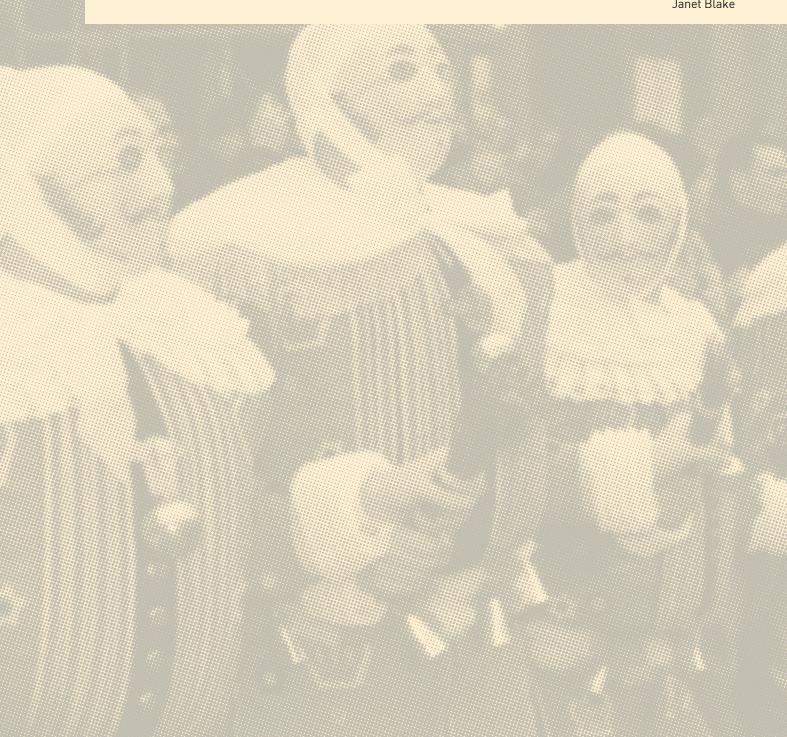# Museums and Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage – Facilitating Participation and Strengthening their Function in Society

Janet Blake

Museums and Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage – Facilitating Participation and Strengthening their Function in Society

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ABSTRACT

The duality of the nature of heritage - celebrated at the same time for its universal value and for its special meaning and its significance for local and bearer communities - represents a challenge for its safeguarding and its presentation by museums. Heritage as a universal, global value has been the predominant approach in international cultural policy-setting since the second half of the twentieth century, but its significance to local and bearer communities is now increasingly well understood. This duality has been particularly challenging with regard to implementing UNESCO's *International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003). With the adoption of this treaty, the policy - and law-making - paradigm has shifted from valuing monuments, sites, artefacts and other objects, to safeguarding a living heritage that is primarily located in the skills, knowledge and know-how of contemporary human beings. With regard to the role of museums in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH), a document of great significance is the *Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society* adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 2015. This is an innovative document that recognises not only the great importance of the preservation, study and transmission of cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, for all societies, social cohesion and sustainable development, but also the central role that can be played by museums in helping to achieve this. Recently, the potential of cultural heritage has increasingly been acknowledged in international policy - and law-making - as a social, cultural and, at times, economic resource for communities, in particular the intangible heritage. Moreover, international law has now called for a greater democratisation of the heritage protection paradigm, in particular through community participation in its identification, safeguarding and management. This article examines the aforementioned shift from an emphasis on global to local heritage and the role museums can play in this with regard to safeguarding intangible aspects of heritage.

Keywords

global heritage, local heritage, bearer communities, community participation, museums and ICH, 2015 *Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society*

Introduction

The duality of the nature of heritage - celebrated at the same time for its universal value and for its special meaning and significance for local and bearer communities - represents a challenge for its safeguarding and its presentation by museums. Heritage as a universal, global value has been the predominant approach in international cultural policy-setting since the second half of the twentieth century, but its significance to local and bearer communities is now increasingly well understood. This duality has been particularly challenging with regard to implementing the *International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO: 2003). With the adoption of this treaty, the policy - and law-making - paradigm has shifted from valuing monuments, sites, artefacts and other objects to safeguarding a living heritage that is primarily located in the skills, knowledge and know-how of contemporary human beings. With regard to the role of museums in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH), a further document of great significance is the *Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society* adopted by UNESCO in 2015. This is an innovative document that recognises not only the great importance of the preservation, study and transmission of cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, for all societies, social cohesion and sustainable development, but also the central role that can be played by museums in helping to achieve this. This, then, responds to recently developed understanding of the potential of cultural heritage to play a role as a social, cultural and, at times, economic resource for communities (Council of Europe: 2005; UNESCO: 2013; UNESCO: 2016); this is true, in particular, with regard to the intangible aspects of heritage. Moreover, international law has now called for a greater democratisation of the heritage protection paradigm, in particular through community participation in its identification, safeguarding and management. Hence, two major tropes of this article are the aforementioned shift in emphasis from a global to a local heritage, and the role museums can play in this with regard to safeguarding intangible aspects of heritage.

It may, at first glance, appear somewhat paradoxical to be discussing how museums can contribute towards the safeguarding of ICH, a form of cultural heritage that predominantly takes no physical form. As an initial response to this view, I would like to refer to the definition given for 'intangible cultural heritage' in Art.2(1) of UNESCO's 2003 *Convention*, where it is defined as follows: *… 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 recognise as part of their cultural heritage…*

From this definition it immediately becomes clear that intangible cultural heritage does not only comprise non-physical aspects (oral expressions, dance and musical performances, social practices, rituals, traditional ecological and medicinal knowledge, handicrafts, etc.)[1] but also a range of objects that are 'associated with' this heritage. These may be more obviously artistic objects such as musical instruments, costumes, masks, carpets and other handicraft items and so on; they may also comprise a range of apparently mundane, everyday objects such as wood-working tools and looms used in weaving textiles.[2] However, what gives this latter range of items their 'cultural' value or significance is their connection with the intangible knowledge, skills and know-how with which they are used. Hence, for example, a carpenter's tools may not in themselves be of great heritage 'value' but, when they are associated with the building of a wooden Japanese temple[3] in traditional style using the knowledge to do this acquired over decades through a very demanding apprenticeship period, then they acquire an ICH patrimonial value (Deacon and Beasley: 2007). In this way, a range of items that might not normally be presented in the museum become museum exhibits. (Plate 1)

In recent years, therefore, museums have begun to grapple with the challenge of how to present ICH – a cultural practice, performance, enactment – in the museum context. Some of the responses that have been developed to meet this challenge are examined below. Interestingly, this endeavour has occurred in tandem with a growing interest in community museums, museums of minority and immigrant cultures and, in the UK, the USA, Latin America and the Caribbean and West Africa, museums addressing the slave trade.[4] In this way, it can be seen that finding new ways to present and interpret ICH in museums is part of a wider movement towards a more community-based and less elitist conception of the museum. This new approach coincides with the way in which the 2003 *Convention* has itself introduced a new heritage management and protection paradigm which places the heritage community (in particular heritage

Plate 1
Puppets in the Museo internazionale delle marionette Antonio Pasqualino.
Photo: Janet Blake, 2018.

bearers) at the centre (Blake: 2016). It shifts away from a predominantly state-driven operation to one in which, if the 2003 *Convention* is to be faithfully implemented, this becomes an activity conducted by state authorities with the active involvement of cultural communities, groups and even individual exponents. This shift of emphasis can be seen in the definition presented in Article 2.1 of the *Convention* in which the heritage is no longer understood as a 'national treasure' but is a social and cultural resource of the communities that create, maintain and transmit it, and it is directly identified with them.

Not only does this fundamental shift of emphasis in heritage protection present government agencies with a serious challenge, but importantly for this article, it will require cultural institutions such as museums to re-think their role *vis-à-vis* not only the heritage they hold and display, but also the communities that create it. Finally, as will be further explored below, museums represent a very significant actor among a number of important local stakeholders who can play a number of key roles with regard to the implementation of the national safeguarding measures set out in Part III of the 2003 *Convention* (Articles 11 to 15). Thus, safeguarding ICH involves museums in a number of outreach activities which go beyond the traditional role of holding, conserving and displaying cultural property.

Universal and local conceptions of heritage

Heritage has traditionally been celebrated for the outstanding 'masterpieces' of human creativity; for example, a museum was established in Babylon by Ennigaldi, the daughter of King Nabonidus, in the sixth century BC (León: 1995; Prott and O'Keefe: 1984). However, it is being increasingly recognised that heritage enjoys a dual character, being both local and global at the same time, and that even 'world heritage' has a special meaning for its bearers and other local communities. The approach whereby protection is predicated on the notion of a universal/global value, as a 'heritage of humankind' (Cameron: 2005) has been the dominant one in international cultural heritage law-making since the second half of the twentieth century and has formed the justification for international co-operation in this field (Wagener: 2016). This dual character has, in recent years, created a tension in international cultural heritage law-making which has become most evident with the adoption by UNESCO in 2003 of the *International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (Blake: 2015, Chapter

1). With this treaty, international cultural heritage law has shifted from a paradigm that gives value predominantly to the material heritage - monuments, sites, artefacts and other objects - to one that celebrates a living heritage that is primarily located in the skills, knowledge and know-how of contemporary human beings (Lixinski: 2013, Chapter 1).

The idea of according global significance to certain elements of (often monumental) heritage contains aspects within it of a Eurocentric colonial tradition. A striking example of this was the refusal of Europeans to accept that the ruins of Great Zimbabwe had been built by the local Africans whom they regarded as sub-human, but instead attributing its construction to some master race that had become extinct (Shyllon: 1998). Indeed, the archaeological investigations undertaken by European teams in the Near East, Egypt and Africa during the 19th and 20th centuries came, over time, to be regarded by the governments of those countries as a form of despoliation of their heritage (Lydon & Rizvi: 2010; Díaz-Andreu: 2004). Moreover, the collections held in leading European museums, such as the British Museum in London and the Louvre in Paris, are a clear reflection of those countries' colonial history (Shyllon: 1998) and there has been a tendency to equate colonial 'ownership' with a kind of 'universal' heritage for all humankind.[5] This viewpoint, however, seeks to efface the special relationship a particular local and/or national community has with its heritage and to deny any specific claims they have to it (Lowenthal: 1997, pp. 245-47). Of course, today many European and North American museums have returned indigenous and other artefacts, including human remains, to their countries and communities of origin (Vrdoljak: 2008).

The question as to how we should characterise heritage - as a 'cultural heritage of humankind', a 'national treasure' or a source of value and identity to local and indigenous communities – remains today a challenge to members of the international community. The 2003 *Convention* takes a nuanced approach to this since it regards each ICH element as a constituent part of cultural diversity, itself constituting a 'common heritage of humanity' (UNESCO: 2001), and treats the safeguarding of intangible heritage as a 'common concern of humanity' (UNESCO: 2003, Preamble). At the same time, it is innovative (as a cultural heritage treaty) in that it gives a much greater space to the local and specific character of heritage. This latter aspect of its approach is in keeping with its strong human rights dimension and responds to the right of bearers and local

communities to enjoy and have access to their cultural heritage (United Nations: 1966b, Article 15) as well as to the procedural human rights principle of participation.

Intangible heritage: local communities and 'their' heritage

The removal of any reference to the notion of 'outstanding' or 'exceptional' value as a criterion for international inscription under the 2003 *Convention* represents a major significant conceptual departure from the 1972 *Convention*. This move reflects the fact that it is the *representative* nature of the inscribed ICH and its cultural significance that should be celebrated and safeguarded by this *Convention*. This notion of representativeness also underpins the importance accorded in the 2003 *Convention* to the community-specific character of the heritage: it is being celebrated internationally (through inscription) on the basis not of a unique, universal character, but because it represents one aspect of the diversity of ICH worldwide being practised and performed daily in different communities. The definition of 'intangible cultural heritage' in the 2003 *Convention* is therefore the key to understanding just how great a shift of emphasis is made in this treaty, from a state-driven process of identification and protection of heritage to one in which communities are main players. It is partly for this reason that drafting this definition and, consequently, of defining the scope of the instrument, proved to be one of the most challenging aspects of negotiating the 2003 *Convention* (Blake: 2006, p. 29). Not only was it a very new area for international regulation, but it placed the communities (groups and individuals) that create, maintain and transmit this heritage at the centre, in the following manner (as noted in the Introduction).

Article 2(3) sets out the various actions intended by the notion of 'safeguarding' under the *Convention* as: *measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage* and, specifically, including *the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalisation of the various aspects of such heritage* (UNESCO: 2003). In addition, *the importance of the participation of communities, groups and relevant non-governmental organisations* is emphasised (Article 11.b), while Parties are *explicitly enjoined to ensure the widest possible participation of communities, groups*

and, in some cases, individuals that create, maintain and transmit such heritage, and to involve them actively in its management (Article 15). This is a significant development in cultural heritage instruments whereby not only the need of cultural communities for, but also their entitlement to be directly involved in the safeguarding process, is explicitly recognised.[6]

Among national safeguarding measures (set out in Part III) the use of inventories is envisaged as a central tool for identification and safeguarding, and the requirement is placed on Parties to draw up one or more inventories of their ICH and to update these regularly (Article 12.1). Parties should also adopt a policy that promotes the function of ICH in society[7] and integrates it into planning programmes, designating one or more competent bodies for safeguarding ICH. Further measures set out relate to education and training, the transmission of ICH, capacity-building for the management of ICH, providing access to ICH while respecting customary practices, and for establishing institutions for documenting ICH (Articles 13 and 14).

All of this suggests a very deep level of community participation that goes to the heart of some activities, in particular the identification, and giving significance to, nationally-protected heritage that has traditionally been a privileged domain of the State and its organs. In addition, safeguarding here also includes providing the conditions within which ICH can continue to be created, maintained and transmitted, which in turn, implies the continued capability of the cultural communities themselves to do this (Kurin: 2004). Kurin (2007, p. 12) has noted in this journal that, *Unlike the idea of traditional culture or folklore ... as found in much institutional practice around the world, the 2003 Convention shifts both the measure and onus of safeguarding work to the cultural community* itself and that *ICH is not something fixed in form that remains constant forever, safeguarded when only found in its pure, essential form.* As Kurin continues, museums *usually deal with things inanimate or dead, and while many museums – at national, regional and local levels - have increasingly become quite skilled in relating to and partnering their constituent cultural communities, it is something fairly new in their orientation and practice* (Ibid., p. 14). This very specific character of intangible heritage, accompanied by the deep involvement of communities in its safeguarding, poses serious challenges for institutions when seeking to present it and its exponents in the museum context.

Hence, the community is the vital context for the existence of ICH and so is placed at the centre of this *Convention* and not the heritage itself, and, as a result, safeguarding ICH then becomes a more context-dependent activity. Such an approach is one that must take account of the wider human, social and cultural environments in which the enactment of ICH occurs and, importantly, the rights of the communities, groups and individuals that create, maintain and transmit it. Hence, safeguarding ICH becomes a human rights-based action in which not only are the wider cultural, economic and social rights of bearers to be protected, but also, and crucially, the procedural rights of participation.

Finding ways in which communities (groups and individuals) can become more actively involved in all stages of safeguarding presents a major challenge to governments and their national heritage bodies, in particular those such as in the Middle East which have traditionally operated in a very top-down manner (Arantes: 2007). It requires them to develop new institutions and consultation mechanisms in order to be able to collaborate more closely with communities and their representatives (who may, in some cases be cultural associations and, in others, non-governmental organisations). It is important here to give consideration also to the human rights context in which all heritage identification, documentation, presentation, interpretation, conservation, protection and safeguarding takes place. First, there is the over-arching scope of the right of everyone to participate in cultural life (United Nations: 1966b, Article 15) which includes the right to the access and enjoyment of cultural heritage (their own and others'). Second, the protection of the special rights of ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities to practise, enact and/or use their heritage is also protected by human rights law (United Nations: 1966a, Article 27); this, therefore, places an additional obligation on governmental and other institutional actors not to discriminate against these minorities with regard to their heritage.

This, then, leads us to the issue that is of huge contemporary relevance to museums in large, multicultural cities – that of how to interact with and treat the heritage of immigrant and refugee communities. A project undertaken by the London Museum Hub between 2004 and 2006 to record refugee heritage gives a good insight into this question. Estimating that there were over 20 million people throughout the world in an uncertain civil status as refugees and similar in 2006, the report

noted that, [w]*hat differentiates the global citizen from the global alien – the world refugee – has to do with one profound human reality: the sense of being accepted, of fitting in. It is the deep human and humanising experience of belonging* (ibid: p.2). The project was primarily aimed at confronting the alienation and marginalisation of refugees in London while, at the same time, making local people more aware of their shared humanity with the refugees in their community. Museums that co-operated included the Hackney Museum in North London which worked with the Halkevi Turkish-Kurdish Community Centre to organise two exhibitions of Kurdish refugees' heritage and lives in Britain, accompanied by traditional songs, drumming and kilim-weaving. The Redbridge Museum worked with a group of Afghani women to hold a series of workshops in the museum on rug-making, pottery, tile-making and story-telling. Notably for this paper, all of these are either ICH itself or the cultural products thereof. As a consequence of these heritage-based community projects, the refugee communities experienced greater confidence and self-esteem through having their heritage and culture presented in their own words and through being given prominence in a public space. Acquiring greater social confidence is an essential component in building social capital and challenging negative stereotypes towards refugees and other marginalised communities. An important question to address here, then, is: how can museums contribute towards ensuring community-driven approaches to ICH safeguarding? [Plates 2 and 3]

Museums: ensuring a function for ICH in society

Periodic Reports[8] submitted by 41 States Parties during the 2011-2013 reporting cycles to the 2003 *Convention* show that most have put in place some kind of new policy for ICH safeguarding (24 out of 29) and were able to establish a link, to varying degrees, between ICH and sustainable local development (economic, social, rural and environmental). As such, ICH is clearly perceived as a driver of social and community development and, in general, as a resource for communities. Certain actors serve as important *vectors* for implementing ICH safeguarding policies and measures (Torggler and Sediakina-Rivière: 2014) among which are numbered local authorities, community centres, *non-*governmental organisations active in the field of *ICH*, cultural associations and the private sector. Museums are pivotal actors in helping to integrate ICH into society and policies for community and sustainable development.

In order to implement Articles 11(b) and 15 of the 2003 *Convention, States Parties are encouraged to establish functional and complementary cooperation among communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals who create, maintain and transmit intangible cultural heritage, as well as experts, centres of expertise and research institutes* (UNESCO: 2016, paragraph 76). One essential safeguarding action towards this is for States Parties to sensitise communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals, to value their ICH and to promote the *Convention* among their communities so that the

Plate 2
ARIANA exhibition
Photo: Redbridge Museum and Heritage Centre, 2005.

Plate 3
Museums in the programme built partnerships with community organisations.
Photo: Redbridge Museum and Heritage Centre, 2005.

heritage bearers can fully benefit from its measures. Clearly, museums that are closely connected with their local community are in a privileged position to contribute towards this.

States Parties are also called upon to develop the capacity of communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals so that they can become fully and effectively involved in this process (UNESCO: 2016, paragraphs 80-82). Actions that Parties can take to strengthen community participation include: facilitating access to the results of research on ICH carried out in communities (while fostering respect for practices governing access); establishing networks of communities, experts, centres of expertise and research institutes to develop joint approaches; and sharing ICH-related documentation relating to ICH located in another State (UNESCO: 2016, paragraphs 86-88).

In many cases, ICH elements are predominantly safeguarded by their local cultural community, and some countries provide subsidies to communities and civil society organisations to support their work alongside local communities by holding folk festivals, equipping cultural centres, buying costumes and making documentaries (Torggler and Sediakina-Rivière: 2014, paragraph 107). Local museums often play a pivotal role in such actions, as does the Museum of Binche along with the local Town Council in the safeguarding of the Carnival of Binche, an inscribed element from Belgium (UNESCO: 2013). [Plates 4 and 5] In order to play this role effectively, museums (especially those with a strong history of ethnographic research) need to be able to expand their range of activities and, in many cases, to re-consider their role within the local society and how they engage with local communities and groups. They can, for example, provide communities with the capacities - educational, social, spatial etc. - which they need to participate effectively in ICH safeguarding (including transmission). However, there remain challenges in how museums currently relate to ICH and ICH-related collections that need to be reconsidered in light of the ICH *Convention* and new thinking about the nature of this heritage and its relationship to the bearer community. For example, holding the tangible elements associated with an ICH element in a museum (masks, musical instruments, costumes, looms, cooking utensils etc.) can place restrictions on their use by the ICH holders, as is the case with the utensils and even the physical space for the Jongmyo element;[9] this can present difficulties for the performance and transmission of the ritual and its *Jerye* music [Plates 6 and 7].

Plate 4
Carnival of Binche
Photo: International Museum of Carnival and Mask

Plate 5
Carnival of Binche
Photo: International Museum of Carnival and Mask

Plate 6
Ritual music, Jongmyo jeryeak
Photo: National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, 2008, with the permission of UNESCO

Plate 7
Ritual music, Jongmyo jeryeak
Photo: National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, 2008, with the permission of UNESCO

Another important challenge to address is that there is still (among some ethnographic museums in particular) the tendency to place a heavy emphasis on documentation and recording, rather than on seeking to enhance the function of ICH within society and the community and how it can be promoted as an element of modern life for local communities, as required under Article 13 of the 2003 *Convention* (Torggler and Sediakina-Rivière: 2014, paragraph 101). Of course, a traditional role of museums has been in the collection, documentation and archiving of material cultural elements associated with ICH and ethnographic research materials, and this continues to be important for ICH safeguarding. However, it is vital that communities retain access to the documentation of their ICH and that the means be found by which remote bearer communities can have access to their own (and other communities') ICH. In this regard, the movement towards establishing documentation centres in local museums and cultural centres, some of which are custom built for specific elements, is a positive move. Some museums now combine this role with training activities, as does the Open Air Museum in Hungary which conducts specialised workshops on research, documentation and related activities (UNESCO: 2013).

Museums, sometimes in co-ordination with local cultural NGOs, may offer training courses on ICH management and inventorying, as in Lithuania where the Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre organises training sessions in which ICH bearers transmit their knowledge and skills to the younger generation (UNESCO: 2013).

As an example, in relation to Lithuanian cross-crafting, cross-crafting schools and a creative workshop have been organised by the Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre in partnership with the Open Air Museum of Lithuania. As a result of the workshop, ten crosses typical of the Aukstaitija region in northeastern Lithuania have been re-created (Lithuania: 2012, p.10). NGOs and civil society organisations involved in these activities include the Association of Craftsmen of Lithuania, the Association of Lithuanian Regional Culture, the Association of Lithuanian Political Prisoners and Exiles, rural community organisations, and religious communities represented by their parishes (Ibid at p.12). Similar hands-on training is offered to university students in the Open Air Museum in Hungary, focusing on examples of operational measures, such as developing inventory forms and audio-visual documentation techniques (Hungary: 2013). Educational programmes and workshops held at Kumrovec 'Old Village' Museum also transfer ICH-related knowledge (e.g. relating to making wooden toys, *ojkanje* singing and gingerbread making) mainly to pre-school and school-aged children, although other visitors who show an interest are also welcome to participate. Educational programmes are also offered by different governmental bodies, cultural artistic societies and experts, to promote traditional craftsmanship and arts in community centres and other regional centres spread across the country (Croatia: 2012 at p.43).

As noted above, establishing local museums related to particular elements is also an important safeguarding

action and these can serve several purposes: as interpretation centres, information and documentation centres, spaces for training in the ICH, as performance spaces and workshops for artisans, as exhibition spaces, and so on. For example, the city councils of Concepcion and Mito have worked with the Society of Huacones to develop safeguarding strategies for the *Huaconda* element in Peru,[10] in part through creating an on-site museum. Croatia is also developing specialist museums related to ICH elements in their localities, including a Lace-making Museum, a Children's Toy Museum and an Alka Museum (UNESCO: 2012). The 'Eco-museum of Lace and Lace-Making' is the first lace museum in Croatia with a contemporary, hands-on approach to presenting and appreciating the lace-making of the Lepoglava area and other lace-makers in Croatia and Europe. The museum presents the work of the lace-makers at international exhibitions and stages the annual International Lace Festival in Lepoglava. It is planned to host a permanent exhibition, a gallery for occasional exhibitions, a children's lace museum, a workshop for restoring lace and textiles, a fashion studio, a multifunctional hall, a documentation centre, an archive, a library, a souvenir shop, and a cake and chocolate shop. The activities of the museum 'outside the walls' include the International Lace Festival, a lace-maker's garden, lace-making routes and a virtual museum (Croatia: 2012 at p.13).

It is obvious that museums reflecting specific ICH elements in the localities in which they are predominantly practised can have a very immediate impact on the ability of local communities to interact with the presentation, as well as research, documentation, skills training, transmission, and other aspects of ICH safeguarding. Museums may, for example, house artisanal workshops for ICH practitioners to demonstrate and teach their skills, as in the Old Village Museum in Kumrovec (Croatia)[11] where wooden toys and gingerbread are made according to traditional methods. Within the the CRAFTATTRACT project which organises demonstrations at traditional fairs like the one in Gabrovo (Bulgaria) or at Bitola (Macedonia) of the wooden toys created in the museum's permanent demonstration of production techniques with master craftspersons. After the death of Dragutin Kunić, his wife Marija continued to work alone in their demonstration workshop, despite her difficulties in attending the museum.[12] A museum has been constructed in the local town, Mohács, alongside a 'Busó Yard' and a craft house, to present the various crafts associated with the Busó procession in Bulgaria (UNESCO: 2012). It is home to a Craft House to present the various crafts which emerge in the context of the Busó procession, which allows visitors to gain an insight

Plate 8
Traditional cooking demonstration at Gilan Rural Museum in Iran.
Photo: Katherine Azami, 2016.

Plate 9
Verandah at Gilan Rural Museum in Iran.
Photo: Katherine Azami, 2016.

into these traditions all year round, and also gives them an opportunity to try their hand at various crafts in the open workshops of the establishment (Hungary: 2013, p.39). The number of active Busó craft artists in Mohács has increased significantly and, in 2012, there were six registered mask carvers and one potter with the status of 'Folk Craft Artist'. There is also a Busó implement maker and a maker of *bocskor* (traditional footwear) to assure the continuity of supply for Busó activities. In addition, there are approximately 35 Busó groups, each of them consisting of local inhabitants. An interesting example of co-operation in this areas is that Mohács mask carvers have secured a plentiful supply of sheepskins and sheep horns from the Karcag Sheep Stew Makers Organisation, custodians of another ICH element (Ibid., pp. 40-41).

These allow visitors to see these seasonal traditions throughout the year and have an opportunity to try their hand at various crafts in the open workshops. Such initiatives provide excellent opportunities for going beyond presenting the ICH in a passive manner, and for demonstrations by exponents and hands-on experience and training, especially with a focus on young people. [Plates 8 and 9]

One significant aspect of ICH safeguarding in which local authorities can play an important role, alongside local communities and through making good use of museum spaces, is in protecting and/or providing the physical spaces necessary for performing, practising and enacting ICH. In Bulgaria, for example, physical spaces of significance for ICH are cared for by the local community in conjunction with local museums, municipalities and community cultural centres. These may not necessarily be formal museums as such and, for example, a strong emphasis has been placed on interpreting the *Krakelingen* and *Tonnekensbrand* element in Belgium[13] for outside visitors, and on providing an accessible cultural programme that brings local people and visitors closer to the theme of the procession (UNESCO: 2013). In a few cases, museums dedicated specifically to ICH have been established, such as the Intangible Cultural Heritage Applied Museum in Ankara (Turkey) which holds collections covering all of the domains of ICH as set out in the 2003 *Convention* (UNESCO: 2013, Article 2.2), namely: oral traditions and expressions (including language as a vehicle of the ICH); performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and traditional

craftsmanship. These are actively practised and/or performed within the museum in place of static exhibits and the museum also organises interactive training programmes in ICH elements. This approach to passing on the skills and know-how of handicrafts through hands-on experience has proved a popular means of transmission for young people, and consequently, of keeping traditional handicraft and other skills alive (Turkey: 2013). One of the biggest target groups of this museum comprises elementary school students and the museum has become an important extra-curricular educational environment for ICH. At the same time, the museum-based workshops and demonstrations contribute to the physical and mental development of children (Tekin: 2017).

Another similar institution in Turkey is the Living Museum in Beypazari Municipality in Ankara which was established with the specific aim of revitalising and safeguarding ICH elements through active participation in the exhibits. This ensures that visitors to the museum are not a passive audience but active participants. In keeping with the idea of ICH as a social and cultural resource, its activities are directed towards community outreach and for the benefit of the community and wider society; through this approach it is hoped that transmission of the ICH elements it presents will be transmitted to future generations. Major traditions, customs, and ceremonies have been announced to the public to keep them alive by following the schedule for the events. In the Living Museum, visitors actively participate in all attractions and therefore they are not just a passive audience. On the contrary, they keep the cultural heritage alive and actively contribute to its safeguarding. The mission of the Living Museum is to develop all its museum activities for the benefit of the society and to provide transmission of ICH elements from one generation to the other (Turkey: 2012, p.12). The Museum of Children's Play and Toys in Izmir was opened in 2010 and offers an interactive environment to children in seeing and creating traditional games and toys. Through workshops on specific elements of ICH, for example Karagöz, children have a chance to learn about the forms of the characters and to make copies of them at the museum. Other museums in Turkey plan to open special sections to provide widespread education and training on ICH elements, while other ICH museums are being built with the positive support of local communities and groups (Turkey: 2012, p.26).

UNESCO *Recommendation on the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society* (2015)

In view of the above discussion, the last part of the title of this *Recommendation*[14] which refers to the diversity of museums and to their role in society, demonstrates that the types of evolution in the role of museums required by ICH safeguarding are in tune with a general shift towards more community engagement by, and a greater variety of types of, museums. This *Recommendation* regards the *diversity of museums and the heritage of which they are custodians constitutes their greatest value* and UNESCO Member States are therefore requested *to protect and promote this diversity, while encouraging museums to draw on high-quality criteria defined and promoted by national and international museum communities* (UNESCO: 2015, paragraph 23). The Open Museums established for ICH, such as we find in Hungary and Serbia, and specifically ICH-focused museums, as described above in Turkey, are in keeping with this. They represent a museum model that is quite different from the traditional approach of displaying objects in glass cases; in these, the experience of visiting is both interactive and often involves ICH practitioners demonstrating their skills and know-how *in situ*. In addition, the requirement for museums to have a greater function in society is often responded to by local museums, whether related to specific elements or not, and their direct engagement with the bearer communities in safeguarding ICH elements.

In this *Recommendation* a museum is defined as a *non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purpose of education, study and enjoyment* (UNESCO: 2015, paragraph 4). Hence, the outreach and educative roles of museums, so relevant to ICH safeguarding, are noted here. As with the idea of a museum, so also 'collection' is defined in relation to both tangible and intangible heritage, reminding us that (material) associated items of ICH (UNESCO: 2003, Article 2.1) are also a valid part of a museum collection, even items that would otherwise be regarded as mundane and everyday but that gain their significance through their association with ICH. This point is further drawn out by the definition of heritage as *a set of tangible and intangible values, and expressions that people select and identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their identities, beliefs, knowledge and traditions, and living environments, deserving of protection and enhancement by contemporary generations and transmission to future generations* (UNESCO: 2015, paragraph 6).

The primary activities of museums are set out in the *Recommendation* as preservation, research, communication and education, and all of these speak directly to the safeguarding actions set out in the 2003 *Convention* (Article 2.3). Transmission is, of course, a central part of this process and the draft *Recommendation* also mentions museums *as spaces for cultural transmission, intercultural dialogue, learning, discussion and training, also play an important role in education (formal, informal, and lifelong learning), social cohesion and sustainable development* (UNESCO: 2015, paragraph 2). Moreover, museums *have great potential to raise public awareness of the value of cultural and natural heritage and of the responsibility of all citizens to contribute to their care and transmission* (ibid.). The participatory approach taken towards community (group and individual) engagement with safeguarding ICH in the 2003 *Convention* is also mirrored here: for example, with regard to communication, it is noted that, [m]*useum actions should also be strengthened by the actions of the public and communities in their favour* (UNESCO: 2015, paragraph 11). In a similar vein, the social role of museums is understood as including *help*[ing] *communities to face profound changes in society, including those leading to a rise in inequality and the breakdown of social ties* (UNESCO: 2015, paragraph 17) Where the heritage of indigenous peoples (one important 'community' of the 2003 *Convention*) is concerned, 'appropriate measures' should be taken to *encourage and facilitate dialogue and the building of constructive relationships between those museums and indigenous peoples concerning the management of those collections, and, where appropriate, return or restitution in accordance with applicable laws and policies* (UNESCO: 2015, paragraph 18). This echoes the strong concern shown in the 2003 *Convention* for respecting traditional cultural taboos and customary rules and/or practices regulating access to secret and/or sacred ICH elements (UNESCO: 2003, Article 13).

Conclusion

The move towards a more anthropological conception of cultural heritage in international cultural policy-making over the last 15 to 20 years has brought with it a much greater focus on ordinary people and communities as the creators and transmitters of heritage and, inevitably, on the rights that they enjoy with regard to this. This has resulted in one of the most significant shifts in this area of law-making which is the main subject of this paper: namely, the move from a state-driven conception of heritage towards one that more closely responds to what communities and individuals identify as their heritage and to which they ascribe a particular significance.

There remain tensions associated with the dual character of heritage - both global and local at the same time - and these have become evident in the implementation of the 2003 *Convention*. This treaty requires us to reconsider the role of communities, groups and individuals in ICH safeguarding and to propose new approaches towards building partnerships between them and state bodies in this endeavour. Immediately, when we move towards giving value to a heritage that resides primarily within human memory and human communities, moving away from a paradigm that gives value predominantly to the material heritage, an essentially people-based and human rights-based approach to heritage safeguarding becomes necessary. With regard to the 2003 *Convention*, we are still in an early stage of its implementation and have only experienced over ten years of putting these new ideas into practice.[15]

Hence, in its approach towards national safeguarding measures, the 2003 *Convention* has brought with it a quiet revolution in the field of cultural heritage law and presents a paradigm shift of potentially seismic importance for the relationship between state organs and communities (groups and individuals) in the identification, designation and safeguarding of heritage. A central subject of this paper, then, has been the way in which this paradigm shift is being played out on the ground and, in particular, the central role that museums can play in supporting more community-driven approaches to heritage safeguarding.

ENDNOTES

1   The domains of ICH as set out (non-exhaustively) in Article 2(2) of the 2003 *Convention* are: oral traditions and expressions (including language as a vehicle of the ICH); performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship.

2   For example, the traditional loom used in weaving Taquile textiles which are the subject of the *Taquile and its textile art* element inscribed on the *Representative List* by Peru in 2008. Further details of this element are available on: https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/taquile-and-its-textile-art-00166 [accessed 9 December 2017].

3   As used in the *Daemokjang, traditional wooden architecture* element inscribed on the *Representative List* by the Republic of Korea in 2010. Further details of this element are available on: https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/daemokjang-traditional-wooden-architecture-00461 [accessed 9 December 2017].

4   Such as the Kura Hulanda Museum in Curacao which is a museum of slavery, and the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool.

5   For example, the British Museum Trustees (n.d.) have argued with regard to the Parthenon sculptures that: *The* [British] *Museum is a unique resource for the world: the breadth and depth of its collection allows a world-wide public to re-examine cultural identities and explore the complex network of interconnected human cultures. The Trustees lend extensively all over the world and over two million objects from the collection are available to study online. The Parthenon Sculptures are a vital element in this interconnected world collection.* **They are a part of the world's shared heritage and transcend political boundaries** [emphasis added]. Available online at: http://www.britishmuseum.org/about_us/news_and_press/statements/parthenon_sculptures/trustees_statement.aspx [accessed 12 May 2015].

6   Interestingly, revisions to the *Operational Guidelines* to the 1972 *Convention* since 1998 have also increasingly recognised the role of local communities in management and protection of inscribed properties.

7   A similar provision is contained in Article 5(a) of the 1972 *Convention*.

8   Reports of the States Parties to the 2003 *Convention* are available in English at: http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00460 [accessed 12 May 2015].

9   *The Royal ancestral ritual in the Jongmyo shrine and its music* element inscribed on the *Representative List* in 2008 by the Republic of Korea. Further details of this element are available on: https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/royal-ancestral-ritual-in-the-jongmyo-shrine-and-its-music-00016 [accessed 9 December 2017].

10 *Huaconada, ritual dance of Mito* element inscribed by Peru on the *Representative* List in 2010. Further details of this element are available on: https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/huaconada-ritual-dance-of-mito-00390 [accessed 9 December 2017].

11 More information about this museum and 'ethno-village' is available online at: http://www.kumrovec.hr/museum-staro-selo/ [accessed 9 December 2010].

12 Information available online at: http://www.craftattract.com/eng/o_projektu_e.html [accessed 13-0402018]/

13 *Krakelingen and Tonnekensbrand, end-of-winter bread and fire feast* element inscribed by Belgium on the *Representative List* in 2010. Further details of this element are available on: https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/krakelingen-and-tonnekensbrand-end-of-winter-bread-and-fire-feast-at-geraardsbergen-00401 [accessed 9 December 2017].

14 Its full title is: *UNESCO Recommendation on the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society* (2015).

15 The 2003 *Convention* came into force in April 2006 with the accession of its fortieth State Party.

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