



This 20th anniversary volume of the *International Journal of Intangible Heritage* opens with a special contribution by Ms Alissandra Cummins, Director of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society, former President of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), and my predecessor as Editor-in Chief of the *International Journal of Intangible Heritage, Museums and intangible cultural heritage: a memoir and a meditation*. This year is also the 80th anniversary of ICOM's creation, marking eight decades of international cooperation in support of museums and heritage worldwide. Ms Cummins brings her comprehensive knowledge of the evolution of the 2003 ICH Convention and the pronouncements of key players, including the Director-General of UNESCO, Koichiro Matsuura, to her delineation of the pathways to this significant development in the world of heritage.

Ms Cummins' article traces the origins of the *International Journal of Intangible Heritage* to ICOM's 20th General Conference and 21st General Assembly, held in Seoul, South Korea, on 8 October 2004. This conference on Museums and Intangible Heritage - memorably illustrated with an evocative exhibition at the National Folk Museum of Korea, *Tree and Paper in Traditional Korean Crafts*, interpreting Buddhist and shamanistic craft practice for a contemporary audience - was the catalyst for two decades of collaboration between ICOM and the NFMK in the production of IJH. She pays tribute to two former Editors-in-Chief of IJH, Professors Amareswar Galla and the late Patrick Boylan, and describes her own role as President of ICOM and in the development of the Journal, among many other aspects of the operation of the ICH Convention.

Ms Cummins's special contribution is followed by an obituary of Ralf Čeplak Mencin, a much-respected member of the Governing Board of the IJH.

Umut Başar and Nurullah Gözcü's article, *The contribution of intangible cultural heritage to the culture industry: the case of Nowruz among Iranian Turks* examines how the Iranian Turkish community observes Nowruz, the Iranian/Persian new year festival symbolising new beginnings, the end of winter and the arrival of spring. Although predominantly associated with Central Asia, the Nowruz tradition extends across a wide region and diverse variations shaped by historical, regional and local factors have developed. The Turkic population of Iran represents one of the communities in which these adaptations are most vividly observed. Iranian Turks continue to sustain and preserve the Nowruz tradition through collective participation, supported by cultural mechanisms that ensure its continuity. This study explores the contributions to the culture industry of the Nowruz tradition amongst Iranian Turks by examining Nowruz practices, analysing the relationship between tradition and the culture industry, and evaluating the practices' contributions using a cultural anthropological approach. Nowruz-related practices contribute to the culture industry and economy in areas such as design, heritage branding, entertainment and the experience economy.

*Exploring and understanding attachment to intangible cultural heritage practices: the cases of Silvesterchlausen and Constance Carnival*, by Robert Maria Moosbrugger, Leticia Lbaronne, Fabian Andreas

Rebitzer, Brian Switzer, Svenia Schneider-Wulf, and Liliana Heimberg, offers an in-depth examination of how attachment to intangible cultural heritage is initiated and sustained. Through two case studies – Silvesterchlausen in the rural region of Appenzell Ausserrhoden, Switzerland, and Constance Carnival in the urban border area of southern Germany – practitioners' perspectives are investigated, demonstrating how individual and collective attachment to these traditions emerges, evolves and is sustained over time. Employing a qualitative methodology, the analysis identifies five key themes that elucidate how these traditions function not merely as cultural representations but as dynamic, performative and civic practices. The results suggest that the strong attachment experienced by practitioners is not attributable to a single element, such as an initial childhood attachment process. Instead, it is the interplay of various components that fosters the profound attachment observed among ICH practitioners within these two traditions.

Tom Black, Johnathan Djabarouti, Dragana Opacic Wilkinson's study, *Performing place: the spatial dynamics of intangible heritage and the Heptonstall Pace Egg ritual* utilises the Heptonstall Pace Egg Play in the Upper Calder Valley of northern England – a seasonal folk performance revived in the mid-20th century – to explore the interplay between built and intangible heritage, addressing a gap in heritage discourse: the symbiotic relationship between physical spaces and place-based cultural practices, specifically in England. Utilising non-representational theory and 'habit memory', the article investigates how the performance enlivens Weavers Square – a site shaped by urban clearance in the mid-20th century – and how the locale in turn influences the play's enactment. Through archival research and participant observation, it demonstrates how the annual revival of the Pace Egg Play sustains cultural memory and reinforces local identity while also stimulating cultural and economic activity through small-scale tourism. Local traditional performances can thus serve as vital mechanisms for the continual reinterpretation and reinforcement of cultural heritage within evolving English villages. The Heptonstall Pace Egg Play offers valuable insights for the integration of intangible cultural heritage into broader heritage frameworks in the United Kingdom.

Tran Quoc Viet, Hoang Dang Tri, Le Thi Thu Huong, *Continuity in change: water rituals, material constraints and community soft power in Hanoi* examines how sacred continuity is reworked within water-offering rituals in two villages along Hanoi's Tô Lịch River under conditions of urban transformation and hydrological degradation. Drawing on interviews, two consecutive years of participant observation and archival materials, it follows ritual not as a stable form but as a sequence whose elements – act, referent and material substrate – no longer coincide. The two cases expose different points at which a sequence becomes untenable: in Phú Gia, the act of water-fetching remains performable while its referent shifts to the Red River; in Quan Nhân, the referent is retained while the river itself becomes non-executable and is replaced by a well. These configurations emerge, not from symbolic choice, but from what can still be carried through without interrupting the sequence. Continuity thus depends on executability rather than meaning, challenging accounts that locate adaptation in reinterpretation or negotiated authenticity. Under material constraint, ritual persists only while a sequence remains performable, with configurations stabilising through repetition rather than through consensus, persuasion or centralised decision-making.

Karina Tucunan, Ken Taylor, Karima Karima Laachir's article, *Rituals, memory and the city: how intangible heritage shapes Islamic sacred districts in Java* demonstrates the process by which intangible cultural heritage is undergoing a transformative shift towards becoming an active participant in cultural and identity formation, moving from merely safeguarding what is vulnerable to becoming a dynamic force that shapes both culture and space. This transformation unfolds through ongoing processes of valuing, re-evaluating and negotiating the boundaries between material and immaterial heritage. The case of Islamic urban heritage in post-colonial Java, expressed through generational rituals and social practices, demonstrates its persistent role in shaping and reshaping urban districts, placing the intangible at the axis of significance that influences district regeneration. Four case studies from the early Islamic era articulate how the rituals of *ziyarah* and *haul* shape city configuration and governance through the emotions and memories that linger in urban spaces.

*Transmission and revival of the puppet Sambasou ritual in the Izu Peninsula, Japan*, by Tsuji Shyuji, examines transmission efforts relating to ritual puppet performances through two case studies in the Izu Peninsula, Japan. Transmission of intangible cultural heritage in Japan, with its strict adherence to faithfully reproducing performances or products handed down from previous generations, has been perceived as fossilisation of heritage; however, this study challenges this perception. The first case study demonstrates the community's capacity for agile modification of its social system to accommodate external social transformations, while the performance itself remains unaltered. The second case study examines the contemporary revival of the ritual performance after a seven-decade hiatus. This revival is distinguished by a spirit of re-creation that enabled a synthesis of skills from diverse origins to reinvigorate the lost ritual performance.

Asadaporn Kiatthanawat, Fatiha Pollin, Patiphol Yodsurang's article, *A geo-cultural analysis of the relationship between Shitalpati craftsmanship communities and murta cultivation landscapes in Bangladesh* investigates the spatial relationship between Shitalpati craftsmanship communities and land use and land cover ('LULC') characteristics, focusing on the ecological context of murta (*Schumannianthus dichotomus*) cultivation – the plant used in mat weaving. A mixed-methods approach combined geo-spatial analysis, land cover classification, and field interviews with artisans. The spatial distribution of weaving communities was mapped and overlaid on to national LULC data to examine correlations with ecological zones such as swamp forests, herb-dominated lands and rural settlements, revealing a strong correlation between historical murta cultivation areas and current Shitalpati activity, particularly in regions with year-round moisture. Land use changes have weakened this connection: many weavers now rely on buying murta from outside sources and outsource processing. Correlation analysis demonstrates that current Shitalpati communities are more closely aligned with agricultural zones than natural murta habitats, reflecting a growing disconnection from local resources. The vulnerability of heritage crafts linked to ecological systems is evident. Policy interventions that support habitat restoration, local cultivation, and institutional framework backing for sustainable craft livelihoods are urgently needed.

Andrea Yankowski, Ana Maria Theresa P. Labrador, Audrey Dawn M. Tomada, *Revitalising and representing the endangered intangible cultural heritage of traditional salt making (asin tibuok) in Bohol, Philippines* describe a project relating to the dying practice of traditional salt making in the Philippines. The production of *asin tibuok* involves extracting and processing salt from seawater by boiling enriched brine in earthenware pots to form hardened salt cakes. This intangible cultural heritage is now practised by only a handful of salt makers and is the only salt of its kind still produced and used in the Philippines today. Collaborating with local knowledge holders (salt makers and potters), researchers, institutional partners in heritage preservation and community advocates, the project sought to document, support, safeguard, revitalise and represent this important cultural heritage. The processes, challenges and accomplishments associated with fostering this engagement and collaboration are described, as well as developing initiatives to preserve and represent ICH in a museum exhibition and through public programs.

Oh Semina, in *Bibimbap: constructing its meaning as intangible cultural heritage in two communities, Jeonju and Jinju*, undertakes an anthropological inquiry into how the traditional dish called bibimbap has changed and been practised amid Korea's historical transitions. Focusing on the cases of Jeonju and Jinju communities, the article explores the process of heritage-making of bibimbap within the everyday practices of local communities, and examines the institutionalisation that secures sustainability. Bibimbap is shown to be not merely a traditional dish, but a form of living intangible heritage that is continually reconfigured and reinterpreted within local historical, ecological, economic and social networks. Through these case analyses, the study moves beyond viewing the heritage-making of bibimbap as a mere typification or an 'invented tradition'. Instead it understands it as a process in which sustainable transmission is built through community practices and institutional efforts. Bibimbap is thus not a heritage item confined to the past; rather, it is a dynamic cultural

heritage that is constantly reconstituted through community practice and institutional labour.

Mengqian Wu, *Heritage on the margins: paper-cutting, commodification and intangible cultural heritage in Shanghai* examines the dynamics of intangible cultural heritage commodification through a case study of paper-cutting in the Shanghai World Intangible Cultural Heritage City. While large-scale state and corporate investments initially sought to transform heritage into a cultural theme park, the project ultimately collapsed, leaving practitioners to navigate survival without institutional support. Drawing on fieldwork, including participant observation in workshops and in-depth interviews with paper-cutting inheritors and enthusiasts, the article highlights how new materials, technologies and market strategies are mobilised to sustain creative practices outside official frameworks. Rather than treating commodification solely as a threat or failure, it is conceptualised as a complex, double-edged process of decontextualisation and recontextualisation. By foregrounding the agency of marginal actors, it demonstrates that unofficial and often overlooked practices reveal how heritage domains are continuously reshaped through negotiation, resilience and creativity. In a context characterised by an 'abundance' of heritage, the Chinese case further illustrates how UNESCO's ICH framework is appropriated in a state-driven context, offering insights of global relevance for rethinking the future of heritage studies.

Monica Teofil Koleva, *Living heritage safeguarding and the capacity building of intangible cultural heritage industries: the case of honba yuki tsumugi*, focusses on *honba yuki tsumugi*, a traditional silk-weaving technique practised in Japan's neighbouring Ibaraki and Tochigi prefectures. Production of *honba yuki tsumugi* has been declining since the 1990s, leading to numerous initiatives to support the capacity building of amateur *yuki tsumugi* craftspeople. With ethnographic data of *honba yuki tsumugi* as a base, this study clarifies the present state of the craft, as well as the challenges it poses in terms of capacity building and safeguarding efforts. *Honba yuki tsumugi* is a unique case study because it is a single industry, or a single set of ICH folk-craft techniques, whose production region encompasses two prefectures (jurisdictions). Each side of the border has its own contrasting approach to safeguarding, here categorised as safeguarding as a cultural industry and preserving as cultural heritage. These perspectives on safeguarding and the challenges faced in the production region enable understanding of how an ecosystemic view of intangible heritage industries based on relationships between stakeholders can support safeguarding of an ICH industry as living cultural heritage.

Dilan KAKDAŞ ATEŞ, Sevilay AKALP's article, *Memory, orality, and space: a qualitative case study on the tradition of dengbêj and traditional houses from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage* examines the relationship between the *dengbêj* tradition, a prominent aspect of Kurdish oral culture, and its spatial context within UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. How does the tradition of *dengbêj*, as a form of oral culture, generate memory, and how does this memory interact with historical spaces? In this context, *dengbêj* is regarded not merely as a melodic form of narration but as a folkloric archive in which migrations, struggles, joys and sorrows are transformed into oral memory. The *Dengbêj* House, where the oral tradition of *dengbêj* performance is practised, is in the Suriçi district of Diyarbakır, in southeastern Türkiye, within the World Heritage-listed historic walled area. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants from different age groups and professions who had visited the *Dengbêj* House, and the data analysed using Colaizzi's method. This study reveals that intangible cultural heritage, through the oral tradition of *dengbêj* performance, is not merely an action-based tradition but also acquires meaning through the spatial context in which it is performed, thereby forming collective memory. By examining the relationship between intangible cultural heritage and architectural space, this project contributes to addressing the interdisciplinary gap between built and intangible cultural heritage studies.

Julie Nichols, *Intangible heritage as pedagogy: reorienting architectural education through the Confluence Studio*, addresses a situation in Australia where formalist and aesthetic concerns have been emphasised in architectural education, often marginalising the social, cultural and ecological knowledge that shape lived

environments. This article repositions intangible cultural heritage not as ancillary content, but as an epistemic and ethical framework for rethinking architectural pedagogy. It examines a third-year architectural design studio, the Confluence Studio, centred on designing a South Sulawesi Sea Cultures Centre in Tana Beru, Indonesia, that foregrounded making as a primary mode of learning. This unsettled conventional practices: drawing was displaced by model-making, oral traditions informed spatial logic, and Indonesian terms served as conceptual scaffolds. Students developed tactical interventions translating intangible cultural knowledge into form, program and material strategies. Findings indicate that ICH-informed pedagogy can transform studios into laboratories for memory, relational exchange and future-making. By privileging hands-on, culturally attuned and iterative methods, architectural education can cultivate designers capable of socially, culturally and ecologically responsible practice, extending beyond purely formalist frameworks.

Laura Tendas, *Speaking our roots: the intertwining between language preservation and ethnobotanical knowledge in the Gallura region of Sardinia, Italy*, examines the role of minority languages in Gallura, a region in northern Sardinia, Italy, in preserving cultural heritage and traditional ecological knowledge. Focusing on the minority languages of Gallurese, Logudorese and Maddalenino, the article investigates how these languages serve as tools for transmitting traditional ethnobotanical and botanical knowledge. As globalisation and sociolinguistic shifts privilege dominant languages such as Italian, the critical ethnobotanical knowledge embedded in Gallurese, Logudorese and Maddalenino faces the threat of disappearance. By utilising the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage framework, the challenges of preserving orally transmitted knowledge and the broader consequences of language loss for biocultural diversity are identified. The biocultural heritage approach – which treats linguistic, cultural and ecological knowledge as inseparable and mutually reinforcing dimensions of heritage – provides a theoretical lens which identifies key linguistic features and cultural expressions linked to sustainable ecological practices. The deep connection between linguistic diversity and environmental knowledge is highlighted, emphasising how minority languages shape how local community members understand nature and support intergenerational transmission of sustainable practices. By positioning minority languages as active repositories of ecological wisdom, the study highlights their relevance in current sustainability discourse and calls for integrated strategies to protect both linguistic and ecological diversity.

This issue concludes with a book review by Tian Shi of Zheng Biao Wu's *The Ancient Oral Classics of the Miao and Historical Analysis (苗族口传经典与史事研究)*, a compilation of extensive narrative works that explore the reasoning behind and exposition of Miao culture. Recited by ritual masters during important ceremonial events – such as sacrifices, funerals, shamanic rituals and celebrations – these scriptures encompass various categories, including ancestor-worshipping scriptures, funeral scriptures and wedding scriptures. They address themes such as the origin of humanity, the history of the Miao people, and their day-to-day lives and practices. As a form of orally transmitted ethnic folk literature, the ancient oral classics are central to traditional Miao culture and constitute a significant treasure within China's multiethnic literary heritage.

The *International Journal of Intangible Heritage* – and its Editor-in-Chief – owe a great debt of gratitude to the many people who work diligently to bring each issue to publication. The members of the Editorial Committee shoulder an ever-increasing load of assessing submissions, suggesting peer reviewers and undertaking peer reviews themselves. I thank them all for their hard work and generous contributions of their time and expertise. The many peer reviewers who bring their perspectives and intellectual discernment to the task are a major strength of this Journal, and I hope that they can see their hard work reflected in the final articles that have been included in this volume. The work of our copy editor, Robyn Flemming, merits special mention – her skills are amply demonstrated in the quality of the final publication. The IJH Secretariat at the National Folk Museum of Korea has, as always, provided wonderful coordination and support to myself, the other members of the Editorial Committee, to external peer reviewers and, above all, to the authors whose works appear in this volume of the Journal. Finally, thanks to all the authors whose works are contained within this special anniversary volume of

IJIH – your patience with our processes is, I hope, rewarded by seeing your scholarship in print in the *International Journal of Intangible Heritage*.

Editor-in-Chief  
*International Journal of Intangible Heritage*

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rosly Russell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small flourish at the end.