

V. The Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

Royal ancestral ritual in the Jongmyo shrine and its music (2001)

The Jongmyo Shrine in Seoul is the setting for a Confucian ritual dedicated to the ancestors of the Joseon dynasty (14th to the 19th century) that encompasses song, dance and music. The ritual is practised once a year on the first Sunday in May and is organized by the descendants of the royal family. It offers a unique example of a Confucian ritual, which is no longer celebrated in China. The tradition is inspired by classical Chinese texts concerning the cult of ancestors and the notion of filial piety. It also includes a prayer for the eternal peace of the ancestors' spirits in a shrine conceived as their spiritual resting place.

The order of the ceremony was defined in the fifteenth century and most elements have remained unchanged until today. During the rite, the priests, dressed in ritual costume with a crown for the king and diadems for the others, make offerings of food and wine in ritual vessels. The Jongmyo Jerye is music played to accompany the rituals and is performed on traditional instruments, such as gongs, bells, lutes, zithers and flutes.

The dances are performed by 64 dancers in 8 lines representing the opposing yet complementary forces of Yin and Yang as set out in the Confucian texts. The Munmu dance, accompanied by the harmonious and soothing Botaepyong music, is characterized by a first step to the left. While the Munmu dance symbolizes the force of the Yang, the Mumu dance, accompanied by Jeongdaeeop music and characterized by a movement to the right, represents the force of the Yin.

The ancestral ritual is nowadays often considered to be devoid of meaning, especially in the context of the growing importance of Christianity. However, the ritual and its music are protected through the National List of Intangible Heritage and the 1982 Law for the Protection of Cultural Property.

Pansori epic chant (2003)

Pansori is a genre of musical storytelling performed by a vocalist and a drummer. This popular tradition, characterized by expressive singing, stylized speech, a repertory of narratives and gesture, embraces both elite and folk culture. During performances lasting up to eight hours, a male or female singer,

accompanied by a single barrel drum, improvises on texts that combine rural and erudite literary expressions.

The term Pansori is derived from the Korean words *pan*, meaning “a place where many people gather”, and *sori* meaning “song”. Pansori originated in south-west Korea in the seventeenth century, probably as a new expression of the narrative songs of shamans. It remained an oral tradition among the common people until the late nineteenth century, by which time it acquired more sophisticated literary content and enjoyed considerable popularity among the urban elite. The settings, characters and situations that make up the Pansori universe are rooted in the Korea of the Joseon period (1392-1910). Pansori singers undergo long and rigorous training to master the wide range of distinct vocal timbres and to memorize the complex repertoires. Many virtuosos have developed personal interpretive styles and are renowned for their particular manner of performing specific episodes.

Threatened by Korea’s rapid modernization, Pansori was designated a National Intangible Cultural Property in 1964. This measure spurred generous institutional support, which in turn fostered the revival of this tradition. Although Pansori remains one of the most prominent genres among traditional stage arts, it has lost much of its original spontaneous character. Ironically, this recent evolution is a direct result of the preservation process itself, for improvisation is tending to be stifled by the increasing number of written texts. Indeed, few singers nowadays can successfully improvise, and contemporary audiences

Gangneung Danoje festival (2005)

The annual Gangneung Danoje Festival takes place in the town of Gangneung and its surroundings, situated east of the Taebaek Mountain Range on the Korean peninsula. The festival includes a shamanistic ritual on the Daegwallyeong Ridge, which pays tribute to the mountain deity and male and female tutelary deities. It encompasses traditional music and Odokddegi folk songs, the Gwanno mask drama, oral narrative poetry, and various popular pastimes. The Nanjang market, Korea’s largest outdoor marketplace, is today a major element of the festival, where local products and handicrafts are sold and contests, games and circus performances take place.

The four-week long festival begins with the brewing of a sacred liquor and the Dano shamanistic rituals, in which a central role is played by a sacred tree, the *sinmok*, and the *hwagae*, a ritual object made of feathers, bells and bamboo wood. One of the specific features of the festival is the coexistence of Confucian, shamanistic and Buddhist rituals. Through the rituals devoted to the deities, the region is believed to remain unaffected by natural disasters, allowing all its

residents to live in peace and prosperity. Every year, a large number of visitors attend the various ritual performances and actively participate in events such as making Danoje festival fans, brewing the sacred liquor, drawing masks for the Gwanno Mask Drama, preparing and eating Surichiwi rice crackers and washing their hair in Iris water.

The Gangneung Danoje Festival enjoys immense popularity. However, cultural standardization and increased media coverage over the years have resulted in the loss of some traditional elements of the festival. In the traditional context of the festival, one of the functions has been to transcend social differences by allowing people of all social classes to participate.

Yeongsanjae (2009)

A central element of Korean Buddhist culture, Yeongsanjae is a re-enactment of Buddha's delivery of the Lotus Sutra on the Vulture Peak in India, through which philosophical and spiritual messages of Buddhism are expressed and people in attendance develop self-discipline. Yeongsanjae begins with a ritual reception for all the saints and spirits of heaven and earth and concludes with a farewell ritual representing manners of the otherworldly realm of Buddha, with singing, ceremonial adornment and varied ritual dances such as the cymbal dance, drum dance and ceremonial robe dance. The other components include a ritual cleansing, a tea ceremony, the dedication of a rice meal to the Buddha and Bodhisattvas, a sermon inviting the audience to the door of truth and a ritual meal for the dead to congratulate them on their entry into heaven. Preserved chiefly by the Taego Order of Korean Buddhism based in Seoul, the Yeongsanjae is held in temples throughout the Republic of Korea to help all beings enter the world of truth by worshipping and admiring the Buddha and his laws and monks. The ceremony serves as an important space for transmission of values and art forms and for meditation, training and enlightenment.

Namsadang Nori (2009)

Namsadang Nori, literally the 'all-male vagabond clown theatre', is a multifaceted folk performance tradition originally practised widely by travelling entertainers and now kept alive by professional troupes in the Republic of Korea. The performance is made up of six components: a segment of 'farmers' music' emphasizes the percussive sounds of metal gongs and animal-hide drums; a mask dance presents four comic scenes depicting people from different social classes; a tightrope walking act sees an acrobat on a high-wire engaged in witty exchanges with a clown below; in a puppet play, more than fifty puppets act out seven scenes together with a narrator and musicians; an acrobatic segment combines

physical feats performed on the ground with comic dialogue and music; and an intricate display of hoop spinning with a wooden stick rounds out the performance. In addition to entertaining rural audiences that would surround the performers in outdoor arenas, Namsadang Nori carried an important social message. The mask dance and puppet plays in particular enacted the oppression of the lower classes as well as women in a male-dominated society. Through satire, these performances raised issues on behalf of those with no political voice and manifested ideals of equality and freedom, sustaining and inspiring the poor.

Jeju Chilmeoridang Yeongdeunggut (2009)

The Jeju Chilmeoridang Yeongdeunggut is a ritual held in the second lunar month to pray for calm seas, an abundant harvest and a plentiful sea catch. The rites held at Chilmeoridang in the village of Gun-rip are representative of similar ceremonies held throughout the island of Jeju in the Republic of Korea. Village shamans perform a series of rituals to the goddess of the winds (Grandmother Yeondeung), the Dragon King Yongwang and mountain gods. The Yeondeung Welcome Rite includes a ceremony to call the gods, prayers for a good catch, and a three-act play to entertain the ancestral gods; the Yeondeung Farewell Rite two weeks later includes offerings of drinks and rice cakes, a ceremony to welcome the Dragon King, fortune telling with millet seeds, and the launching of a straw boat into the sea by the village's senior men. As the goddess Yeondeung departs on the fifteenth day, marking the arrival of spring, she sows seeds and calms the troubled waters. Besides the shamans, the Yeongdeunggut is primarily supported by the female divers and ship owners who prepare food and offer sacrifices. Both a seasonal rite and a cultural festival, this ritual is a distinctive embodiment of Jeju identity and an expression of the villagers' respect for the sea on which their livelihood depends.

Ganggangsullae (2009)

Ganggangsullae is a seasonal harvest and fertility ritual popular in the southwestern part of the Republic of Korea, performed primarily on Korea's Thanksgiving in the eighth lunar month. Under a bright full moon, dozens of young, unmarried village women gather in a circle, join hands and sing and dance all night under the direction of a lead singer. During interludes, the women playfully mime vignettes reflecting life in a farm or fishing village, including treading on roof tiles, unrolling a mat, catching a mouse or tying herrings. The dance takes its name from the refrain repeated after each verse, although the exact meaning of the word is unknown. Once a rare break from restrictive rules governing the behaviour of rural young women who were not allowed to sing

aloud or go out at night, except during the Chuseok Thanksgiving celebration, the ritual is mostly preserved today by middle-aged women in cities and taught as part of the music curriculum of elementary schools. Now practised as a performing art throughout Korea, it can be seen as a representative Korean folk art. It is an important hereditary custom drawn from the rice culture that pervaded daily life in the countryside. The easy tunes and movements can be learned quickly for this communal practice that contributes to harmony, equality and friendship among the women dancers.

Cheoyongmu (2009)

Cheoyongmu is a court dance today performed on stage but formerly used to dispel evil spirits and pray for tranquillity at royal banquets or during exorcism rites on New Year's Eve to promote good fortune. Based on the Korean legend of Cheoyong, a son of the dragon king Yongwang, who took human form and saved his human wife from the smallpox spirit through singing and dancing, the dance is performed by five men clad in white, blue, black, red and yellow to represent the four cardinal directions and the centre. They wear the light wine-coloured mask of the man-god, with white teeth, tin earrings with a necklace of lead beads, and a black hat decorated with two peony blossoms and seven peaches to ward off evil and invite auspicious energy. The dancers move with stateliness and vigour through a variety of styles and tempos of music, punctuated by various lyrical song recitations. Part of a greater folk mythology surrounding Cheoyong, including the belief that his image carved on the gate of a house would repel smallpox and other ills, Cheoyongmu also embodies the philosophy of Confucianism, particularly the Theory of the Five Elements. The creation of the Cheoyong masks also provides a valuable opportunity for traditional craftsmanship.

Gagok, lyric song cycles accompanied by an orchestra (2010)

Gagok is a genre of traditional Korean vocal music sung by men and women to the accompaniment of a small orchestra, one of several forms of singing that together constitute jeongga, or 'right song'. Formerly a music associated with the higher classes, Gagok is today widely popular throughout the country. Gagok comprises twenty-six namchang or songs for men, and fifteen yeochang or songs for women. Namchang are characterized by strong, deep, resonant voices, while yeochang are characterized by high-pitched, thin voices. Gagok songs are composed either in a solemn, peaceful key or a melancholic one, and use 10-beat or 16-beat rhythm. The traditional instrumentation of the orchestra includes the geomungo six-string zither, daegeum bamboo transverse flute, gayageum twelve-

string zither and piri (small double-reed pipe). Gagok songs are acclaimed for their lyrical patterns, balance, refined melodies and advanced musical composition. Acquiring skill as a singer takes extensive time and effort and performance requires dedication and extreme control. Gagok is preserved and transmitted by practitioners, their communities and related organizations in local heritage training centres. Gagok has played an important role in the establishment of Korean identity.

Daemokjang, traditional wooden architecture (2010)

The term 'Daemokjang' refers to traditional Korean wooden architecture and specifically to the woodworkers who employ the traditional carpentry techniques. The activities of these practitioners also extend to the maintenance, repair and reconstruction of historic buildings, ranging from traditional Korean houses to monumental wooden palaces and temples. The Daemokjang are in charge of the entire construction process, including the planning, design and construction of buildings, and the supervision of subordinate carpenters. The wooden structures created by Daemokjang are smooth, simple and unadorned – distinctive features of traditional Korean architecture. The traditional construction processes require both technical skills to design the building with consideration to its size, site and function, and aesthetic sense to select the lumber for the construction materials, cut and shape the wood, and assemble and interlock the separate wooden pieces without using nails, creating the so-called 'joints that withstand a millennium'. The know-how of Daemokjang has been handed down from generation to generation and takes decades of education and field experience to master. In working to restore monumental buildings using traditional techniques, Daemokjang practitioners reinterpret the beauty of traditional architecture with their artistic creativity and re-create it with their technical skills.

Weaving of Mosi (fine ramie) in the Hansan region (2011)

Weaving of Mosi in Hansan is transmitted by middle-aged women in the township located in South Chungcheong Province, Republic of Korea. The region boasts fertile land and sea winds that allow ramie plants to thrive. Weaving ramie cloth involves a number of processes, including harvesting, boiling and bleaching ramie plants, spinning yarn out of ramie fibre, and weaving it on a traditional loom. Ramie cloth is comfortable in hot summer weather and is used to produce a variety of clothing from dress suits and military uniforms to mourning garments. The whiteness of the bleached ramie fabric, as well as its refined quality and neatness, makes it suitable for high-end clothing as well as for clothing for ordinary people. Weaving of Mosi traditionally takes place in the form of women-

led family operations in which mothers transmit techniques and experience to their daughters or daughters-in-law. The tradition also binds the community together with neighbours gathered and working in a designated section of the town. At present, around 500 people in the province are engaged in the diverse activities of weaving fine ramie.

Taekkyeon, a traditional Korean martial art (2011)

Taekkyeon is a traditional Korean martial art that makes use of fluid, rhythmic dance-like movements to strike or trip up an opponent. The graceful movements of a well-trained Taekkyeon performer are gentle and circular rather than straight and rigid, but can explode with enormous flexibility and strength. The feet play as important a role as the hands. In spite of its gentle impression, Taekkyeon is an effective martial art highlighting a broad variety of offensive and defensive skills employing all available fighting methods. It also teaches consideration: a skilled Taekkyeon practitioner can rapidly dominate an opponent, but a true master knows how to make an opponent withdraw without incurring damage. As a part of seasonal farming-related traditions, Taekkyeon serves to facilitate community integration, and as a sport accessible to all plays a major role in promoting public health. Taekkyeon is also practised by a great number of people as a daily activity. There are approximately fifty recognized practitioners of Taekkyeon at present, and the Korean Taekkyeon Association plays a significant role in the transmission and promotion of this traditional martial art.

Jultagi, tightrope walking (2011)

Tightrope walking is a widespread form of entertainment that in most countries focuses purely on acrobatic skill. The traditional Korean performing art of Jultagi is distinctive in that it is accompanied by music and witty dialogue between the tightrope walker and an earthbound clown. Jultagi is performed outside. The tightrope walker executes a variety of acrobatic feats on the rope, along with jokes, mimicry, songs and dance, while a clown engages the tightrope walker in joking banter, and a team of musicians plays music to accompany the entertainment. The tightrope walker starts with simpler feats, gradually moving to more difficult acrobatics, displaying some forty different rope techniques in a performance that can last several hours. Today, tightrope walking performers are frequently invited to local festivals that take place throughout the country, particularly in spring and autumn. Currently, transmission of tightrope walking in Korea is centred on the Jultagi Safeguarding Association in Gyeonggi Province. There are two types of training: apprenticeship education where masters educate

practitioners and take on students, and public education which takes various forms such as school training, experience classes and summer camps.

Falconry, a living human heritage (2012)

Falconry is the traditional activity of keeping and training falcons and other raptors to take quarry in its natural state. Originally a way of obtaining food, falconry is today identified with camaraderie and sharing rather than subsistence. Falconry is mainly found along migration flyways and corridors, and is practised by amateurs and professionals of all ages and genders. Falconers develop a strong relationship and spiritual bond with their birds, and commitment is required to breed, train, handle and fly the falcons. Falconry is transmitted as a cultural tradition by a variety of means, including mentoring, learning within families and formalized training in clubs. In hot countries, falconers take their children to the desert and train them to handle the bird and establish a mutual relationship of trust. While falconers come from different backgrounds, they share common values, traditions and practices such as methods of training and caring for birds, equipment used and the bonding process. Falconry forms the basis of a wider cultural heritage, including traditional dress, food, songs, music, poetry and dance, sustained by the communities and clubs that practise it.

Arirang, lyrical folk song in the Republic of Korea (2012)

Arirang is a popular form of Korean folk song and the outcome of collective contributions made by ordinary Koreans throughout generations. Essentially a simple song, it consists of the refrain 'Arirang, arirang, arariyo' and two simple lines, which differ from region to region. While dealing with diverse universal themes, the simple musical and literary composition invites improvisation, imitation and singing in unison, encouraging its acceptance by different musical genres. Experts estimate the total number of folk songs carrying the title 'Arirang' at some 3,600 variations belonging to about sixty versions. A great virtue of Arirang is its respect for human creativity, freedom of expression and empathy. Everyone can create new lyrics, adding to the song's regional, historical and genre variations, and cultural diversity. Arirang is universally sung and enjoyed by the Korean nation. At the same time, an array of practitioners of regional versions, including local communities, private groups and individuals, actively lead efforts for its popularization and transmission, highlighting the general and local characteristics of individual versions. Arirang is also a popular subject and motif in diverse arts and media, including cinema, musicals, drama, dance and literature. It is an evocative hymn with the power to enhance communication and unity among the Korean people, whether at home or abroad.

Kimjang, making and sharing kimchi in the Republic of Korea (2013)

Kimchi is the Korean name for preserved vegetables seasoned with spices and fermented seafood. It forms an essential part of Korean meals, transcending class and regional differences. The collective practice of Kimjang reaffirms Korean identity and is an excellent opportunity for strengthening family cooperation. Kimjang is also an important reminder for many Koreans that human communities need to live in harmony with nature. Preparation follows a yearly cycle. In spring, households procure shrimp, anchovy and other seafood for salting and fermenting. In summer, they buy sea salt for the brine. In late summer, red chilli peppers are dried and ground into powder. Late autumn is Kimjang season, when communities collectively make and share large quantities of kimchi to ensure that every household has enough to sustain it through the long, harsh winter. Housewives monitor weather forecasts to determine the most favourable date and temperature for preparing kimchi. Innovative skills and creative ideas are shared and accumulated during the custom of exchanging kimchi among households. There are regional differences, and the specific methods and ingredients used in Kimjang are considered an important family heritage, typically transmitted from a mother-in-law to her newly married daughter-in-law.

Reference

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