conditions, with different researchers' and filmmakers' inputs, and with a varying degree of participation by the heritage bearers. Initially, these films very often belonged to the genres of news reports or tourist and promotional films.

At the conference *Documenting and Presenting Intangible Cultural Heritage on Film* and in this book, the audiovisual presentation of the intangible cultural heritage is dealt with on the empirical basis and from the viewpoint of visual anthropology, which has reflected most on the representations of culture<sup>5</sup>. Usually, this academic discipline is considered to have begun with the systematic and targeted field work by Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson in the 1940s, but the first ethnographic recording appeared in 1895, when the French anthropologist Félix Regnault filmed the work of a female Wolof potter at the colonial ethnographic exhibition on Western Africa in Paris (De Brigard 1975: 15, MacDougall 1978: 406, Hamar and Voľanská, 66, Nikolić Đerić in this book, 86).

The development of methodological approaches in visual anthropology and the manners of constructing knowledge are dealt with by Shina-Nancy Erlewein (30-33). In the colonial beginnings of visual anthropology, the general belief was that film was an objective document of reality and the so-called salvage anthropology<sup>6</sup> was practised. In the 1960s, *observational*

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4 Some authors in this volume use simple expressions such as film and video, and other apply more complex ones: "Audiovisual representation encompasses media, technologies and practices through which meanings are produced and circulated among social groups" (Erlewein, 26). "The real existence of the ICH element lies in its presentation, related to reality, whereas the video about this element is its representation, partly connected to the imagination" (Hamar and Voľanská, 67).

5 Ethnology and anthropology often define culture as the field of their research. Culture and heritage overlap to a certain extent, but cannot be equated (more in Slavec Gradišnik 2014: 12-14). In the past, there was a division into the material, social and spiritual culture, but due to the interconnectedness of these, efforts later appeared to go beyond this division. Similarly, critical heritological studies and Erlewein (27) stress the pointlessness of the division of heritage into natural and cultural, and within the latter, into material and intangible.

6 UNESCO heritage safeguarding is quite similar to salvage anthropology, which involved anthropologists' efforts to rescue peoples and their cultures before they disappear, or at least study and document them in detail (Slavec Gradišnik 2014: 11).

*cinema* and *cinema vérité*<sup>7</sup> became established, which drew the subjects into a dialogue; since last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, *participatory cinema* is on the increase, which also invites the subjects into the production process, reveals the researcher's presence and considers the viewers. Anthropological knowledge is created through dialogue, exchange and a mutual connectedness with the subjects, which is why Erlewein promotes this approach as the most suitable for the filming of the intangible cultural heritage. Quite soon, there emerged *indigenous media*, in which the subjects take full control over the production and use of audiovisual representations (Erlewein, 33). In visual anthropology a great diversity of approaches and hybrid audiovisual forms can be found. In new millennium, a new discipline – sensory anthropology has developed, which studies paths to knowledge through sensory input (Nikolić Đerić, 87-88).

During the initial period, film technology was expensive, the equipment heavy and filming required good lighting. Filmmakers were able to view the recorded material only after developing it and editing was complex, therefore the ethnographic films were accessible to a few researchers and very rarely to the general public. Silent film<sup>8</sup> did not allow subjects to be included, so the shift in ethnographic film (*observational cinema* and *cinema vérité*) could only happen with the invention of a camera that recorded synchronous sound. The equipment became lighter and there was less need for a tripod, which meant that one person could manage the equipment. *Participatory cinema* emerged at approximately the same time as analogue video technology, which was considerably cheaper and easier to work with and so film was used by more and more institutions and individuals. Digital technology, which became widespread at the turn of the millennium, is even more accessible and capable; it brought about a revolution in the visual perception of the world, a flood of recordings, very simple opportunities for internet publication and the democratisation of the medium (Erlewein, 33).

## The role of film in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage

Beate Engelbrecht discusses the role of audiovisual documentation in the safeguarding, protection and preservation of intangible cultural heritage

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7 Its pioneer Jean Rouch was initiator and Executive Secretary of International Committee on Ethnographic Film (1952). With the support of UNESCO, anthropologists of that time could present their films in Paris, Brussels, Prague, Venice, Florence and Locarno (De Heusch 2007: 365). In 1955, Rouch compiled a catalogue of 105 ethnographic films for UNESCO's series *Mass Communication* (De Brigard 1975: 28). These were first UNESCO's recognitions of ethnographic film and its authors.

8 Initially, the explanations to pictures were inserted with captions, and in the second phase via third-person commentary; which was later avoided due to its authoritarian omniscient voice.

confronting UNESCO positions and observations gained through visual research of rituals in Tana Toraja in Indonesia. She classifies the value of visual recordings for the safeguarding of heritage with regard to the status of the filmmaker (local filmmakers, the documentary filmmakers, makers of tourist video guides, visual researchers, tourists), the purpose of the filming and the quality and accessibility of recordings. She concludes that systematic and representative audiovisual documentation is made by the local filmmakers, visual researchers and documentary makers. The accessibility criterion assigns the greatest value with regard to the safeguarding of traditional cultural practices to recordings by visual researchers and archive materials kept by film archives and public institutions (Engelbrecht in this book, 40-44). In addition to systematic institutional care, Engelbrecht (48) singles out the informed and responsible approach of the *Working Group of Indigenous Population*<sup>9</sup> to heritage, its documentation, and to the management of heritage and video recordings.

Engelbrecht reflects on the differences between safeguarding, protection and preservation of heritage and the role of film by quoting the UNESCO definitions and the definition of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), which protects through copyright. "Protecting intangible cultural heritage refers mainly to intellectual and cultural property; in this context protecting traditional practices would mean keeping knowledge for oneself and limiting access for others" (Engelbrecht, 49). In a specific situation, Engelbrecht was invited to record the reconstruction of a traditional house ritual with participation of speakers, priests, musicians and dancers. The performers have rights over their performance, and not over the cultural practice, because the Torajan people have no concept of the ownership of traditional cultural expressions<sup>10</sup>. Preservation of intangible heritage is possible when people perform traditional cultural practices regularly and remember them. Film recordings support the memory of the performers, while the knowledge of local memory keepers is a necessary supplement to the recordings. Engelbrecht (49) draws attention to the necessity of continuation in the documentation of vital cultural practices and to the safe storage of the recordings.

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9 It was established in 1982 as a subsidiary organ of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights within the United Nations. They produced principles and guidelines regarding the heritage of indigenous peoples (Yokota and the Saami Council 2005).

10 In her PhD dissertation, Shina-Nancy Erlewein explains the relationship between copyright law and traditional law: "Copyright law was conceptualised based on the Western premise of an individual. However, these rights might not be entirely fruitful and adequate in the context of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding, as customary law defines a collective or communal ownership of cultural traditions and expressions in many communities" (Erlewein 2014: 236).



Similarly to Engelbrecht, János Tari also focuses on the importance of performing the intangible cultural heritage on a regular basis and its documentation that is appropriately stored and accessible. In Hungary they have developed good strategies of keeping their folk culture alive through systematic documenting, researching, preserving, spreading and transmitting it, especially folk music and dance to the younger generation. They have nominated the *Dance House Method* and the *Kodaly Method* of musical education to the *Register of Safeguarding Practice* (Tari in this book, 53-56).

The digitisation of a film collection from the Hungarian Ethnographic Museum allowed museum visitors access to the recordings, and the wider public access to the data on the films through a website that enables two-way communication with the public. Tari (57-61) calls this a “connected museum”. The management of audiovisual collections presents a great challenge in the 21<sup>st</sup> century due to their extensiveness, the multitude of old recording formats, their carriers and playback devices, and especially due to the constant introduction of new, more capable formats of digital recording and the technologies supporting it. This complex field is dealt with by *The International Committee for Audiovisual and New Technologies of Image and Sound* at the *International Council of Museums* (AVICOM) within *International Council of Museums* (ICOM) (Tari, 60).

### **Visualisation of intangible cultural heritage within the UNESCO framework**

The last four articles (Juraj Hamar and Lubica Voľanská, Mirela and Darije Hrovatin, Tamara Nikolić Đerić, and Nadja Valentinčič Furlan) are based on practical experience in the UNESCO safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage in three countries. Authors enter film production in the phase of designing film concept and field research (preproduction), which can continue with filming (production) or proceeds directly to the editing phase (postproduction). Mirela and Darije Hrovatin report that most videos in Croatia were created from existing material produced by national and local television stations; one of exceptions is the film about the Batana ecomuseum, which makes use of archived and purpose-made recordings (Nikolić Đerić, 91-93). In Slovakia existing films and footage are used for the national register, while for the two productions for UNESCO list also new recordings were planned (Hamar and Voľanská, 68-69). Valentinčič Furlan has produced films for the national register on the basis of visual ethnography (Valentinčič Furlan in this book, 99-101). and she also promotes the production of local filmmakers and producers; while for productions for UNESCO she offers professional support (104).

The articles show that some countries (at least potentially) create film presentations of the elements for national registers (Slovakia, Slovenia),

while other countries produce videos only for the international level. Expert groups in some countries maintain that a different type of film is appropriate for national registers than for the international level, where more contextualisation is needed or "an authentic, considered and systematically structured film", "a new film genre" (Hamar and Voľanská, 69). The films for the UNESCO lists are "constructions", appropriate for the "UNESCO narrative scheme" (Hrovatin and Hrovatin in this book, 81, 78). Hrovatin and Hrovatin refer to them as "nomination films", as they 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" (81).

Hamar and Voľanská (64) and Hrovatin and Hrovatin (76, 80) have defined three target audiences: the first is made up of the members of the UNESCO Evaluation Body and Intergovernmental Committee, who assess and evaluate the nominations, the second is the broad auditorium of the General Assembly of the *Convention*, and the third is the general public that can view the films on the UNESCO portal. It is quite likely that many of the viewers come into contact with a heritage element for the first time.

Three empirical articles (Hamar and Voľanská, Hrovatin and Hrovatin, Valentinčič Furlan) state that during the creation of films the filmmakers take into account the basic UNESCO instruction that the "video should represent different aspects of the element in its current state, focussing in particular on its role within its community, its transmission processes and any challenges it faces." (Internet source 8, Point 16). Nikolić Đerić answers the question, how ethnologists can convey knowledge, skills, and the feeling of identifying with what matters, that this can be done using participatory method and the strategies of sensory ethnography (91-92). Valentinčič Furlan sets a complex question, "how can we document and then present ICH phenomena (practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills), their bearers (communities, groups, individuals), the natural and cultural environment (space, tools, objects, products), and creativity, continuity and identity – all that intangible cultural heritage encompasses" (99), to conclude that often "it is more productive to plan a longer ethnographic film for a comprehensive, in-depth presentation of an intangible cultural heritage element" (101).

Hamar and Voľanská (65) observe that some intangible cultural heritage elements are more 'filmic' than others (customs, crafts, folk theatre versus oral tradition). Valentinčič Furlan (99) confirms this with an example from practice: customs, crafts and traditional working procedures are the most frequent elements in the Slovene register and very frequent contents of Slovene ethnographic films. She also deals with the issue of *casting*, i.e. the selection of the heritage bearer(s) who will appear convincingly in the film (99-101).

Hrovatin and Hrovatin (81) conclude that the final appearance of the Croatian films was influenced by the requirements of UNESCO and the particular list/

register, the type of heritage and the special features of the shown element, the quality of the available material and time limitations, and the attitudes of experts, heritage bearers and filmmakers to the intangible cultural heritage and film presentation; they also point out that the filmmakers did have some freedom of choice, how to tell a story of the element and what aspects to highlight. They emphasise that UNESCO expects experts to take part in writing texts of the nomination file, inferring it from the instructions on how to write an analysis of the reference works (76); it would make sense to include visual anthropologists in film production.

On the basis of an analysis of the recent UNESCO guidelines (Internet source 8, Points 16-23, Internet source 9, Points 118-122), Nadja Valentinčič Furlan observes the qualitative shifts, such as 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. The recent UNESCO recommendations thus contain some fundamental guidelines from visual anthropology, calling for participation of heritage bearers (Valentinčič Furlan, 102-103). Shina-Nancy Erlewein argues for the methodology of a participatory cinema that encourages respect, dialogue and the dissolution of the rigid concepts of Self and Other. She emphasises that the representation of heritage as a process of creating meaning should be democratised, because these representations later influence the lives of heritage bearers (Erlewein, 34). Tamara Nikolić Đerić (91) reports that the local community contributed to the concept of the film about their fishing heritage.

Valentinčič Furlan draws attention to topics that would be worthy of further research and raises the issue of copyright and the role of the producer in video production (103). Copyright law protects the integrity of the film work and moral rights of the filmmakers, but they sign the cession of (material) rights, so that UNESCO can freely use the videos. The texts of nominations within the UNESCO framework of the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage are not copyright protected (the authors are not named and it is possible to intervene in the texts), so that all those involved can adapt them for the requirements of UNESCO.

## Conclusion

The authors of the articles agree that film is an adequate and quality medium for documentation and presentation of intangible cultural heritage. They treat film as a research method for collecting data and creating knowledge, identity, continuity and memory (Erlewein); as a means of heritage safeguarding, protection, preservation and revival, raising awareness of its importance and preservation of knowledge (Engelbrecht); and one of the ways of transmitting heritage to others (all authors), especially to the younger generations – in Istria, the digital media have become a playful and creative means of bringing the heritage closer (Nikolić Đerić, 91-92). In the case of Torajan house ceremony the filming by a foreign visual researcher elevated the status of the family who organised it – her presence was important to them, but they were not interested in her recordings (personal communication with Beate Engelbrecht). She was able to gain an insight into the complex relationship of the roles in the ritual and the rights over it in the Torajan culture, as well as an overview of who was recording the ritual and for what purposes (Engelbrecht, 41-44).

On the one hand, ethnologists and anthropologists as outside critical observers try to understand how cultural policies on intangible cultural heritage affect phenomena and communities, while on the other hand they support communities in safeguarding their heritage by documenting, researching, presenting and promoting it (Nikolić Đerić, 88). By increasingly including people in the (audiovisual) production of knowledge, they are becoming part of these communities and groups. Only a few authors use impersonal passive or the neutral academic plural in the articles, while many take the first-person stance throughout the whole article or in its part (Engelbrecht, Hrovatin and Hrovatin, Nikolić Đerić, Valentinčič Furlan, Erlewein). The principle of participatory cinema that research work is an encounter between a researcher and the studied community and the film a result of this encounter that also reflects the researcher's standpoint (MacDougall 1975: 125) is thus extended also to the discourse on film.

Among their other roles, museums, institutes and other heritage institutions also serve as mediators between heritage and its bearers in the field and the global UNESCO system of heritage safeguarding, as "interpreters" from everyday folk language into political, professional and academic discourse, and vice versa (from a conversation with Jasna Fakin Bajec). This book is both an external, sufficiently distanced view of the "vertical" structure or "arena" of the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage within the UNESCO framework, and an internal, engaged view, since all the authors are, in one way or another, included in heritage processes. In this way, academic and professional findings can be brought closer to the people who live with the heritage or manage it.

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# INTANGIBLE MATTERS: METHODOLOGIES IN VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE DOCUMENTATION OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Shina-Nancy Erlewein

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The contribution focuses on intangible cultural heritage and its audiovisual representation. It argues for a shift in the discourse and practice of heritage representation and for greater involvement of the respective communities, groups and individuals in the processes related to the representation of intangible cultural heritage. The author approaches intangible cultural heritage from a constructivist paradigm, concentrating on the processes involved in the (re)creation and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage. In order to derive insights for intangible cultural heritage documentation by audiovisual means, methodological approaches to the audiovisual representation and documentation of culture as they have been developed and applied within visual anthropology are discussed, underlining the respective paradigms.

**Keywords:** visual anthropology, methodology, documentation, representation, intangible cultural heritage, UNESCO

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## Introduction

*The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (the 2003 Convention, Internet source 1), adopted in 2003, established procedures of inventory making and listing, similar to the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (Internet source 2) from 1972. Three lists were created in 2008: the *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding* (43 inscriptions); the *Representative**

*List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* (336 inscriptions); and the *Register of Best Safeguarding Practices* (12 programs, projects and activities; data from December 2015). All of the inscriptions are promoted by means of modern technology and media. Indeed, the audiovisual representation and documentation of cultural practices and expressions is part and parcel of safeguarding strategies for intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and exercised extensively on a local, national and global level.

Audiovisual representation encompasses media, technologies and practices through which meanings are produced and circulated among social groups. These meanings, which make sense of the world and position subjectivities within it, can be manufactured from outside a socio-cultural group, from within or in a collaborative manner. Moreover, a number of rivalling and contesting representations may exist at the same time and even help produce each other. Still, within the global modes of representation the ICH practising communities, groups and individuals, their views, aspirations and needs, remain marginalized in preproduction, production and postproduction processes. Participation in selection-making and decision-making as well as consumption processes is rarely facilitated for the respective community members, while at the same time "their" heritage is constructed as representative heritage and enters the realm of the commons, in some cases, fostering even appropriation by outsiders of the community of practice (Erlewein 2014).

Indeed, while engaging in the audiovisual representation of intangible cultural heritage, it is crucial to consider the politics of representation. Methodologies and tools need to be chosen consciously, as the audiovisual representation and mediation of cultural practices constitutes cultural memory and manipulates knowledge and practice. Thus we simultaneously have to ask some questions: How can ICH be effectively safeguarded by audiovisual means? Who is involved in the production, consumption and regulation of representations and thereby also the (re)construction of ICH? Who holds the potential to shape and alter the meaning attached to ICH? Do we follow a top-down system of representation, in which only a selected few are enabled to articulate their ideas, visualize their conceptions and situate them within cultural memory – or can the practice of representation be democratized, giving tribute also to locally grounded perceptions? Does the *2003 Convention* offer any basis for this?

This contribution proceeds as follows: the first part attends to UNESCO's *2003 Convention*. It provides definitions of the central concepts used and points to a conceptual shift within heritage politics, as the *Convention* acknowledges the central role of communities, groups and individuals for the recognition and safeguarding of ICH. The second part attends to different strategies and approaches to the audiovisual representation and documentation of culture, as they have been developed in social/cultural

anthropology and particularly in visual anthropology, also paying tribute to the respective paradigms. It outlines a shift from realist to constructivist approaches in representation, focusing on collaboration, dialogue and exchange. The third part finally outlines some reflections and conclusions relevant for the audiovisual representation of intangible cultural heritage.

## Intangible cultural heritage and safeguarding

Today, heritage formations are predominantly conceptualized as political and cultural processes (Smith 2006). But what does intangible cultural heritage mean? What does it signify?

In the *2003 Convention*, intangible cultural heritage is defined as “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage” (Internet source 1, Article 2/1). It manifests itself in the following five domains: oral traditions and expressions, including language; performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship (ibid, Article 2/2). ICH is essentially living heritage, “transmitted from generation to generation” and also “constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history” (ibid, Article 2/1).

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. ICH is also cohesive; it forms a constituent part of the cultural identity of the respective communities, groups and individuals. As the heritage continuously evolves, the evolving nature of identity is also acknowledged. As such, an anti-essentialist and dynamic notion of culture found its way into the *2003 Convention* (Erlewein 2015). Referring to the inseparability of tangible and intangible heritage Laurajane Smith and Natsuko Akagawa also argue that heritage “only becomes ‘heritage’ when it becomes recognisable within a particular set of cultural or social values, which are themselves ‘intangible’” (Smith and Akagawa 2009: 4). These values can neither be universally applied nor fixed.

There are many meanings of heritage, which are constantly contested and differ through time and space. As a result, the hierarchisation of the existing ICH resources worldwide was challenged and terms like masterpiece and treasure were omitted from the text of the *Convention*. Thus, intangible heritage is not required to bear outstanding universal value across the globe. Instead, the first sentence of the ICH definition marks communities, groups and individuals (Internet source 1, Article 2/1) as the main point of reference, underlining that it is their recognition which is crucial for the identification

of ICH. Janet Blake underlines that “the identification of ICH is not only fundamental to its safeguarding but it also addresses a deeply political issue as to what and whose ICH is to be given value by the process” (Blake 2009: 50). This philosophical core of the *Convention* needs to be remembered in all subsequent reflections and measures.

So what are the aims of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*? And finally, what does safeguarding mean? Article 1 of the *Convention* outlines its aims, namely the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage; ensuring respect for the ICH of communities, groups and individuals; raising of awareness of the importance of ICH at local, national and international levels, including ensuring mutual appreciation; and provision of international cooperation and assistance (Internet source 1, Article 1).

The *2003 Convention* can be traced back to UNESCO’s 1989 *Recommendation on Safeguarding Traditional Culture and Folklore* (Internet source 3), where the concept of safeguarding was introduced. The document first targeted the safeguarding and preservation of living heritage. Considering the destructive effects of mass media, industrialization and globalization on cultural traditions and folklore, it aimed to build awareness concerning the importance of safeguarding these practices and expressions. It asked member states to engage in heritage preservation via the establishment of museums and archives, the encouragement of documentation, as well as via support for custodians of traditions and transmission practices. It further encouraged research and educational programmes, arguing that traditional practices are constitutive of identity and continuity and enable dialogue and exchange. However, while the *Recommendation on Safeguarding Traditional Culture and Folklore* primarily focuses on documentation and research, the safeguarding of ICH is the prime concern of the *2003 Convention*; measures encompass documentation and research, but they transcend these concepts and aim for enabling viability (Internet source 1, Article 2/3).

Indeed, the *Convention* not only refers to intangible cultural heritage, but also accords “value to the ‘carriers’ and ‘transmitters’ of tradition, to their habitus and habitat” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004: 53). Safeguarding departs from notions of conservation and preservation, which might lead to a fixed or frozen heritage and rather targets the encouragement of the continuous development and transmission of the human knowledge and skills called ICH. Crucial importance is not given to products, such as specific manifestations of heritage, in particular plays etc., but rather to processes. Even though inventory-making and listing take central stage, the sustainable maintenance of socio-cultural conditions that enable ICH to be re-enacted is explicitly mentioned as a target aim.

Safeguarding measures are envisaged at two levels, in the form of national safeguarding measures (Internet source 1, Articles 11-15) and as international safeguarding activities, policies and programmes (ibid, Article 16). The former



give a clear orientation towards community participation. States parties are required to engage communities, groups and NGOs in the process of identification and definition of ICH elements within their respective territories (ibid, Article 11b) and to establish inventories (ibid, Article 12). Furthermore, the *Convention* mandates that in the course of any safeguarding or management activity the “widest possible participation of communities (...) that create, maintain and transmit such heritage” shall be aspired to (ibid, Article 15). States parties are, in fact, obliged to engage them in a collaborative approach and to consider and integrate local, community-based concerns with regard to the safeguarding of ICH. This requirement of community participation gives tribute to the facts that intangible heritage is constantly recreated and firmly rooted within the socio-cultural realities of the communities, groups and individuals concerned and that intervention of safeguarding measures will have a direct impact on their respective contemporary realities.

Facing the possibilities and limits of the *The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, different responses were articulated. Janet Blake enthusiastically argues that “the community is placed at the centre of this *Convention* rather than the heritage itself” (Blake 2009: 51). This optimism, however, is not shared by Amanda Kearney, who claims that *the 2003 Convention* has structural shortcomings as it explicitly authorizes the state to hold the primary role in the implementation of the *Convention* as stated in Articles 11b, 12/1 and 13 (Kearney 2009). Moreover, the *Convention* does not define the concept of community, nor does it state how “participation” should be understood. It refrains from giving an exact definition of its scope and meaning, hence participation can be interpreted in a wide range of ways, from information to collaboration and support for community’s self-initiated projects with expertise, know-how or funding.

Even though the procedures established by the *2003 Convention* reflect those exercised in the context of the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* from 1972, the *2003 Convention* must be regarded as a “corrective to the World Heritage List” (Kurin 2004), which nourished elitism and excluded cultures particularly of the global South. The *2003 Convention* points to a conceptual shift within heritage politics, given that it transcends the “Western authorized heritage discourse” (Smith 2006), which conceptualized heritage as primarily material, if not monumental, as good, aesthetic and of universal value; moreover, it also explicitly legitimizes the central and vital role of communities, groups and individuals for the recognition and safeguarding of ICH. The *Convention* marks an important step towards the engagement and empowerment of communities within international legal instruments and has a strong potential for demonstrating a democratization process within cultural heritage policies and practices. This process empowers so far disadvantaged and marginalized forms of cultural heritage in terms of international attribution of value and significance, and also engages the local people who are the custodians and creators of heritage (Deacon et al 2004: 11)

The question remains how to produce appropriate audiovisual representations of ICH practices, which can be used and disseminated at a local as well as a global level. This question can be at least partially answered by looking at the methodological approaches to audiovisual representation as they have been developed and applied in the discipline of visual anthropology.

## Salvage anthropology and film as record

While a number of different approaches to the audiovisual representation of culture can be applied, a look at the legacy of ethnographic film and its conceptualization is helpful to ascertain sustainable strategies for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.

Anthropology initially followed the enlightenment vision and strove to make the world visible and knowable by means of advanced technology. Early endeavours in ethnographic film were closely interconnected with colonialism, the evolutionist paradigm and a belief in linear progress. Pioneers like Alfred C. Haddon, Walter Baldwin Spencer and Frank Gillen tried to document “vanishing” cultures, the cultures of tribal, kinship-based, “primitive” and non-western societies. Serving the salvage paradigm, film was expected to record reliable neutral evidence about these other cultures. Filmic records were collected, objects and subjects analysed, classified and categorized according to the evolutionist paradigm, subjected to colonial aspirations. Film was used as a method of research, enabling direct observation and conceptualized as an objective scientific tool for documentation. Moreover, reliable neutral evidence about other cultures was also particularly sought after in the context of ethnographic salvage, however, this did not aim towards the safeguarding of cultures, but rather the preservation of cultures for the need of scientific investigation. Filmic material was understood as pure and undisturbed evidence of culture, usable for illustration, documentation, preservation and presentation purposes. This understanding of film mirrored the 19<sup>th</sup> century positivist stance in science and anticipated the general belief in the objectivity of the filmic material.

After World War I, methodologies in anthropology changed, placing long-term fieldwork and participant observation, thus the Malinowskian approach, at its centre. Instead of a vision based on mere technology, a vision based on learning and immersion in the other’s culture was cultivated. Anthropology focused on literary representations of culture and visual representations were largely categorized as popular, entertaining and thus non-academic. With Bronisław Malinowski, anthropological practice largely abandoned evolutionism and racial categorization; furthermore, it became increasingly dissociated from the salvage paradigm and the culture of collection, exposition and display.

Nonetheless, Margaret Mead was exceptional in two ways: she not only extensively applied visual technologies in her research and thus followed

a scientific agenda that was rather reminiscent of early anthropological endeavours, but she also practised salvage ethnography and aimed at the preservation of disappearing cultures by recording them on film. She acknowledged film as predestined for systematic research particularly in the context of ethnographic salvage and spoke about the anthropologist's responsibility to create and preserve records of customs and human beings at risk of disappearance (Mead 2003). Considering film records as useful for the revitalization of cultural heritage and the preservation of cultures and behaviours, she argued for "unedited stretches of instrumental observation" (Mead 2003:10), for purely technical illustrations of reality. In order to preserve un-manipulated and almost total observations of pre-filmic reality she would encourage the utilization of unstaffed, non-stop running 360-degree camera (Mead 2004). Following a realist paradigm, film was understood to capture and preserve un-interrupted pre-filmic reality. However, in Mead's work, visual representations of culture – unedited footage acquired via sequential filming – functioned as data sets and research materials; the camera was used as a note-taking instrument and representations of culture were meant to be interrogatory rather than illustrative and expository. Mead thus re-conceptualized images as data, as elements in an argument, as primary sources that could be read and reread even in the light of changing paradigms and research objectives.

### Turning points and the (re)positioning of representation

In the context of independence struggles and civil rights movements, two entirely new strands in the representation of culture developed: *cinéma vérité* and *observational cinema*, both posing a challenge to the positivist paradigm in filmic representation. These new approaches aimed at breaking with objectifying endeavours and focused on the complex, diverse subjectivities of the people. Within the first modus of documentary film, the notion of *ciné-transe* was given attention. French anthropologist Jean Rouch conceptualized the camera as an extension of the body, freed of the constraints of the tripod, and a transformative agent. Rather than harnessing objectivity and detachment, he entered into intense interaction with the subjects of the film and even stimulated confrontation and provocation in order to create a new space for intercultural understanding. He strove to break down borders between the Self and the Other, as well as between reality and imagination, seeing the latter as an agent of transformation. *Cinéma vérité* was committed towards an undirected and spontaneous process of filmmaking; scripts were rejected and films had a strong reflexive stance. Within *observational cinema*, the notions of respect and ethics took on prime importance. Here, rather than talking about the subjects of films, filmmakers aimed at listening to subjects; abandoning their privileged positions, expertise and authority, they gave space to the mediation of a variety of different voices and positions.

Within *direct cinema*, introduced by the Drew associates in America, clear guidelines were established. Direction, staging, stimulation of and interaction with the film subjects as well as tripods, lights, scripts and repetition were forbidden. The filmmaker was conceptualized as an eyewitness, investigating the world through intense observation practices and the footage as evidence. The audience was expected to immerse itself in the event through the reception of the film. In an ethnographic context this methodology was termed *observational cinema* (Young 2003). In its approach it radically differed from the realist paradigm, in which the camera was considered to record data or to illustrate arguments. The camera got deeply involved with the subjectivities of people and an all-knowing expert commentary was replaced by a variety of voices speaking in diverse ways and contexts. Nonetheless, *observational cinema* and *direct cinema* still did not engage in direct dialogue and exchange with the subjects. The camera, located at a distance, continued to mark a demarcation line, whereby existing power relations were also (re)manifested. Moreover, processes of production and meaning making were mainly neglected. An invisible camera intended to film undisturbed interaction. The filmmaker was conceptualized as omnipotent, able to grasp an event in its totality and to give evidence of it. Furthermore, as subjects of the film were denied access, films remained monologues. David MacDougall argued that this approach, where the filmmaker had to neglect his or her presence and the camera was utilized as a "secret weapon in the pursuit of knowledge", dehumanized the film subjects and made the audience accomplice in a reinvention of the colonial legacy of separating the Self and the Other (MacDougall 2003: 120).

*Participatory cinema* marked a turning point in this regard. Here, the dynamics of the filmmaking process were acknowledged, and also the subjects of the film were allowed to project their culture directly on film. Furthermore, the audience was conceptualized as actively engaging in the decoding of meaning. The pre-filmic reality was no longer in focus for mediation. Instead, the filmmaker was acknowledged as part of the ethnographic situation and part of the film event. Anthropological knowledge was reconceptualized as being created through dialogue, exchange and interrelation between individuals and members of diverse cultures, rather than "existing as a block of disembodied knowledge apart from intersubjective exchange" waiting to be discovered (Grimshaw 2008: 304). The central notion in *participatory cinema* and collaborative films is conversation, the creation of conditions that allow for the generation of knowledge, rather than the exchange of existing information (ibid). Shared authorship, collaboration and reflexivity are among the means in reaching this aim. Moreover, *participatory cinema* was used to generate platforms for the articulation of the subject's points of view, as well as the support of their needs and aspirations.

The "Writing Culture" debate in the 1980s finally marked anthropology's reflexive and postmodern turn, whereby concepts of culture, methods and

practices of representation were rethought. In the 1980s and 1990s, former film subjects also increasingly gained access to media technologies and were enabled to generate their own filmic representations, to use media for their own sake, responding to (colonial) master narratives and reasserting their own cultural identity. Enabling influence and agency, audiovisual media provided a social, cultural and political tool for the (re)construction of identity and continuity, of knowledge and memory. Anthropological filmmakers supported them in their endeavours, enabling access to technologies and know-how.

Even though subject-generated cinema proved to be useful as a tool for empowerment, the revitalization of cultural practices and the assertion of identity, specifically indigenous media activists were accused of fostering change within indigenous cultures, as well as being naive agents of a Western-dominated visual project. While academic debate centered on the benefits and drawbacks of media usage, indigenous communities, minorities and disenfranchised groups all over the world embraced the new possibilities for articulating, representing and self-consciously positioning themselves within the politics of culture. They welcomed opportunities that allowed them to exercise control over visual representations of their culture; films became increasingly polyphonic and multi-layered, giving space to diverse and even rival interpretations of social reality.

We can summarize that ethnographic film departed the objective and objectifying endeavour and became increasingly subjective and reflexive by the 1980s/1990s. It developed from a realistic paradigm, in which film was conceptualized as data, via *observational cinema* to a *participatory cinema* with a constructivist paradigm (Loizos 1993; Grimshaw 2001). Simultaneously, former (indigenous/minority/disenfranchised) film subjects created a new category of filmic representation, which has been called *subject-generated cinema* or *indigenous media*.

## Conclusions

I propose to enlarge the concept of community participation with regard to the audiovisual representation of ICH, utilized for identification, documentation, promotion, enhancement and research and thus for the safeguarding of ICH, and to thereby democratize the practices of representation. Democratization in this context particularly refers to participation, involving enduring and intensive dialogue among community and other participants of the film as well as to access to preproduction, production and postproduction processes and finally access to the final film.

The first section pointed out that ICH manifests itself through the recognition of the local communities, groups and individuals. This cultural contextualization and significance also needs to be addressed within audiovisual representation if it aims to acknowledge, (re)narrate and

(re)produce an understanding of cultural diversity of humanity in all its expressions. Implementation strategies need to take this requirement into account, even though its scope and scale is still open for negotiation. Community participation as conceptualized in the *2003 Convention* basically aims at the cultural contextualization of heritage and safeguarding measures, paying particular tribute to community needs. An intense dialogue between members of practising communities and others engaged in safeguarding practices is a prerequisite for reaching that goal. The methodology of *participatory cinema*, as developed within the discipline of visual anthropology, seems promising in this regard. Moreover, the *2003 Convention* constitutes a good base for the acknowledgement of community participation, as all safeguarding measures need to be developed and applied together with the respective communities. Still, community participation seems too limited, in particular within current practices of audiovisual representation. The importance of control over the means of representation by a social agent in order to create power and meaning needs to be underlined again. Community participation can be efficiently used to strengthen common identity and to creatively influence the representation of ICH.

Furthermore, ICH was identified as highly process-based category, having a developing and evolving character, which makes it essentially re-negotiable. Knowledge and meaning are mediated also by means of modern technologies. Thus the encoding of manifold messages must be continuously exercised, and also community participation within these processes is crucial in order to stay up to date.

Intangible cultural heritage, as defined within the *2003 Convention*, is widely acknowledged by the practising communities, which are not only participants but rather central agents. Communities, groups and individuals need to be enabled to participate in the creation of audiovisual representations, and thereby of meaning and knowledge related to their heritage, communicating on intracultural and intercultural levels. Nevertheless, we have to be aware that also communities, groups and individuals engaged in the practice of representation will produce representations with similar implications. They will not necessarily be better in an ethical sense, as rivalling and contesting representations and interpretations of ICH exist and circulate among communities. But their participation in collaborative or self-generated projects, respecting customary practices regulating access to knowledge within specific communities, will lead to an enhanced diversity in representation. This will contribute to the task of writing the margins into the centre, to engaging marginalized groups in the making of their history. It will foster diversity, multi-vocality, multi-visibility, plurality, enabling multiple usages of audiovisual representations for multiple aims, including transmission, research, enhancement and promotion of ICH.



Recapitulating the history of ethnographic film and the diverse methodological approaches to the generation of knowledge, I argue that in the context of safeguarding ICH we should not fall back to practices and approaches reminiscent of the beginnings of visual anthropology, but rather engage in practices that foster respect, dialogue and dissolution of the rigid framing of the Self and the Other. Representation of heritage as a process of meaning-construction must be democratized. This is even more the case since representations of people through representation of their ICH have consequences for their lives. Representations participate in knowledge production as projection screens, which construct the cultural heritage at stake. In that case it becomes highly important whose representation is considered valid and will be preserved, and whose are rejected, subjected or neglected.

The selection process bears a risk of fostering cultural hegemony instead of promoting cultural diversity. In the course of this process other meanings and attributions are inevitably destroyed. As the choice taken has an effect on the cultural expressions and practices and will greatly influence the meanings attributed to them, selections must be negotiated dialogically among all participants involved. Similarly we have to rethink who has the right and legitimacy to make these decisions.

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# SAFEGUARDING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE WITH FILM: QUESTIONS OF DOCUMENTATION, PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION

**Beate Engelbrecht**

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With regard to intangible cultural heritage it seems to be logical to use audiovisual records – film and video – for safeguarding, protection and preservation. The question then arises as to how film can be beneficial in this context and for what purpose. The quality of the film records, the problem of archiving them, the diverse concepts of safeguarding and protection and especially the problem of preservation of intangible cultural heritage are discussed taking as an example film records of feasts in Tana Toraja, the Land of the Toraja people, in Sulawesi, Indonesia.

**Keywords:** intangible cultural heritage, film, documentation, archiving, protection, preservation, safeguarding, copyright

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## Introduction

Film documentations of Torajan cultural practices (Sulawesi, Indonesia) are taken as a point of departure to discuss the value of film records in the context of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. The Toraja are famous for their elaborate funeral rituals, that have been attracting tourist since the early 1980s and many film documents show these rituals. Additionally, Indonesia successfully nominated *Tana Toraja Traditional Settlement* to the UNESCO Tentative list for World Heritage List in 2009 (Internet source 1). Taking part in a larger research project on cultural property<sup>1</sup>, I was able to witness and film

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1 *Transcultural Authorship, Copyright, and Film. The Case of Funeral Rituals among the Toraja in Sulawesi, Indonesia*, by the University of Göttingen (Internet source 2).

a House Ceremony<sup>2</sup> in Tana Toraja thus observing different ways of filming cultural practices on-site.

## Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and film

Two UNESCO conventions are relevant to discussion of the question whether film serves the aim of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage: *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 2003 (Internet source 3) and *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, 2005 (Internet source 4). *The 2003 Convention* 2003 states:

“Safeguarding” means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage. (Internet source 3, Article 2/3)

Three terms of this definition are of interest for the following discussion: documentation, protection and preservation. Before adopting the *Convention for the Safeguarding ICH* some experts met in Paris to compose a glossary concerning ICH that was edited by Wim van Zanten (van Zanten 2002) which will be used as a reference here as the terms are not defined in the convention itself. In addition to UNESCO, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) deals with Traditional Cultural Expressions and Traditional Knowledge and their protection, so we will consider how these organisations deal with the problem of safeguarding cultural practices with film.

## Documentation of traditional cultural expressions or cultural practices with film

The *Glossary: Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH Glossary)* defines “Documentation: The recording of intangible cultural heritage in tangible forms” (van Zanten 2002: 5). Much more extensively the term “documentation” is used by WIPO discussing the protection of traditional knowledge and cultural expressions in its *Glossary*:

Documentation: *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines “documentation” as the accumulation, classification and dissemination of information; the material as collected. Documenting traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions may include recording them, writing them down, taking pictures of them or filming them –

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See also Engelbrecht 2010.

2 *Documentation of a House Ceremony for a Tongkonan in Buntao (2009)*.



anything that involves recording them in a way that preserves them and could make them available for others. It is different from the traditional ways of preserving and passing on traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions within the community. (*Summary and Introduction to the Toolkit for Managing Intellectual Property when Documenting Traditional Knowledge and Genetic Resources*, document WIPO/GRTKF/IC/5/5.) (Internet source 5)

Let us take a closer look at whether film is an adequate medium for documenting TCE or cultural practices. With regard to Tana Toraja, there is quite a variety of film documents. There are various historical documents from colonial times, including the film on the cult of the dead *De Doodencultus bij de Sadang Toradja's van Midden-Celebes* (1923). It is very descriptive and recognised by Torajan intellectuals; old films are always of interest as they document the past and are valuable for the cultural memory.

Torajan funerals attract the attention of tourists. In the 1980s a tourist boom evolved. Especially in France and Germany, several TV productions about the Toraja and the funeral rituals were broadcast<sup>3</sup> in the late 1980s and 1990s. The newest TV production<sup>4</sup> was broadcast by ARTE for the first time in 2009. Additionally, tourist video guides<sup>5</sup> were produced to encourage people to visit Tana Toraja; some of them can now be found on the Internet<sup>6</sup>. Many tourists upload short videos from their trip to Tana Toraja, mainly presenting the funerals, to encourage others to visit the region and feasts. The search for videos on Google results in an amazing number of videos mainly in YouTube.

Discussing ICH, the Swiss music anthropologist Marc-Antoine Camp asks:

Isn't in our daily life, which is today constantly documented with the aid of cheap technologies, the "examination of history", i.e. of audiovisually documented history, increasingly becoming a key instrument to safeguard traditions as well as a source of creativity?<sup>7</sup> (Camp 2006: 61)

It is possibly true that each film document will one day be historical, but does that also contribute to safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage itself?

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3 For example *Fest des Niedergehenden Rauches: Totenkult auf Sulawesi* (1990).

4 *Les montagnes du monde: Sulawesi, Rantemario* (2009).

5 For example *Indonesien: Das Leben der Torajas auf Sulawesi, Celebes* (1993).

6 For example *Toraja ReiseVideo* (2010).

7 Translated by BE from German, originally: Ist in unserem Alltag, der heute mit Hilfe relativ günstiger Technologien fortwährend dokumentiert wird, die "Auseinandersetzung mit der Geschichte", und zwar mit der audio-visuell dokumentierten Geschichte, nicht zunehmend sowohl ein zentrales Mittel für die Bewahrung von Traditionen als auch eine Quelle der Kreativität?

## Filmmakers at work

To begin with, I was interested in how videos about Torajan feasts are generated, what value the film records have as documents of cultural practices and what interest the locals have in safeguarding and transmitting their culture. To examine these issues I attended a House Ceremony in Tana Toraja; besides creating a film record of the feast I was interested to see who else was filming, how and what. The feast was held to inaugurate a newly built family house *tongkonan*. The family organising it, being Roman Catholics, had decided to celebrate it in the traditional way, i.e. in the tradition of the old religion *aluk to dolo*. They said that the last traditional *merauk* ceremony in the area was celebrated some 30 years ago. Many of the organisers had not seen the feast or they did not remember it well. They asked older people who still believe in *aluk to dolo* and remember the ceremonies to help in the performance. Step by step the arrangements and sequences of offerings were worked out.

Various people were filming at the feast: I was invited to make an ethnographic document and a local videographer was paid for an audiovisual record of the feast.<sup>8</sup> The two of us were filming side by side during preparatory offerings. I was exploring the feast with the camera, following the practitioners and their communication as they were trying to “restore” the feast. The local videographer was a very experienced person who had produced several records about funerals. As he was Torajan, he could follow the everyday conversations. However, he had never seen this feast before. He was documenting mainly the central activities, concentrating on the offerings of the animals and the performances of the practitioners, dancers and musicians. The visitors, guests of the family, tourists and a group of anthropologists were of no particular interest to him. All the visitors were taking still or moving pictures using cameras or mobile phones, but I could not discern whether they had any plan of what to record.

There are quite diverse audiovisual documents about Torajan feasts: films from colonial times, TV productions, visual tourist guides, documentaries (including ethnographic films), local productions, clips from tourists, and clips from guests. In relation to safeguarding ICH with film some questions arise: What is the purpose of the films? What image of Torajan culture is transmitted? What is the value of these films in relation to safeguarding the traditions? How can one work with existing films? How could a good film documentation of cultural heritage be realised? Where can material on Toraja be collected and seen?

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8 Remar Parinding produced a series of 7 DVDs *Merauk: Tongkonan Bara'ba Lentenan Pangrarakna: UGAI sola RANGGA Sau'* (2009).

## Film records – quality, storage and accessibility

Looking at the quality of the audiovisual records one can observe that videos (including TV productions) for and from tourists reduce Torajan culture to images of traditional houses *tongkonan* and offerings of buffaloes during the funerals.



Traditional house *tongkonan*, Lentenan, 2009 (photo Beate Engelbrecht).

The records of the guests are very selective, while the local videographers constantly film what is going on over several days and create valuable documents of the feast. Thus the question of who is recording cultural practices and for which purpose is very relevant when discussing safeguarding ICH through film. Film documentation of cultural practices is made by those who have a deeper knowledge and a special interest in them: i.e. mainly by the local people performing, visual researchers studying these practices and serious documentary filmmakers.<sup>9</sup>

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9 Trisha Das explains the role of script writing in documentary film production in a monograph *How to Write a Documentary Script* (2007) and touches many issues mentioned here.

Another question is where can material on Toraja be seen, where is it collected and archived? Films from colonial times are kept in archives in the Netherlands. TV productions might be archived by the station, but they are not generally accessible. Some TV films can be found in private archives and university collections and some can be bought on VHS or DVD. Visual tourist guides are sold or can be found on the Internet. Documentaries and ethnographic films are often preserved only by the producer. After their death or the closure of the production company the film might just vanish. Local productions are copied onto DVDs which are given to the customers who paid for the recording. The original video tapes are often reused. Clips of tourists can be found on the Internet and clips of the guests – who knows where?

If we return to the question whether film records are of value for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage: with the exception of film documentation produced or kept by national film archives, the above forms of collecting and keeping film records or copies do not contribute much to safeguarding ICH.

### Protection of intangible cultural heritage and film

Another question is, if film records contribute to the protection of ICH. What does protection mean in this context? *The Convention for the Safeguarding of ICH* gives little information on protection of heritage practices; but it refers to the protection of spaces where cultural practices are performed (Internet source 3, Article 14 c). The *ICH Glossary* states:

Protection: Ensuring that certain social practices and representations do not suffer damage. [This notion may not be applicable to all aspects of intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, for the purpose of the future convention, the adoption of the term "safeguarding" is endorsed.] (Van Zanten 2002: 6)

In the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* (2005) we find the following definition:

Protection: "Protection" means the adoption of measures aimed at the preservation, safeguarding and enhancement of the diversity of cultural expressions. "Protect" means to adopt such measures. (Internet source 4, Article 4/7)

In a UNESCO document *Ten Keys to the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, 2007 (Internet source 6), protection is closely related to cultural creativity and therefore to intellectual property, referring to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The WIPO deals with the protection of intellectual property – in our case copyright and service rights.

The *Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization* concluded in Stockholm on July 14, 1967 (Article 2/viii) provides that

»intellectual property shall include rights relating to:

- literary, artistic and scientific works,
- performances of performing artists, phonograms and broadcasts,
- inventions in all fields of human endeavour,
- scientific discoveries,
- industrial designs,
- trademarks, service marks and commercial names and designations,
- protection against unfair competition, and all other rights resulting from intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, literary or artistic fields.” (Internet source 7, Chapter 1, Paragraph 1.3, page 3)

So what are the cultural products and traditional cultural expressions which can/should be protected? Who are the creators? Who are the owners of traditional cultural expressions? Who has the authority to decide? What are the traditional concepts of intellectual property? I asked these questions to find out whom I should ask in order to get permission to film.

Filming feasts always means recording tangible and intangible cultural heritage. In the case of the *merauk* feast there was the house with its marvellous carvings representing a family as well as Torajan culture, and there were the cultural practices and creative activities. Priests performed the offerings, which differ from one place to the next, as they are traditional and recreated at the same time. On the last day of the ceremony there were several people performing. I tried to understand who would decide if I could film the feast and take the footage with me to Germany to edit my film at home.

The feast was organised by the family of the traditional house *tongkonan*. The official representative was the eldest of 9 siblings. The decision-makers were all family members of the *tongkonan*. During the offerings the eldest brother was rarely seen. Two of his uncles, a cousin and a knowledgeable person from nearby directed the activities on site. They discussed the order of the offerings and the single activities with some advisors, who were mainly performing actors. They recreated the feast and during it, the eldest brother was director of ceremonies. The most important actors were speakers, priests, dancers, and musicians – performers who bring the cultural practices to life. The practice is remembered and recreated each time it is performed. The participant performers have no rights over the cultural practice, in a song for example, but they do have rights over their performance and more and more people are these days aware of it. So filming an event like this, I should have the consent of the performers for publishing the performance in a film.





Decision-makers at the eve of the feast, Lentenan, 2009 (photo Beate Engelbrecht).

Talking about protection one has to ask: What is protected, by whom and for whom? Where do the music and the dances come from? In Tana Toraja there are no concepts for ownership of traditional cultural expressions. Thus, who has the knowledge? Who performs the offerings, prayers, and speeches? Who has what rights? What role do the various persons involved in the cultural production play, are they authors, performers or artists? Indonesian law (Internet source 8) defines the expression "author", but looking more closely, it is not clear how authors (*pencipta*) and performers (*pelaku*) are differentiated and if "artists" have something of both in the meaning of creator (Kusumadara 2008). Under Indonesian law performers have special rights over their performances. Some are becoming aware of this and thinking about protecting the style of their performance by copyright (Donzelli 2007). Audiovisual records could play a role as evidence for cultural practices or for the personal style of performance, but film has not yet been used in this way.

### **Preservation of intangible cultural heritage and film**

What does preservation in the context of safeguarding ICH mean? How can TCE be preserved? Interestingly enough, the preservation of cultural practices is not referred to in the conventions; only the *ICH Glossary* mentions the term:



Preservation: Ensuring that certain social practices and representations are maintained. [This notion may not be applicable to all aspects of intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, for the purpose of the future convention, the adoption of the term “safeguarding” is endorsed.] (van Zanten 2002: 5)

If one presumes that ICH is living cultural heritage, it can be preserved only by performing it continuously. Cultural practices are memorized by those performing them. Sometimes they have an interest in keeping their knowledge to themselves and gaining personal status, but they inevitably have to pass it on. In the definition of safeguarding we find also the term “transmission”. The *ICH Glossary* defines transmission as follows:

Transmission: Transferring social practices and ideas to another person or persons, especially to younger generations, through instruction, access to documental sources, or by other means. (van Zanten 2002: 6)

So how is knowledge transmitted to younger people in Tana Toraja? A young carpenter told me that he learned his craft from his uncle. Playing the flute is a local tradition taught at school. The priest (*tominaa*) learned all from his father. His role is a very special one:



School class playing the traditional flutes, Lentenan, 2009 (photo Beate Engelbrecht).

*Tominaa* literally means: *to* = the one, *minaa* = who knows. Because in the countryside it is extraordinary ... because you have ... in every village they used to have a person "who knows". Who knows everything, who knows the myth of origin, who knows everything about the rituals. So they are called *tominaa*. And these people are certainly ... they don't own but they know, for instance, they know how to tell it. They are the only ones right now still able to tell it. (Interview with Dana Rappoport, Rantepao, 27.7.2009)

Dana Rappoport hits the point: to transmit knowledge to the next generation persons are needed who still have this knowledge, "who know" and who are willing to pass the knowledge on. And you also need a younger generation interested in this knowledge which seems to be rather difficult in the case of the priest.

Do audiovisual records help in preserving TCE? The *Working Group of Indigenous Population* discussing this problem stated that this is the task of the indigenous groups themselves.

In the interest of transparency, legality and the conservation of indigenous peoples' cultural heritage, elements of such heritage could be registered and/or recorded. Such registration and/or recording, as well as any disclosure thereof, shall be subject to the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous people concerned, or, when so determined by their customary or other laws, by individual members of the group. The records and/or registers shall further preferably be managed by the indigenous peoples themselves. When this is not practically feasible, the registers or records should be managed in cooperation with the relevant indigenous people. (Yozo Yokota and the Saami Council, 2006, Paragraph 23)

Therefore, audiovisual records can be useful in preserving traditional knowledge and cultural expressions. And they should be produced regularly as long as the culture practices are performed. Immediately the question of the preservation of these materials arises. The *Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations* (CCAAA, part of UNESCO) discusses the preservation of film and audio records in general.

Archival materials are those intended to be kept so they may be available for future generations, regardless of their age at the time of acquisition (used by Association of Moving Image Archivists).

Preservation is the totality of the steps necessary to ensure the permanent accessibility – forever – of an audiovisual document with the maximum integrity (derived from UNESCO publications *Memory of the World: General Guidelines to Safeguard Documentary Heritage* and *Audiovisual Archiving: Philosophy and Principles*). (Internet source 9, Paragraph 2)

There is no discussion of whether film and audio records serve the purpose of preserving traditional cultural expressions and cultural practices. Film documents serve mainly to memorize the ritual practices. As we have seen, rituals change, they are created differently each time when performed and even recreated when performed after a longer period of time. As there is no fixed script, rituals will persist and be preserved only by performing.

## Final observations

Our point of departure was the question of what role film can play in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage especially concerning its documentation, protection and preservation. Audiovisual records seem a very adequate tool to document traditional cultural expressions. Questions of representation and quality arise, as well as the problem of archiving these records. Not every audiovisual record is suitable for this purpose, and many useful records are not archived properly, and thus not accessible.

Protecting intangible cultural heritage refers mainly to intellectual and cultural property; in this context protecting traditional practices would mean keeping knowledge for oneself, limiting access for others, and also freezing the practices. Preserving cultural practices is possible only when they are performed on a regular basis, memorised and the knowledge is passed on. Audiovisual records of traditional cultural practices document the contributions of the performers and help them to remember the rituals. They support preservation of cultural practices also by creating and raising awareness of their importance.

On the other hand, using audiovisual records to transmit cultural practices without "people who know" might become difficult. Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage often starts when living memory fades away; therefore, it is fundamental that the production of audiovisual documents starts while the cultural practices are still performed. But who has an interest? Who looks after it? And who pays for it? Marc-Antoine Camp states in the context of the audiovisual cultural heritage:

On one hand, the intangible cultural heritage will be more and more described and documented in the future, and on the other, these documents will be used as aid to transmit the cultural practices, partly even to revitalize traditions not performed anymore.<sup>10</sup> (Camp 2006: 64)

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10 Translated by BE from German, originally: Vermehrt wird in Zukunft einerseits das IKE verschriftlicht und dokumentiert, andererseits werden Dokumentationen als Tradierungshilfe beigezogen, teilweise gar zur Revitalisierung von nicht mehr praktizierten Traditionen.

He also points out that the problem will arise in the long run as to how securely these documents are stored. UNESCO believes this is a task for archives, libraries, museums and other well supported institutions.

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# DOCUMENTING, PRESENTING AND DIGITIZING HUNGARIAN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

János Tari

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In Hungary, living tradition in everyday practice was documented, archived and catalogued. Film is of particular value as a form of documentation of the intangible cultural heritage. The contribution presents the film collection of the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography as a starting point for an ethnographic thesaurus system, which responds to the rapid increase of digital and social media, as well as to the reformulation of museum dialogue and practice. The social context of museum transformation is addressed by the *International Committee for Audiovisual and New Technologies of Image and Sound* (AVICOM) at the *International Council of Museums* (ICOM). AVICOM measures are also of value when safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in the UNESCO framework.

**Keywords:** film, documentation, intangible cultural heritage, digitization, metadata

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## The intangible cultural heritage of Hungary

Hungary lies in the centre of Europe, at the intersection of different cultures, so it has a rich repository of living cultural heritage. The manifestation of intangible cultural heritage was made the focus of scholarly research as early as the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Tradition that was still alive in everyday practice and in its original function was documented, archived, catalogued and processed. Ethnographic collections have become available and popular thanks to series of important publications and to the national traditionalist

movement. With the help of scholarly and scientific organisations, educational programmes, public education networks and civil communities, the traditions live on with both their original and new functions; they reach the broadest audiences, having been able to contribute to the continuity of culture, to handing down knowledge, to enjoyable learning and to helping heritage live on locally and even in urban settings.

In 1895, the Hungarian linguist and folk music collector Béla Vikár was the first in Europe to record folk songs on a phonograph. From the early 1900s onwards, Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály launched a comprehensive scholarly folk music collecting programme that extended to all Hungarian language-speaking areas. This marked the beginning of academic musicology. Their results soon contributed to international comparative folk music research. Exploration of the origins and interrelations of cultures that had been living side by side for centuries led Bartók, Kodály and their pupils to explore the folk music of the neighbouring countries and even further afield. They recorded, noted down, analysed and arranged many Slovak, Romanian and Serbian melodies. Kodály researched the Finno-Ugrian peoples; Bartók performed exemplary, seminal work in collecting folk music in Algeria and Turkey. László Lajtha, an official in the *International Commission of Popular Arts and Traditions of the League of Nations* from 1928 and one of the proponents of the founding of the UNESCO's *International Folk Music Council*, produced many important monographs on instrumental folk music.

Bartók, Kodály and their followers created a considerable archive with over 200 thousand melodies, arranged according to Bartók's catalogue order. Béla Bartók, Zoltán Kodály and László Lajtha dipped into the "pure source" – folk music for their world-famous compositional oeuvres. A survey has revealed that the creator of a new, independent musical idiom, Béla Bartók, is the most often played composer in the world. Developing a musical vernacular from early childhood onwards in the framework of musical education in schools has become known as the Kodály Method that has been applied around the world. Hungary nominated the method to the *Register of Best Safeguarding Practices* in 2012; it is in process for 2016 (Internet source 1).

The systematic collection of folk dances began in the entire Hungarian-language area, among ethnicities in Hungary and in the neighbouring countries. Sándor Gönyei Ébner, István Molnár and György Martin were among the first to document dance processes on film. Martin and his followers revealed the Hungarian dance dialects and their links to European dance culture. Rudolf Laban developed a system of notation for dance, similar to musical notation, called Labanotation or Kinetography Laban, with which every movement in dance can be described and analysed. In addition to early research in folk music, dance and customs in Hungary, systematic investigation in folk architecture and craftsmanship have all contributed to the immense and continuously growing archives of intangible and tangible

cultural heritage. The Institute for Musicology within the Hungarian Academy of Sciences is part of a national network of historic scholarly institutions. Hungarian public collections are presented in the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography, the Hungarian Open Air Museum, the Digital Archive of Motion Pictures and the Hungarian Heritage House. This was created for the preservation of living folk art and it functions also as a centre supporting the survival and presentation of intangible cultural heritage through education, making sources available and transmitting good practices.

Concurrently with scholarly efforts, the need arose for the promotion of the living knowledge of traditional communities, with a view to revival. In an effort to present folk culture in urban environments, as early as in the 1930s the so-called Gyöngyösbokréta folk groups would travel from the villages to Budapest to perform music and dance. Growing into a movement, they contributed to preserving local traditions as costumes, dance, music, customs, and craftsmanship. Launched in the 1960s, the televised folk music competition *Fly, Peacock* presented the most gifted advocates of folk heritage as role models, and proved that large numbers of young people had an interest in folk culture. Millions of viewers sung in front of the television screens, and scores of new folk traditionalist groups, bands and dance companies, creative folk art workshops and communities were founded in its wake. The cohesive communal force of tradition, folk music and folk dance made a comeback with new functions. The burgeoning need for personally experiencing tradition and making it a way of life was largely due to the concept of the “nomadic generation” and the dance house movement. Drawing from the “pure source” was the result of active participation on the part of the communities which abandoned passivity for new, personal functions. Knowledge and practice acquired through personal experience attracted hundreds of thousands of young city and country people to authentic folk culture. Today, when the dance house movement is over 40 years old, folk dance, folk music and craftsmanship are practiced across generations.

The conscious use of the early research and collections, the performance practices learnt from authentic informants, and relying on education and the institutional network of public education, the *Táncház Method* (Dance House Method) was entered in the *Register of Best Safeguarding Practices* in 2011 as the Hungarian model of preserving intangible cultural heritage (Internet source 2). A crucial stage in consciously passing down Hungarian folk music was the launch of teacher training in folk music at the Nyíregyháza Teacher Training College in 1990, and the start of tertiary education in folk music at the new, independent Folk Music Department at the Liszt Academy of Music. As a result, teachers holding a university degree in folk music teaching are able to teach folk music at every level of the educational system. An MA course of folk music research was launched in 2011 at the Liszt Academy, providing new folk music research scholars.

Hungary was among the first countries internationally to recognise the outstanding representatives of communities preserving intangible cultural heritage. Under a scheme not unlike the UNESCO *Living Human Treasures* programme, the Hungarian national prize *Awardees of the Master of Folk Art* has gone to over 500 recipients since 1953. The best young talents have been awarded the *Awardees of the Young Master of Folk Art* since 1970. The folk craftsmanship *Applied Folk Artist* award goes to the best in their field.

## Hungarian intangible cultural heritage and UNESCO

Since Hungary joined the UNESCO's *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* in 2006, it has set out to identify and catalogue intangible cultural heritage in the country. A national inventory (Internet source 3) was established in 2008 which currently consists of 19 members, 3 of which appears in UNESCO's *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*, and one method in *Register of Best Safeguarding Practices* (Internet source 4). Consciously advocating, preserving and transmitting their heritage, the bearers and communities are members of the national inventory of intangible cultural heritage. They regularly participate at the *International Gathering of Intangible Cultural Heritage* which has for many years been organised at the Open Air Museum in Szentendre (Internet source 5). Organised under the auspices of UNESCO, the event is Hungary's celebration of the intangible cultural heritage, the bearer communities and cultural diversity. The itinerant exhibition organised on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the *Convention* represented Hungary's professional commitment and results. The exhibition opening featured folk singer Márta Sebestyén, holder of the UNESCO *Artist for Peace* award.

The *Fly, Peacock* folk music talent competition was re-launched in 2012 after a break of five decades to promote cultural heritage. Jury member Márta Sebestyén said to the young singer who had performed an ancient pentatonic folk song collected by Bartók: "Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály would never have imagined that in 2014 a young girl would bring this song alive so beautifully." Millions of television viewers, the bearers and communities keeping the traditions alive, the hundreds of folk dance groups, the folk song circles, bands, singers, craftsmen and women, the dance houses, the popular folk art camps, a fully functional institutionalised folk art education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels all show that in Hungary the interest in heritage and renewing traditional culture is forever growing. "Tradition is not to preserve the ashes but to pass on the flame", Gustav Mahler said. A flame has grown from the spark since we took seriously Zoltán Kodály's warning: *The fire must not go out!* (Internet source 6).

## Films on cultural heritage in the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography and digital access

Cultural heritage and ethnographic film may be subject to historical, theoretical and methodological reflection. As regards intangible cultural heritage, film is of particular value as a form of documentation. Motion picture documentation was an important achievement of ethnological research in the first decades of the 20th century, particularly since the technology of the time and the level of technical development did not yet allow the general spread of up-to-date visual documentation. The most important task of audiovisual archives is to keep a record of the audiovisual documents, preserve and restore them, and provide access to them. Today, archive film material is sought by members of the culture depicted, museum curators and researchers. The film collection of the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography with its 270 films has been digitized. Keyword-based search engine enables users to find and view with ease the archive film material. The project brings to the surface the question of the validity and contribution of ethnographic filmmaking.

By the end of the 20th century it was obvious that the great quantity of motion picture material accumulated could only be made available for research and to the general public through digitisation and the development of a special search system meeting visual requirements, enabling searching the films on the basis of visual motifs, themes and keywords. With the help of a grant, the Museum of Ethnography developed a new programme and created a complex multi-purpose digital database of its motion picture collection. The film catalogue has been available in printed format since 1995 and on the internet since 1997 (Internet source 7). A version of the film catalogue was created earlier in CD-ROM format. In 2002 the Museum of Ethnography won considerable funds through a successful bid for tender for high value digitizing equipment from the Equipment Fund of the *National Academic Research Fund* (OTKA). The OTKA had advertised the tender with the aim of increasing the standard and efficiency of academic research, of improving the technical background of the Hungarian research community and of promoting the utilization of research results. The films are not accompanied by classical key words; since the topics are separated by text inserts as in silent movies, the titles of the scenes become key words. In the case of dance recordings the name of the dance and the dancers may be the key words. In its present form, the key word system of the film collection of the Museum of Ethnography is only a starting point for a full system of key words integrated with an ethnographic thesaurus system aiming for totality.

The programme may be extended continually by involving ethnologists, sociologists and anthropologists, experts of the appropriate area and artisans figuring in the film. The digitisation of 273 items (around 40 gigabytes in AVI format) was finished in 2009; films can be researched in the reading room of the museum library, and viewed on a big screen monitor in the exhibition.



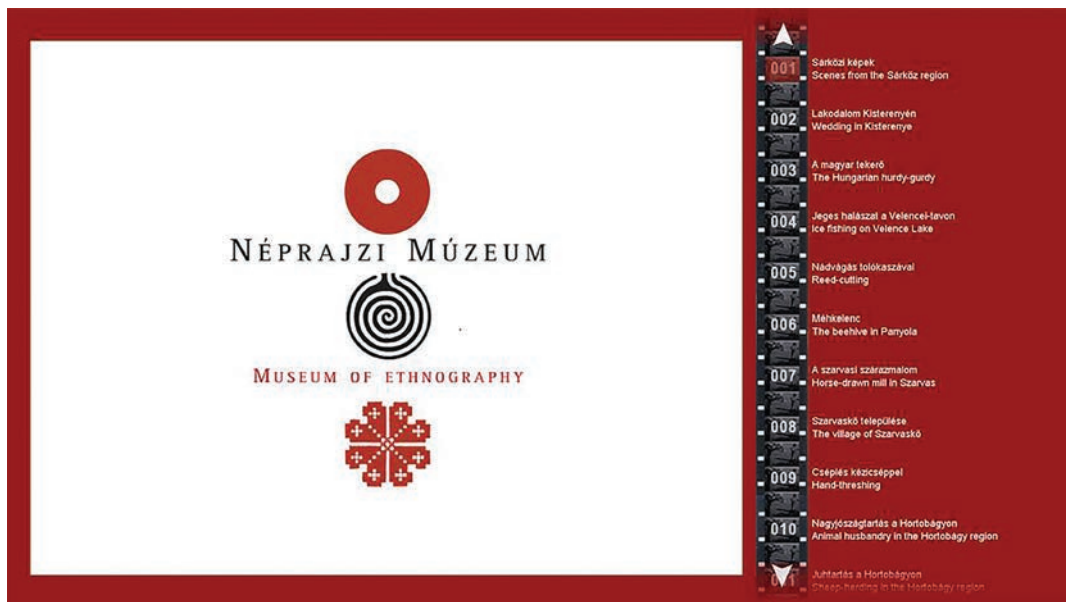


Screenshot of the Tape Archive Programme designed by László Szakallos, Janos Tari and Zsolt Kramos (Hungarian Museum of Ethnography).

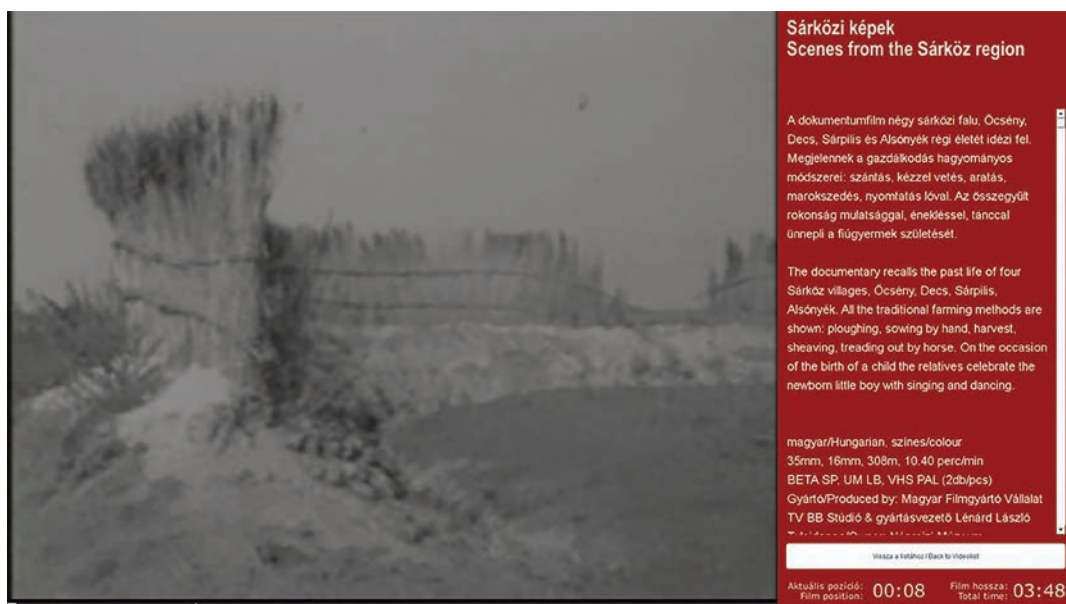
The digitization work which has been carried out since 2003 is in harmony with the definition contained in the amendment to Hungarian Act I (1996) on radio and television, aimed at harmonization with EU law. This means that the motion picture collection in the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography officially qualifies as a national audiovisual archive.

Over recent years the available software and the archive materials have contributed to the realisation of projects such as the multimedia programmes for a number of ethnographic exhibitions. In 2006, we created the digital business card of ICOM for its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary (Internet source 8), as well as an installation consisting of seven big monitors keying film to Bartók's music for the travelling exhibition *Eszmélet* (Consciousness). In 2007, the DVD-ROM about this exhibition won the silver award of the AVICOM international festival FAIMP and was shown at the festival *Best in Heritage* in Dubrovnik, Croatia.





Screenshot of the Tape Archive Programme designed by László Szakallos, Janos Tari and Zsolt Kramos (Hungarian Museum of Ethnography).



Screenshot of the Tape Archive Programme designed by László Szakallos, Janos Tari and Zsolt Kramos (Hungarian Museum of Ethnography).

We also made the stage and musical production *Peacock Song* in honour of Zoltán Kodály in 2007, which presents through a unity of music and spectacle what folk culture means in contemporary thoughts. (Internet source 9)

## AVICOM and its aims related to audiovisual documentation

*The International Committee for Audiovisual and New Technologies of Image and Sound* (Internet source 10) was established in June 1991 as a body of the *International Council of Museums* (ICOM). The committee members are museum professionals, including curators, scholars and technical staff in charge of collections, and those responsible for the services that use audiovisual and new technologies in museums, heritage and cultural institutions. Independent museum professionals and consultants are also committee members. AVICOM advises, informs and increases the awareness of museum professionals regarding the available audiovisual methods and the new technologies. *The AVICOM Working Group on Photography* is devoted to the still image and is currently in the process of compiling information for a thematic directory of art and documentary photographic collections in museums and cultural establishments over the world. *The AVICOM Working Group on Multimedia* is devoted to cinema, video, multimedia (Internet source 11) and the Internet. It offers workshops for the general public and students to inform and engage them with these new technologies. This working group also organizes the *International Audiovisual Festival on Museums and Heritage* (FIAMP, Internet source 12), which promotes creation of multimedia productions by museums and cultural heritage institutions, awarding prizes for the most original productions.

## The “connected museum” disseminates heritage, serving social understanding

The social context of the organizational and educational consequences of the transformation of the “connected museum” and the methodology through which it has been achieved involving digital and social media is important to AVICOM. The recent rapid increase of various forms of social media calls for a reformulation of opportunities and obstacles in museum dialogue and practice. Visitors who are themselves adopters of digital forms of communication increasingly figure as a key target group for many museums. Much of the discussion focuses on the sociability of museum communication and interpretation and the ways in which they are brought about through digital formats. The topic follows a trend in recent museum studies of how to use digital technology to enhance communication, interaction and exchange. Social media are of particular relevance as they facilitate transformation of the museum sector and heritage domains, the effect of which is to enhance museum accessibility for potential visitors. Going online and sharing the work and learning with the connected museum changes the visitor perspective. Individuals respond to museum life online and the impact of the visitor position stimulates organizational change within the museum. This leads to meaningful two-way interaction with their audiences using tools offered by

social media and mobile technologies. By appreciating the technology we create strong synergies between the physical, online and mobile worlds; we need to observe the behaviour of audiences across these three spheres and address museum staff issues in order to be ready to respond to the increasingly connected production of content. Museums create active communicative networks, sharing important aspects with other web-based providers of digital content, thus integrating themselves into the wider society with museums having a goal of serving social understanding and responding to change.

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# THE PRESENTATION AND REPRESENTATION OF ELEMENTS OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN FILM

**Juraj Hamar and Ľubica Voľanská**

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This contribution deals with the UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* and its tools, with the main focus on short video films. In contrast to the relatively precise instructions on the written part of the nomination, there are scarcely any guidelines concerning the presentation video films. Due to the heterogeneous character of the lists and register, and the diverse perception of intangible cultural heritage in the different states parties, production of video films raises a host of questions. The second part of this contribution presents examples of three video productions for the nomination of Slovak heritage elements to the UNESCO *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*.<sup>1</sup>

**Key words:** intangible cultural heritage, UNESCO, video, documentation, presentation, representation

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## **UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* and video documentation**

The UNESCO conventions in the area of culture were created for the generation of international standards that could serve as a foundation for creating policies and strategies in this field at national level. The *Convention*

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for the *Safeguarding of the ICH* (Internet source 1), adopted in 2003, together with the *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding*, the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*, and the *Register of Best Safeguarding Practices*, represents a milestone in the development of the international policy of promoting cultural diversity. However, the need to support cultural expressions was recognised earlier with the creation of the international project *Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity* (Internet source 2) that can be traced back to 1997 and was adopted in 2001.

UNESCO supports a global vision of cultural heritage (Bitušiková 2014: 10) and so, paradoxically, the guardian of the cultural heritage against globalisation acts as a global actor defining programmes, strategies, processes, procedures and practices for the protection of heritage all over the world (Bitušiková 2014: 11). Critics (Lowenthal 1998, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004, Kurin 2004, etc.) express some doubts concerning the various *Convention* tools, especially because of excessive Eurocentrism, but the problem is much broader. An example where differences in the perception of ICH presentation immediately comes to the fore is video production for the nomination files to the UNESCO Lists and Register. In the recommendations as to how to complete the nominations forms (Internet source 3), UNESCO gives a number of specific requirements related to the written documents of the nomination dossier, but fewer guidelines concerning the video production.

The form of videos has changed markedly since the time of the *Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity*, and we do not have in mind only technical parameters and introduction of new formats. Since 2011 videos have been a strongly recommended appendix in the nomination process and in 2015 they have become mandatory (Internet source 4, ICH-02-2014-EN, Paragraph 6A). The ICH Instruction Form from 2014 (Internet source 5, ICH-02-2014-Instructions-EN, Points 20-25) specifies the technical aspects (file type, quality of resolution, the length of the video), and the cession of rights, which enables UNESCO to use the videos for non-commercial presentation of ICH elements. However, the guidelines provide no comprehensive instructions on the content or style of the videos.

What is missing is the target group: Is the video aimed at experts evaluating the content and the quality of the nomination dossier or at the broad auditorium of the General Assembly of the 2003 *Convention*? In the case of the inscription of the nominated element to one of the lists, will the video be made accessible through the UNESCO web page to the wider, non-expert public? Should video also represent a commercial opportunity for promoting the ICH element? Regarding the local communities concerned, is it possible to present the core and character of the nominated element in a responsible way to the international community in a 10-minute video and in such a way that the importance and the values of the ICH element



are revealed without uncertainty? Should the video have the character of an artistic document, an ethnographic film, a documentary or an advertising film? These are important questions related to the production of the film, relevant to the preproduction process and in postproduction.

Some of the elements (traditional rituals, craft, traditional theatre, etc.) are more attractive in the context of a visual presentation and film production than others (traditional vocal expressions, storytelling, etc.). UNESCO recommends that photographs and video should present the element in its current form. The question arises as to what percentage of the 5-10 minute video can be made up of archival shots, capturing the element's past and historical development, or information about perspectives for sustainable development and future safeguarding measures? Could photographs attached to the nomination file be part of the video? Could the video include other pictures?

The text of the nomination form is very complicated<sup>2</sup> and should take into the consideration the answers to the strict UNESCO criteria related to the evaluation of single elements – candidates for the inscription to the lists. If it is necessary 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 6, Point 122) and the production should respect the film language, then filmmakers and producers have to decide which criteria will be given priority at the expense of others. Will it be the artistic-aesthetic criterion, the expert one, the institutional one, the local one, or the UNESCO criteria? Moreover, there are also the political and diplomatic interests of states parties related to the nomination of the particular element.

The video creators from different countries thus deal with the production in their own way<sup>3</sup>, often using the learning-by-doing approach. At the beginning, the practical side of the video production certainly exceeded the theory, but as time passed, the filmmakers and professionals dealing with nomination files have met with a variety of issues.

The latest recommendations from February 2015 (Internet source 6) are currently the most accurate. According to them, the Intergovernmental Committee and the Evaluation Body<sup>4</sup> have not yet provided comprehensive instructions specifying video production, although they have discussed the issue on several occasions. During the Intergovernmental Committee

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2 As a result of many compromises originated via the nature of UNESCO procedures emerging and working in a consensus oriented environment (more in Brumann 2014: 183).

3 The situation in China is presented in Yang 2015.

4 More on the function and the work of the Intergovernmental Committee, Evaluation Body and Subsidiary Body of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the ICH* in Hamar and Voľanská (2015a).

meetings, the Subsidiary body has repeatedly encouraged the states parties to pay greater attention to the quality of the video, especially the requirement for complexity – various aspects of the nominated element should be displayed and not just one or a few selected aspects (Internet source 6, Point 118). The Consultative Body has declared it would prefer the ICH elements to be shown in their everyday context rather than on the stage or set up specifically for filming (Internet source 6, Point 119).

The Intergovernmental Committee calls on individual states parties, when preparing videos, “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” (Internet source 6, Point 121). Finally, the Intergovernmental Committee and the Consultative Body stress the importance of consistency between the nomination form and the video, explaining that “video should make use of image and sound to complement the written text with sensory experiences that cannot easily be captured in words, but members emphasize that the video is not intended to present essential description or argumentation that is lacking in the text” (Internet source 6, Point 122).

## Filming in anthropological research

In the academic sphere, visual anthropology has the longest tradition of reflection on visual phenomena: “Ethnographic visual media (...) play a significant role in the production and application of anthropological knowledge and form an integral part of the discipline course offerings.” (Internet source 7). In 2001 the American Anthropological Association issued *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Ethnographic Visual Media* defining the basic scientific, technical, ethical as well as artistic criteria for the creation of ethnographic visual media. Similar documents provide a solid foundation for our research and the future production of short video films on intangible cultural heritage.

Film as a new media was put to use for the purpose of ethnographic research<sup>5</sup> by a French scholar Félix Regnault in the same year as the Lumière brothers had their first public film presentation (1895). In general, sight is considered to be a theoretical sense. Through sight we are able to distinguish the structure, firmness or weight of materials, which means qualities usually verified by touch. But our visual perception is influenced by many factors, including physiological and cultural ones. In other words, what and how we see is often influenced by our cultural upbringing and individual interests, especially when we are looking through the lens of a camera.

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5 See the short overview of the Slovak visual anthropology by Lutherová (2008, 2010).

A complex construction such as a film or photograph has an animal origin. Corporeal images are not just the images of other bodies; they are also images of the body behind the camera and its relations with the world. (MacDougall 2006: 3)

During research into a given ICH element, the ethnologist, anthropologist, historian, sociologist, musicologist, linguist, etc. is interested in the presentation of the element in its cultural environment, with members of the community that practise their heritage element in their everyday context (place and time). Based on their presentation, the researcher collects the facts which later form a foundation of his analytical work related to the textual description of the element and to the formulation of analytic postulates. Video relates to the origins of the ICH element through processing of these facts. Alongside the subjective view of the filmmaker, a certain role is played by imagination, which has the task of representing and not presenting the ICH element.

Presentation and representation are very similar in the fact that they are displaying a certain idea that an individual has, and they include text or visuals to support the idea. The major difference is that presentation is the original idea and representation stands for an idea that is being represented by something else or something else is being used to support that idea. Essentially, presentation would be the display or proposal of the idea and then representation would take that idea but replace it with something else to prove the idea further. (Internet source 8)

Thus, the real existence of the ICH element lies in its presentation, related to reality, whereas the video about this element is its representation, partly connected to the imagination. Notwithstanding the subjective view of the filmmaker, the goal of the ethnographic film is "with all its controversy, poetry and fascinating abilities, to bring us closer to the world of others as they live it" (Porybná 2010: 9). This can present a goal of videos on ICH elements.

## Experience from Slovakia

Currently, there are three Slovak ICH elements inscribed to the UNESCO *Representative List*: *Fujara and its Music* (2008, Internet source 9) and *Music of Terchová* (2013, Internet source 10), and *Bagpipe culture* (2015, Internet source 11).

The village of Terchová in north-west Slovakia is renowned for collective vocal and instrumental music, performed by three-, four- or five-member string ensembles with a small two-string bass or diatonic button accordion. (...) The traditional musical culture, which is transmitted orally, is a matter of pride and a marker of identity among

the inhabitants of the village of Terchová and the surrounding areas. It encompasses instrumental and vocal music, dance, a knowledge of the musical tradition of Terchová, and the skills related to making musical instruments. (Internet source 10)

The video to the nomination file was composed from fragments of the ethnographic films *Slovak Folk Dances (Slovenské ľudové tance, 1952)* and *Music of Terchová (Terchovská muzika, 1984)*, made with the help of professional filmmaking technologies. In this case there was no complicated editing and postproduction present.

Bagpipes as traditional instruments, as well as the entire bagpipe culture comprising expressions and knowledge associated with bagpipes and their use, represent a long continual music tradition of peasant and shepherds who lived on the territory of Slovakia (Internet source 13, see *Bagpipes and Bagpipe Culture in Slovakia, KCTLK-RZ-NKDS-2012/011*).

The video accompanying this nomination has been edited from the film *Slovak Folk Dances (Slovenské ľudové tance, 1952)* and professional recordings created for the documentation of the contemporary form of the heritage element and its presentation. This process has been an important experience as we have deliberately tailored the style of the video to the requirements of the Evaluation Body.

Also in the process of evaluation by UNESCO is a binational nomination *Slovak and Czech Puppetry* (Internet source 12). In 2014, commission experts from the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic started to work on the joint nomination of this element (Hamar and Voľanská 2015 b). At the national level, a part of the Slovak nomination (Internet source 13, see *Traditional Puppetry in Slovakia, KCTLK-RZ-NKDS-2012/010*), was a 10 minute video. It was edited from excerpts from the film *The Life, Work and Art of the Folk Puppeteer Bohuslav Anderle in Banska Bystrica (Život, práca a umenie ľudového bábkara Bohuslava Anderleho v Banskej Bystrici, 1972)*, the amateur video *Puppeteer Anton Anderle (Bábkar Anton Anderle, 1988)*, and the video documentation on an International Festival of Traditional Puppet Theatre Anderle Radvaň (2011, 2013).

Taking into account the current criteria of Operational directives on mandatory attachments, the Slovak and Czech experts decided to engage a professional film crew to create new audiovisual work, based on archival films, photographs and new recordings. The efforts gave birth to a 10 minute film *Slovak and Czech Puppetry*, equipped with English subtitles.

To summarize, in the production of nomination videos of ICH elements, we have used archive films; video recordings of both professional and amateur production; digitised photographs and documents; and some purpose-made recordings. The existing practice of making videos in postproduction (in the

editing studio) more often results in a compilation or a collage than in an authentic, considered and systematically structured film.

We can conclude that the current discourse on the form of the compulsory visual annexes to the nomination files of UNESCO ICH lists and possible references to visual anthropology started to develop during the conference *Documenting and Presenting the Intangible Cultural Heritage with Film* (2014) in Ljubljana. We believe there is a need for a new film genre that represents (or presents?) the exceptional features of an ICH element in 10 minutes. In the future, these films will play an important role in the presentation, promotion, popularization and protection of ICH.

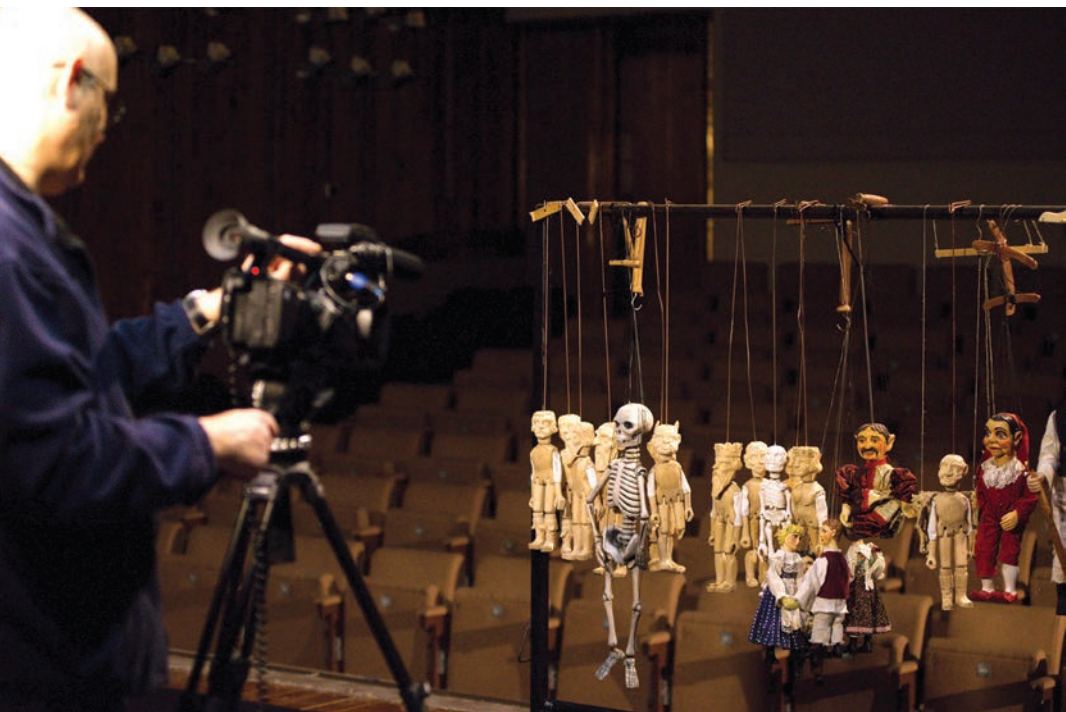


Puppeteer Rastislav Anderle, Banská Bystrica, 2011 (photo Vladimír Kysel, Archive of ICH Centre Bratislava).





Puppeteer Ivan Gontko, Banská Bystrica, 2011 (photo Vladimír Kysel, Archive of ICH Centre Bratislava).



Filming the puppets for the nomination file *Slovak and Czech Puppetry*, Bratislava, 2015 (photo Michal Veselský).



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# THE MAKING OF SHORT FILMS FOR UNESCO'S INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE LISTS AND REGISTER IN CROATIA

**Mirela Hrovatin and Darije Hrovatin**

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Having been involved in the creation of 22 films on elements of intangible cultural heritage in Croatia within activities for nomination to the UNESCO lists and register of intangible cultural heritage, the procedure, issues involved and goals of the filmmaking are discussed. The questions include the idea behind the films, the extent to which they comply with UNESCO's expectations, how experts and bearers of intangible cultural heritage were involved, etc. Based mostly on the practical aspects of film production, this contribution might also serve as a data resource for other countries nominating their elements of intangible cultural heritage to UNESCO's lists.

**Keywords:** intangible cultural heritage, UNESCO, nomination, film

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## Introduction

As an ethnologist and cultural anthropologist at the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia and a freelance film editor, we have been involved in the making of short films for the nomination of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) elements on UNESCO's ICH lists and register. The Croatian Ministry of Culture has prepared nominations for the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Representative List)*, the *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (Urgent List)* and the *Register of Best Safeguarding Practices (Register)*. The greatest amount of work was done in

2008 when it was decided that 16 nominations<sup>1</sup> needed to be prepared. All in all, 22 nomination files and 22 films have been produced at the ministry up to 2015. We here reflect on some of the issues regarding the making of the nomination films.

## Experience with the first nominations

The first UNESCO listing of ICH elements was called *The Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, 2001* (Internet source 1). It was stated that the nomination file should contain, in addition to text including analysis of reference works and a comprehensive bibliography according to common practice in the scientific and academic world, also a "video document" (Internet source 2, page 9). These materials were "documentation necessary for the evaluation of the file", which would illustrate the nomination (ibid., page 20, 21). The technical quality of the video document was prescribed by UNESCO, including its duration of a maximum 10 minutes. The content was suggested, i.e. that video should "reflect the most significant aspects of the candidature file" (ibid., page 21). The audience for the film was also made known: "the members of the Jury" (ibid., page 21) that decided upon the proclamation of the masterpieces. It could be said that the type of film was determined in large part by UNESCO's instructions. It was expected that the submission and the film would be prepared in cooperation with experts, which is clear from the section on how analysis of reference works should be written (ibid., page 21). The inclusion of experts was influenced also by our prior practice of candidatures to the *World Heritage List* (Internet source 3; Hrovatin 2014).

Croatia sent two nominations for *Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity: Lacemaking in Croatia* in 2003 and *Two-part singing and playing in the Istrian scale* in 2005. The files also contained short films especially made for the purpose of the nominations on the basis of the expert texts; however, the proposals did not meet the masterpiece criteria. After the establishment of new UNESCO ICH lists by the *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003), the proposals met the new criteria and entered the *Representative List* in 2009, both comprising slightly shortened video films. It is obvious that many factors contribute to an ICH element's inscription, with video material being only a part of the whole proposal.

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1 The decision to prepare so many nominations was based on the minister's wish to cover all the geographically and culturally specific regions in Croatia (more in Hrovatin 2014).



## The new cycle of nominations for the lists and register established by the Convention

In 2008, another 14 nomination files were prepared for the newly established *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. The main idea was to follow UNESCO's instructions about the video complementing the nomination file. Having only three months to prepare all the nominations, it was decided that most of the films should be made using material which was available at Croatian Radio and Television (CRTV). It was important to show what could not have been written in the text or seen on photos, as well as choosing good scenes that fit the rules of editing, mostly following the practice of documentary and ethnographic films. Editing was restricted by the fact that most of the scenes were taken from existing TV productions, such as documentaries, historical films, live broadcasts and entertainment programmes.

Videos are the result of a double selection: the first was made by the television crew when filming and editing TV films and the second by professionals preparing nominations. Some of the videos were shortened ready-made films, some combined scenes from several films and footage, and only a few were edited from film footage. In the end, it was ethnologists and cultural anthropologists from the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, and museums, who decided what was to be included in the nomination films, while the experts from the ministry supervised their choice and made sure that informative and custom films will suit specific purposes of enlisting.

### Characteristics of the films

As short films were part of the nomination files, they were to meet UNESCO's criteria for inscription of ICH elements to the lists, rather than to fulfil the standards of ethnological or documentary films. UNESCO's instructions for inscription of ICH elements changed over time: in 2008, a film was not obligatory, but from 2009 UNESCO strongly encouraged the sending of videos for evaluation and visibility (Internet source 4, see the 2011 ICH-02 form, page 9). More exact instructions about the video were given after 2012, stating that a "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 4, see the 2012 ICH-02 form, page 2). Instructions for inscription in 2015 say "the use of archive images and of images featuring exclusively objects or landscapes should be avoided" (Internet source 4, see the 2015 ICH-02 form, page 3).

For the ministry experts it was important that the films included several aspects of the ICH element, such as an illustration that the element is a living tradition and not a staged performance, the specifics of the element itself

(singing technique, special skills, etc.), the importance of the element for the local or broader community, the element's geographical location, some problems or good aspects of its safeguarding, and so on. Of course, it was not possible to illustrate everything in every film, but it was possible to tell a short story about the element and its importance. The basic idea behind the films was that the nomination files should present the intangible cultural heritage elements in the best possible way to a person who might never have encountered such a phenomenon.

The films by CRTV were produced by people belonging to similar cultural context of the ICH they filmed, so they knew the theme and even what was important from the point of view of the element's bearers. This was the result of a long tradition of quality documentary programming and the fact that the national TV company has a special *Department for Folk and Oral Culture Broadcasts* that films traditional culture. One of the editors is visual anthropologist Aleksej Gotthardi-Pavlovsky, who follows trends in visual anthropology and contributes to the recording of the living cultural heritage; however, he also points out that television programmes can be a sort of construct and at times even an illusion, due to the production and dramaturgical requirements of the medium (Gotthardi-Pavlovsky 2002: 217-218).

The fact that the heritage from Croatia nominated for the UNESCO ICH lists are conducted in the public sphere and only partly in private spaces was an advantage when getting the archival materials from CRTV. Some of the audiovisual materials were more representational, covering many aspects of the filmed ICH element (its history, specificities, typology, etc.), and some were directed towards interpretation of the element, mostly based on a cultural anthropological approach. For the nominations, TV films were not shortened following their structure, but scenes were chosen and edited to suit a "UNESCO narrative scheme", based on the criteria for inscription and the overall idea of the *Convention*.

No matter how good the materials were, it was of course not possible to present the totality of any of the ICH elements, as it is not possible to do this in any other medium (e. g. text, etc.), nor by experiencing it. It is known how 20th century cultural anthropologists reflected on the representation of cultures they were not part of, discussing representations of the Other, as well as representations of their own culture. The only acceptable interpretation so far is that there is no way to show any culture objectively, because each representation and interpretation is inevitably subjective (Borjan 2013: 26).

Cooperation with the outside experts on both the textual and video part of the nomination files proved to be significant for several reasons. Ethnologists and anthropologists had been researching each element for years, so they knew its characteristics and the bearers' attitudes towards it. They chose for the film those parts of the available video material that vividly depicted

the aspects which could not have been presented in the textual part of the nomination. When outside experts were unable to work on the film, those from the ministry selected what best presented the element to the evaluators. There were several problems encountered while making presentation films, such as the lack of recent material describing the living aspect and comparative material documenting the changes. However, these two aspects were explained in the nomination text. The editors chose the best scenes according to their technical quality and the established rules of editing, thus contributing much to the visual aspect of the film and its viewability. So, none of restrictions significantly influenced the nomination process.

## The diversity of approaches

We followed the aims of the different UNESCO ICH lists in texts and films. For the *Representative List* the ministry experts thought that it might be important to show how the element is lived and recreated by the community, and its significance for the bearers (how it contributes to shaping identity, how it binds the members of the community together, etc.). For the *Urgent List* it was decided to show the overall characteristics of the element and the problems of its safeguarding: why it has become endangered, how it can be revived, etc. For the *Register of Best Safeguarding Practices* the experts decided to show various efforts for the safeguarding of the element, especially the implementation results of specific projects, programmes and activities that contribute to its viability. It was thus a complex task to harmonize the textual and visual parts of nominations. The experts' view on the element was often combined with the bearers'; their statements about the element were included in some of the films.

The type of ICH also influenced the way that the element was presented in the film. Nomination films on music and dance (*Twopart Singing and Playing in the Istrian scale; Nijemo Kolo, Silent Circle Dance of the Dalmatian Hinterland; Bečarac Singing and Playing from Eastern Croatia; Klapa Multipart Singing from Dalmatia, Southern Croatia; Moreška, a Sword Dance-Drama from Korčula*) described the characteristics of music genres and their connectedness to the overall culture of the local community. In one case, nominated for the *Urgent List*, it was highlighted that the element (*Ojkanje Singing*) is endangered. Nomination films on annual customs and religious rituals (*Festivity of St. Blaise, Patron Saint of Dubrovnik; Procession Za Križen on the Island of Hvar; Spring Procession of Ljelje/Kraljice from Gorjani; Annual Carnival Bell Ringers' Pageant from the Kastav Area; Sinjska Alka, a Knights' Tournament in Sinj; Traditional Annual Carnival from Međimurje*) presented their specific characteristics, connection to cultural context, and their importance to the bearers.

The nomination films on handicrafts (*Gingerbread Craft from Northern Croatia; Traditional Manufacturing of Children's Wooden Toys in Hrvatsko*



Traditional Annual Carnival from Medimurje: children masked as *čaplje* (herons), Podturen 2008 (photo Bojan Damiš, Archive of the Croatian Ministry of Culture).

*Zagorje; Traditional Craft of Making Thickened Rekle Coats from Gradište* were mostly made by the experts, but also followed a general concept of presenting an element to the people who would see it for the first time. The film for the *Urgent List* about an endangered ICH element (*Traditional Handwheel Pottery-Making in Potravlje and Veli Iž*) was specific as the video material was very scarce. The element that has taken on a new form as a stage performance was shown in the film as it is performed today (*The Custom of Social Gathering Ličko prelo*). New footage was filmed purposely for two nomination films (*Lacemaking in Croatia; Preparation of the Traditional Dish Soparnik*), presenting the elements' basic characteristics as a type of ICH.

The film on the Batana Ecomuseum (*Community Project of Safeguarding the Living Culture of Rovinj/Rovigno: The Batana Ecomuseum*) is a part of the nomination for the *Register of Best Safeguarding Practices*. The fishing heritage and the safeguarding activities are presented from the point of view of the experts and the bearers. The film was produced by the local ecomuseum, out of the very rich footage filmed over recent years. It was created by filmmaker Tamara Nikolić Đerić\*, a member of the community and a visual anthropologist; the ministry experts inserted a short text on the phases of safeguarding.

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\* Ed. note: See article by Nikolić Đerić in this book.

Another challenge was to cooperate in making a film for a multinational nomination that would fit into the overall concept and add new aspects to the presentation. When Croatia joined the multinational nomination<sup>2</sup> on Mediterranean diet, the film already existed (*Mediterranean Diet*, 2010, 9 min.). Therefore we avoided repeating themes like picking olives, and we rather focused on showing new themes, such as traditional way of fishing (*Mediterranean Diet*, 2012, 10 min.). The film for the multinational nomination on spring celebrations presents some of the shared aspects and some of the unique aspects of Saint George's Day in the Croatian local community that was chosen as representative for this nomination. The film (*Spring Celebration Hidrellez/Saint George's Day*) is a compilation of separately told stories about common element in the countries participating in the nomination<sup>3</sup>.

## Conclusion

The fact that the Croatian experts and filmmakers had a good knowledge of the nominated heritage elements was a key factor in producing short nomination films. The experts at the Croatian Ministry of Culture ensured the monitoring of the processes of selecting video material and editing according to UNESCO's general instructions on the making of the nomination files. The short films made as part of the Croatian nomination files had two main 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. Although the UNESCO's instructions framed the style and the content of these films, we had possibility to make variations in representation of the element and in choice of the aspects presented.

As all films, the nomination films are subjective constructions, shaped by a variety of factors. They were influenced by the UNESCO instructions; by the limited time available; by the type of intangible cultural heritage; by the archival material of the national television company and other sources; by the experts' and the bearers' attitudes toward the element and the film production; by the approach of the experts to the nomination files; by the approach of video editors to ICH elements and video material. In our opinion, no fixed pattern of nomination films can be defined and each film has to be made according to the specifics of the element presented and the list for which it is nominated. We believe that each element of intangible cultural heritage deserves to be treated as unique, respecting the community and taking into consideration UNESCO's expectations.

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# NEW MEDIA AND SENSORY ETHNOGRAPHY IN RESEARCHING AND TRANSMITTING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

**Tamara Nikolić Đerić**

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The author traces briefly the historical development of the visual documentation of culture, arguing for an active use of participatory research and digital technologies as a consequence of the technological revolution that began with the introduction of daguerreotype. Sensory ethnography and new media are discussed as tools in documenting and interpreting intangible cultural heritage, taking into account possible constraints when entering the digital arena and their great potential in today's collaborative, shared and digital environment. They are in line with the postmodern critique of the authoritative scientific voice and the challenges communities face when safeguarding their intangible culture.

**Keywords:** visual anthropology, sensory ethnography, new media, intangible cultural heritage

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## Visual documentation of cultural heritage

I believe that the visual documentation of culture started with the first cave paintings and activities known today as tribal art. People always had the need to visualize their everyday life, their fears and successes. These practices are not of course linked directly to a purposeful act of documenting in the scientific system of values, but emphasize the nature of humanity. This escalated after the introduction of the daguerreotype, the first publicly announced photographic process which paved the way to the technological revolution. The main characteristics of photography (and later on moving

pictures) are the power of “freezing” and multiplying visual (later also audio) information in a relatively short period, as well as its wide distribution. Its features, when dealing with researching and contextualizing culture, were soon realised by Felix Regnault, a young French anthropologist who used time-sequence photography in his comparative study of human behaviour. Already in 1900, Regnault and his colleague Léon Azoulay conceived an audiovisual museum of man, explaining that “having a loom, a lathe, or a javelin is not enough; one must also know how these things are used” (Regnault in Rouch 2003: 81). The phrase “how these things are used” today is popularly articulated through the concept of intangible cultural heritage (ICH).

From simple reproduction techniques and basic documentation of a human walking, jumping or climbing to today’s collaborative, shared and digital environment, visual anthropology as a discipline has accumulated a large corpus of documentation as well as theoretical and critical knowledge on (visual) representations of people and cultures in a variety of contexts. The invention of photography brought endless possibilities to anthropologists. These possibilities were reflected in anthropometry, but also in the desire for anthropology to obtain the status of an empirical science by means of the presumed objectivity of photography. To outline three crucial stages, I will cite a paragraph from my previous work on colonial photography, based on the analysis of the photographic collection of the Ethnographic Museum of Istria.

Until the 1960s the mere act of taking photographs had to be imperceptible and transparent. Anthropologists assumed the role of mediators who used their forceful “voices” to replace personal fieldwork experience (Edwards 2011: 161). (...) A renewed interest in photography, but mostly in the domain of analysis and critique, happened almost in parallel with the poststructuralist turn in anthropology. (...) Anthropologists turned to colonial photography, in compliance with the contemporary political and ideological context. Research emphasized the construction of categories such as race, class and gender. (...) Modern research emphasizes the rigidity of the postcolonial critique considering that such an articulation of power structures only additionally confirmed the power they intended to criticise. (Nikolić Đerić, Internet source 1)

Multivocality and dialogue with the members of the represented have become the new guidelines within (visual) anthropological research. Technological potential is in line with the postmodernist critique of the authoritative scientist as it gives voice to anthropological subjects. Still, from the perspective of a Croatian ethnologist and cultural anthropologist (myself), it seems there is a lasting unease when talking about new media in researching and transmitting culture in general or ICH specifically to a community/public/individual. Acknowledging possible constraints caused by ethical issues of representation in the digital environment, the lack of control of possible manipulation of

digital content, the addictiveness of virtual reality and/or digital gadgets etc., I speak for an active and responsible use of new media in transmitting ICH based on positive examples of synergy between digital technology and intangible heritage. Through familiarity with, researching and adopting new media we can actively reinforce our audience.

## **New media**

The term has been used since the 1970s by researchers conducting social, psychological, economic, political and cultural studies of information and communication technologies. But as the field met with enormous growth in the 1990s – as CD-ROM and Internet technologies became popular – its meanings changed significantly. (Sauer, Internet source 2)

New media can be characterized by the varied use of images, words and sounds in a digital context. These data form a network figuratively called a *nest*:

... nesting (most commonly seen in text or image hyperlinking) is a format that fosters organization in a way in which elements interact with one another instead of simply following a straight order. New media requires a nonlinear interpretation, since many sources are often oriented around the same subject-centre, but are not always collated. At the end of the day all this means that one of the primary characteristics of new media is that it is freed from the linear restrictions of older formats such as newspapers, books, and magazines. (Socha and Eber-Schmid, Internet source 3)

The interactivity of the media, the possibility of nonlinear interpretation as well as its worldwide easy accessibility positions new media as an emerging tool in interpreting, documenting and transmitting ICH. It is not the media or technology itself, but rather the interactive concept that makes it innovative. Living in a participatory culture faces anthropologists with great challenges – we are not exclusive interpreters, just as tradition bearers are not only consumers, but also producers from the earliest age. Their creative interpretations may upgrade our own (multimedia) research.

## **Sensory anthropology and sensory ethnography**

Using the term sensory anthropology, I draw its meaning from Sarah Pink's work (2009) which juxtaposes sensory anthropology with the anthropology of the senses as promoted by David Howes, arguing that it accentuates the role of sensory experience in scientific research. Howes, on the other hand, stands for a discipline concerned with the study of senses in culture to understand

the way people interact with others and their surroundings (Howes 2004). Sensory ethnography is here seen as a method that logically sequences the practice of reflection in anthropology which was criticised for its neglect of the bodily experience and almost exclusive textual strategies in representing cultures (Bagarić 2013). In *Doing Sensory Ethnography* (Pink 2009) the author's starting point is the multisensoriality of experience, perception, knowing and practice.

Sensory ethnography is a process of doing ethnography that accounts for how this multisensoriality is integral both to the lives of people who participate in the research and to how we ethnographers practice our craft. (Pink 2009: 1)

### **Intangible cultural heritage as a research subject**

As ethnologists dealing with intangible cultural heritage, we are confronted with understanding, documenting, interpreting and transferring someone's knowledge, skills, language, dances, world-views etc. We are acting from two basic positions. One is oriented toward supporting communities in safeguarding their heritage. These activities comprise assistance in researching and writing studies on cultural phenomena. We are involved in organizing workshops for transferring knowledge to younger generations or for simply documenting and presenting the phenomena to a wider audience. The other position is somehow that of an outsider. As researchers in the broad field of culture, we have a critical view which can also be applied to understanding how cultural policies on ICH affected phenomena and communities. I believe that our endeavour in both scenarios is achievable through the sensorial strategies presented in Laurent Van Lancker's work, as well as the technological potential of the digital environment.

In 2009 the Ethnographic Museum of Istria started the first ethnographic film festival in Croatia *ETNOFILM*. From the very beginning the festival was oriented towards documenting and creatively interpreting intangible heritage and culture in general. Our aim is to help local communities to creatively interpret their own heritage, as well as to develop new methodologies and tools for professionals in the fields of ethnology to gain understanding of the phenomena and good practices in transmitting ICH. For that purpose we organize visual-anthropology workshops during the *ETNOFILM* festival. We started with basic technical skills in filming and editing, and continued with producing complete 3 minute films, photographic workshops and a hypermedia workshop with Peter Biella. In 2015 we started the project *Sensory ethnography and new media in researching and interpreting ICH* in collaboration with the Soundimageculture organization from Belgium under



the mentorship of Laurent Van Lancker<sup>1</sup>. In 2016 we hope to see completed audiovisual works by our students coming from the universities of Aarhus, Berlin, Ljubljana and Zagreb who attended the first cycle of the workshop.

## Sensory strategies

I intend to identify some basic sensorial strategies that could be applied to ICH filmmaking with the aim of presenting culture as lived by the community involved. During the *ETNOFILM* visual anthropology workshop Van Lancker started the lectures by presenting the experience of anthropologist and ethnomusicologist Steven Felds during fieldwork with the Kaluli people. Felds was documenting a ritual in which a boy becomes a *muni* bird, decorated with feathers of different colours. After seeing the portraits made by Felds, the boy was not satisfied with the representation; "This isn't me becoming a bird." After a longer period with the Kaluli, the pictures showed a colourful chaos. Seeing these, the boy said, "Yes, this is me becoming a bird".

By understanding cultural phenomena and including their bearers in the process of documentation and research through camera, we as ethnologists are giving voice to the subjects. The question is how to convey knowledge, skills, and feelings to a professional and/or wider public. By definition an ICH phenomenon is lived by a community and felt as a common identity marker. Can ethnologists transmit the feeling, identifying with what matters and not solely with the context created by professional classification?

Here I summarise the strategies used in Van Lancker's work that helped opening a new space for rethinking multimedia documentation of ICH.

Creating a sensorial documentary is not just about making haptic images and sounds but also about putting into play specific documentary strategies: asynchronicity, decontextualisation, and cinematic imagination. (Van Lancker 2013: 135)

These three strategies were used in various projects. After analysing them in relation to examples by Van Lancker I will try to connect them with Istrian project by elementary school students.

Asynchronicity questions how the interplay of sound and image can induce a more synaesthetic sense production, more corporeal experiences, and a more poetical knowledge. (Van Lancker 2013: 137)

In his documentary *Surya* (2006), dealing with storytellers, Van Lancker uses asynchronous images and sounds from his fieldwork, "which in an

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1 I thank Professor Van Lancker for his help in developing sensorial strategies in filmmaking as well as for his thoughtful insights during the *ETNOFILM* visual anthropology workshop in 2015.

impressionistic way evoke the journey of the filmmaker” (Van Lancker 2013: 136) and performances from the storytellers with synchronous sounds. Different film techniques were used and storytellers were asked to look directly into the camera addressing the spectators in front of the screen as the aim of the film was to transmit the sensations lived in direct contact with the performers.

Decontextualisation is a strategy proposing an alternative to the dominant principle – found in almost any television documentary or ethnographic film – that states that in order to present a culture it is always necessary to start with a mapping of the place of research or filming. (Van Lancker 2013: 140)

In his film *Surya* Van Lancker used a topographic approach rather than a geographic one. He avoided information that would contextualize the oral practice. In this way he managed to situate the stories in culturally specific settings rather than nation states. It is important to note that his research journey started in Turkey and ended in India. I find this approach appealing for various phenomena that were acknowledged as multinational intangible heritage such as the *Mediterranean diet* and *Falconry*. It could also be used in representing different musical traditions in the Balkans such as *ganga* singing.

The cinematic imagination is achieved by using different film formats or creatively combining sounds and images.

To approach filmmaking as a painter requires considering sound and image in all their sensory and synaesthetic possibilities – different materials become the palette at my disposal, to use to convey sensations, impressions, and intentions. Many films use a change in materiality to signal a change in point of view – for instance, using super 8 mm to invoke childhood or memory. I do not adopt the same strategy; in *Surya* I mix super 8, photography, and DV video to play both with material appearances (texture, grain, colours) and the different feelings associated with them. (Van Lancker 2013: 138)

## Online projects

To proceed to the new media-based research or digital ethnography I would like to mention another work by Laurent Van Lancker and Marc Colpaert. *Diwans.org* is an online project which best reflects the principles of collaborative authorship and shared experience.

[*Diwans.org*] is generated by people around the world who are invited to produce and upload audiovisual creations inspired by the poetry of the Persian poet Hafez and the German writer Goethe. *Diwans.org* also exists as a live performance or installation. (Internet source 4)

Further, an interactive and asynchronous presentation of Chilean culture comes from the authors Pablo Ocqueteau and Philine von Düssel.

*Aysénprofundo.cl* is a multimedia document containing video, text, audio and image that bring us into the workshops and homes of the region, revealing secrets of crafts and traditions to younger generations and to those who wish to discover how people live in the southern lands of Chile. (Internet source 5)

## Personal experiences

In my work with the Batana Ecomuseum I've been involved in filming and editing a video presentation of the museum for inclusion in UNESCO's *Register of Best Safeguarding Practices*. We used old photos, digitized historical maps and sound records, new videos produced by heritage bearers during festivities and footage by TV professionals. My aim was to present the continuity of the activities involved but also to give a "taste" of the varied and lived phenomena of intangible heritage. The experience of doing a film in a short period without the possibility of stronger interaction with the bearers was limiting, but for a presentational purpose the result was satisfying for everyone.

The film is 10 minutes long and it was done in close collaboration with members of the Ecomuseum in terms of narrating the story they wanted to tell, using footage they had in their archive as well as checking the final result and adding the musical tradition they felt to be important. The film is structured in four parts: socio-historical and geographic setting, establishment of the Ecomuseum, activities conducted and viability. There is a strong emphasis on language and music tradition so digitized photos, postcards and geographic map are combined with sounds of the *bitinada*<sup>2</sup> recorded in the 1960's. (Internet source 6)

This year, at the Ecomuseum the project *iEcomuseum: New technologies in transferring knowledge on ICH* was started (Internet source 8). Six primary school children produced brilliant digital books and films connected with a *batana* boat. Without any lecture in sensory ethnography they used asynchronicity, de-contextualization and cinematic imagination to convey their experiences. They used two languages spontaneously so as to present a culturally specific setting of the bilingual town of Rovinj/Rovigno, they edited the film by combining the sound of the hammer used to build the *batana* boat and shots of seagulls. Finally, they used their own digital drawings to add

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2 *Bitinàda* is an original expression of Rovinj's folk songs and a method of performing musical accompaniment with a singer's voice. When a soloist or a duet intones the song, *bitinadùri* begin to imitate the sounds of various musical instruments with their voices. (Internet source 7)



Primary school student documenting the building of the *batana* boat during the workshop *iEcomuseum*, Rovinj, 2015 (photo Kosjenka Brajdić Petek).

more personality to their interpretation of the *batana* boat and the cultural phenomena connected with it.

I found this to be a positive example of how digital technologies can be useful in documenting ICH, but what is more important I saw it as an opportunity to connect children and youngsters to their own cultural heritage. The problem of intangible cultural heritage is that it is mostly practiced by elders. The Ecomuseum is faced with a lack of young members who would continue the traditions of boat building, the Istriot dialect and *bitinada* singing as well as traditional gastronomy. By engaging them with new technologies we managed to get children frequenting the Ecomuseum for a month. They read all the labels, talked to elder members, filmed the process of building, recorded the sound of the *bitinada* singers and rounded the whole story with their own comments or drawings showing a personal connection with the local heritage.

At the end of the day I believe that the enthusiasm I saw during this month is a starting point for the future of Rovinj's intangible heritage. The fact that the Ethnographic Museum of Istria was part of the project demonstrates the need for mutual cooperation between ethnologists and bearers of local culture.



Collage of photographs taken during the workshop iEcomuseum; the *batana* boat on the right, Rovinj, 2015 (archive of the Batana Ecomuseum).

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# VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE VISUALISATION OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE WITHIN THE UNESCO FRAMEWORK

**Nadja Valentinčič Furlan**

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The author discusses the relationship between visual anthropology and the visualisation of the intangible cultural heritage within the UNESCO framework, referring to analysis of UNESCO guidelines and the practical experience of the Coordinator for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Slovenia. Documenting and presenting the intangible cultural heritage with film, she operates within three sets of parameters: the principles and ethical code of visual anthropology; UNESCO objectives and recommendations; and findings gained through the inclusion of films in museum exhibitions and online. She argues that the website of the Slovene Coordinator and the UNESCO portal function as virtual internet collections with the potential for virtual exhibition, which is why she supports the complementarity of their modes of communication.

**Key words:** intangible cultural heritage, visual anthropology, film, museum, virtual collection

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## **Safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage**

In 2003, UNESCO adopted the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Convention)*, in which this type of heritage is defined as:

the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated

therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity (Internet source 1, Article 2/1).

The aims of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH) are to ensure respect for cultural diversity and human creativity, to raise awareness of the importance of the ICH at the local, national and international level, and to ensure international cooperation (Internet source 1, Article 1).

Slovenia ratified the UNESCO *Convention* in 2008 and established *The Register of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*<sup>1</sup>, maintained by the Ministry of Culture of The Republic of Slovenia. The first Coordinator for the Safeguarding of the ICH was the Institute of Slovene Ethnology at the Research Centre of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts; in 2011 the Slovene Ethnographic Museum was appointed the new coordinator. Department for Ethnographic Film took on the responsibility for visual ethnography.

The Coordinator's working group consists of ethnologists and anthropologists from national and regional museums, the Institute of Slovene Ethnology and the Institute of Ethnomusicology at the Research Centre of the SASA, the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the Faculty of Arts, the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia, and representatives from the Ministry of Culture and the Slovenian National Commission for UNESCO. There are 45 elements and 125 heritage bearers in the national register (data from December 2015). Textual data, photographs and a characteristic video<sup>2</sup> on each element are available on the Coordinator's web page (Internet source 2).

So far, Slovenia has nominated two elements to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. The *Škofja Loka passion play* (Internet source 3) is in the process for 2016.

## Visual anthropology and intangible cultural heritage

The Department for Ethnographic Film at the SEM bases the documentation of intangible cultural heritage and the production of representative videos for the national register on visual anthropology, mostly on activities where the

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- 1 The official Slovene name for this type of heritage is the "living cultural heritage", based on national legislation from 2008. The current Coordinator is striving for unified terminology.
  - 2 The expression denotes a (maximum of one) film that presents an element in the Slovene *Register*.

visual medium is used to describe and analyse culture; the other part of its activities that study visible cultural forms (cf. MacDougall 1997: 283) can be used for the analysis of the visual characteristics of ICH elements and their media representations.

The *Society for Visual Anthropology* classifies visual products into eight categories: research footage and documentation intended for analysis; ethnographic media contributing to theoretical discussion; innovations in new media forms; media designed to enhance teaching; media produced for television broadcasts and other forms of mass communication; and applied media made with and for the benefit of a particular community, government or business; curating film festivals; and curating exhibits of ethnographic visual media (Internet source 4). Characteristic videos are closest to applied films: they are made in cooperation with the ICH bearers with the aim of improving the understanding of the heritage and of promoting it, and in the hope that they will contribute to the development of local communities whilst respecting the requirements and objectives of UNESCO.

So, how can we document and then present ICH phenomena (practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills), their bearers (communities, groups, individuals), the natural and cultural environment (space, tools, objects, products), and creativity, continuity and identity – all that intangible cultural heritage encompasses? Visual ethnography like the field research aspect of visual anthropology provides good foundations for the documentation and presentation of various types of ICH, such as “oral traditions and language; performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship” (*Convention*, Internet source 1, Article 2/2). In practice, a great deal of the registered heritage elements are connected to annual customs and traditional working practices in crafts and farming, and these are the themes that have been most frequently dealt with in visual studies and ethnographic films by Slovene ethnologists.<sup>3</sup>

As a curator of ethnographic film I believe that the most important thing when documenting an ICH phenomenon is to record its genuine image and its bearers in the original environment (Valentinčič Furlan 2014: 53) without interfering in the event in the sense of directing it, whilst at the same time being aware that the presence of the researcher with camera does influence it. Visual anthropologists see research work as an encounter between a researcher and the studied community (Worth 1980: 17, MacDougall 1995: 125), and the film as a result of this encounter.

Awareness of the presence of a researcher with a camera is much lower when recording a lively Shrovetide custom with numerous masked characters moving around a village and communicating with the audience than when

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3 We began using film in ethnology in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



filming a craftswoman making small paper flowers in the privacy of her home. In the former example, due to the intense activity and the public space, the ICH bearers will pay much less attention to a researcher with a camera than in the latter (Heider 1980: 50-55, de Heusch 1988: 48-149). The manner of filming will thus be adapted to the nature of the event, which will be dynamic in the first example and intimately calm in the second, so as to record also the atmosphere of the event. When recording a workshop for the making of traditional Palm Sunday bunches organised by a local society for a larger group of people, the awareness of the camera's presence will be medium level, whilst the researcher will face the challenge of how to simultaneously document the working procedures, the learning process and the mood of the workshop.



The author films a workshop on the making of Palm Sunday bunches, organised by the Bača Heritage Society, Podbrdo, 2014 (photo Cveto Zgaga).

The advantage of filming intangible cultural heritage for the register is that the bearers are generally willing to be recorded and may even be expecting our arrival, so it is relatively easy to arrange the filming. When ICH elements including a larger number of bearers are involved, such as groups of *kurenti* carnival figures or the makers of paper flowers, it is a dilemma how to choose



the most representative group or individual, who will appear convincingly in the film. In visual anthropology, this is known as the casting issue (Temaner in Quinn 1975: 61). When filming for the Slovene register there is often no single right answer, as another group or individual may be equally suitable.

From the viewpoint of visual anthropology, the restriction of the length of videos for UNESCO and national registers and lists to between 5 and 10 minutes is significant. In general, this length does not facilitate a comprehensive treatment of the chosen ICH element and its bearers. For the Slovene register we edit a condensed presentation of the whole event or procedure, and sometimes we show the most characteristic part. For a comprehensive, in-depth presentation of an intangible cultural heritage element it is more productive to plan a longer ethnographic film.

In our research through the camera and in structuring films, visual anthropologists are bound by an ethical approach to the studied community. At the Slovene Ethnographic Museum we take care that our films present the heritage and its bearers respectfully. We find it important that the depicted community can identify with the film presentation. After a rapid start of field recordings for the purpose of the Slovene *Register*, we must conclude that it is necessary to work in-depth with each community even (or especially) in the case of short, concise films.

## UNESCO premises from the viewpoint of visual anthropology

UNESCO considers photographs<sup>4</sup> of ICH elements as mandatory components of the nominations for inclusion in the *Representative List of the ICH of Humanity (Representative List)*, the *List of ICH in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (Urgent List)*, and in the *Register of Best Safeguarding Practices (Register)*, while video varies from highly recommended to mandatory component of nomination<sup>5</sup>. UNESCO presents these elements on all three constituent parts<sup>6</sup> on the internet portal (Internet source 5).

From the viewpoint of users and of visual anthropology, UNESCO's systematic visualization of intangible cultural heritage is very significant. Until now, UNESCO has not taken full advantage of the findings of visual anthropology and its practical experience; however, it has recently integrated some of

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4 Photographs are not dealt with here; however, it would be valuable to analyse what kind of photos are most frequently included to the nomination files and what visual data they contain.

5 Since 2011 video has been a mandatory constituent part of nominations for the *Urgent List* and the *Register*; for the *Representative List* it became mandatory for the 2015 nominations. I thank Marius Tukaj from the UNESCO Section for ICH for exact data.

6 Only two ICH elements from Mali inscribed to the *Representative List* in 2009 do not include video, reports Marius Tukaj.

the issues involved. In 2013, the *Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* asked the advisory bodies to identify in the 2013 cycle good examples of videos<sup>7</sup>. Analysis of the Instructions<sup>8</sup> for the nomination of elements (Internet Source 6) since 2012 and of the *Aide Memoire*<sup>9</sup> (Internet source 7) indicates improvements are in harmony with the principles of visual anthropology.

UNESCO's fundamental instruction is that "video should represent different aspects of the element in its current state, focussing in particular on its role within its community, its transmission processes and any challenges it faces" (Internet source 6, Point 16). In the initial years, videos in the genre of television news and promotional videos were rather common on the UNESCO portal; thus, from the viewpoint of visual anthropology we strongly support the UNESCO recommendations that the filmmakers should not focus on advertising, but on the depiction of the ICH element and its social background. "The purpose of the videos is to contextualize the element rather than to advertise it" (Internet source 7, Point 118).

The documents stress the active role of the heritage bearers: "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<sup>10</sup>" (Internet source 6, Point 17). Visual anthropologists avoid third-person commentaries and also live comments by experts as they can "be based on an ideological disposition of researchers" who "through manipulation of 'objectively' ascertained facts actually express their ideological (cultural, aesthetic, moral, authorial, commercial) interests, rather than the state of the culture dealt with" (Križnar 1996: 119). Instead, we are in favour of an emic, native's view of culture, and that is why we let the ICH bearers speak for themselves. Similar views can be observed in the *Aide Memoire* (Internet source 7, Points 119 and 121).

The recommendation that an English or French translation should be provided via subtitles so that the language of the speaker remains audible (Internet

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7 Data from an email, dated 19 March 2013, signed by Helena Drobná, Regional Officer for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

8 Reference here to the latest version: *Instructions, Urgent Safeguarding List with International Assistance*, with the code ICH-01bis-2016-Instructions-EN, where points 16 to 28 refer to video. Because of amendments, the point numbers in this document do not correspond with the numbering in the older documents.

9 The *Aide Memoire* summarises the observations of the *Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of ICH* since 2014; in the newest variant of the *Aide Memoire for the Representative list of the ICH*, with the code ICH-02-2016\_aide-mémoire-EN, dated 26.2.2015, video is dealt with in Points 118 and 122.

10 This refers to comments written by an external expert and read by an announcer not seen in the video; therefore also terms 'off-camera commentary' or 'off commentary' are used.

source 6, Point 23) is also in line with the principles of visual anthropology. In the early years, statements in videos were often dubbed, thus “overriding” the speaker’s words in his own language, which resulted in the loss of an important component of the intangible cultural heritage shown.

UNESCO advises video makers “to avoid potential and unintended violent messages (...), for example when the practice includes the presence of weapons” (Internet source 7, Point 120), torturing people or sacrificing animals.<sup>11</sup> In visual anthropology this is also a sensitive issue that is resolved by each researcher after thorough reflection on the content, methodology, the ethical code of the discipline and on the basis of personal ethics.

The UNESCO instructions state that only videos “covered by the cessions of rights will be considered” (Internet source 6, Point 18). Video makers occasionally misunderstand that they have to cede copyright fully. Different countries regulate copyright in different ways; in Europe, the model that differentiates between moral and material copyright prevails, and this is also the case in Slovenia. According to the *Copyright and Related Rights Act*, copyright holders can give up their material copyright (i.e. the fee for using the audiovisual work), but they cannot give up their moral copyright (Trampuž et al. 1997: 253) as in Slovenia authorship is non-transferrable.

With regard to the Slovene register, all the makers and producers of representative videos sign a statement<sup>12</sup> that they “transfer to the Republic of Slovenia and the Ministry of Culture as the manager of the *Register of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* and to the Coordinator for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage all the material copyrights with no limitations in time or space” and that “they give their permission also for the use of excerpts from the representative video for the presentation and promotion of the national register, whilst new permissions are required for other types of interventions into the product (re-editing).” The statement also says that “the transfer of the material rights is non-exclusive”<sup>13</sup> and that the “recipient of the rights can transfer these rights to third persons”.

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11 This was also reported by colleagues who took part in the decision-making process in Paris in 2014. The makers of the *Škofja Loka Passion Play* video, prior to submitting a supplemented nomination, excluded the “bloody” scenes and the whipping of Jesus Christ.

12 The statement was drawn up by the legal services at the Ministry of Culture on the basis of the UNESCO statement (Internet source 8); the museum then suggested that producers should be included since they invest money, time and knowledge in the videos, and we also added a sentence about the protection of the integrity of the audiovisual work. The form is prepared by the Department for Ethnographic Film and submitted for signature to all the video makers and producers; one copy is then given to every signatory, to the Ministry of Culture, the Coordinator of safeguarding the ICH, and one is archived by the Department for Ethnographic Film.

13 This means that the video makers and producers can continue to show and use the video themselves.

Characteristic videos for the ICH elements in the Slovene register are produced by the two Coordinators and also by other producers, such as regional museums and local production companies. Moreover, some members of local communities are qualified for documenting the intangible cultural heritage and they often have the best access to the heritage and its bearers. At the Department for Ethnographic Film, we are well aware of the contemporary perspective on heritage as a negotiated category and we appreciate the emic point of view. As representatives of the Coordinator for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage we are available for explanation and cooperation, and we have also drawn up guidelines for the creation of representative videos for the Slovene Register (Valentinčič Furlan 2012) and for the UNESCO lists and register (Valentinčič Furlan 2013). Participation supports the emancipation of all the participants in the production process.



Rok Borštnik films Milka Debeljak decorating a *poprtnik* Christmas loaf, produced by the local organisation Parnas, Gornje Retje, Velike Lašče, 2013 (photo Metka Starič).

## The complementarity of the communication modes used on the portals

In the twenty-first century internet portals facilitate very democratic access to data, particularly to audiovisual content. On the UNESCO portal (Internet source 5) we can see that there are 391 elements included in the *Representative List*, the *Urgent List*, and the *Register* (data from December 2015); they are presented through three media – text, photographs and video. Individual countries have different strategies regarding the visualisation of ICH elements for UNESCO lists and register, as well as for the prior level; some of them do not include videos in national registers. On the website of the Slovene Coordinator, ICH elements can be learnt about through text, photographs and film (Internet source 2). At the moment 11 representative videos are available, whilst 8 are in the process of postproduction.

In addition to a large amount of data, the UNESCO portal presents a growing virtual internet collection of ICH elements from around the world, with the potential of a virtual exhibition. This leads us to consider the relationship between the text of the nomination and the video, in which we also draw on the conclusions reached when creating exhibitions that include several media (Valentinčič Furlan 2015: 185-187, 192) or publishing films and clips on web pages.

UNESCO recommends that there is a close correspondence and coherence between the description of the nomination form and the video for the ICH element (Internet source 6, Point 16). Correspondence is necessary, but duplicating data in the two media or summarising the text in the video are not. The most recent document stresses “the video should make use of image and sound to complement the written text with sensory experiences that cannot easily be captured in words” (Internet source 7, Point 122). In the Slovene Ethnographic Museum, we are similarly in favour of the two modes being complementary, fully developing the strengths of each medium. The nomination text describes an ICH element, its history and territory, listing the bearers and defining safeguarding measures; the video directly depicts the element and its bearers, allowing them to express their points of view. Descriptions, explanations, lists, justifications and generalisation ‘kill’ a film (Valentinčič Furlan 2009: 153), as they may bore the viewers, while the live presence of people makes it easier for the viewers to identify with the bearers and their heritage.

In conclusion, let me reflect on how visual anthropology can enrich the visualisation of ICH in the UNESCO framework and vice versa. Films for UNESCO lists and register are very specific forms of audiovisual messages, initially modelled after television news and tourist films. UNESCO’s latest recommendations include some fundamental guidelines of visual anthropology, yet only in the future can we make an assessment to what

extent they have been adopted by filmmakers. Can basic scholarly premises successfully penetrate film practice around the world through the UNESCO framework of ICH safeguarding? Shall filmmakers facilitate more active participation of heritage bearers in the production process?

Visual anthropologists, in addition to studying intangible cultural heritage, can analyse the visual representations of ICH elements within the UNESCO framework. In doing so, it would be worth studying the style and structure of films, their production processes and who has been involved in (heritage bearers, researchers, filmmakers, producers and also if their contributions are revealed in film credits); and furthermore, the target audience, the use and the impact of these films on the presented heritage phenomenon, its bearers and the local community, education processes, the mass media, the promotion of heritage and states, the tourist industry and so on.

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14 UNESCO constantly refreshes and complements its sources 5-7, so point numbering might not match anymore in the future.

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