

VIII. ICH for Social Cohesion and Sustainable Development

Please describe more than one ICH item in Uzbekistan considered to contribute to social cohesion or sustainable development. (ex. Connecting generations, adapting to natural environment)

1) Basic information

Title: Navruz

Background: Being a spring holiday, Navruz is one of the vibrant and colorful folk festivities, which came down to use from time immemorial. In different forms and under various names it is celebrated by almost all nations and people of the East. Navruz holiday symbolizes renewal and the wakening of nature. Since 1992 Uzbekistan has been celebrating Navruz annually. It was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (2009) as a multinational nomination (Azerbaijan, India, Iran, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan). 21 March is considered as International Day of Navruz and celebrated internationally since 2010.

Navruz is included in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan under index number of 03.02.01

Area: Navruz is spread not only in the territory of Uzbekistan but also in the area encompassing Indian Subcontinent, Central Asia to the Mediterranean and Southeast Europe. The element represents all five domains of ICH, because it itself incorporated the majority of other elements.

2) Explanation:

At present Navruz has become truly nationwide holiday and festivity of the wakening of new life, of well-being, peace, fertility and abundance, happiness and joy, richness and benevolence. During Navruz holiday noble traditions manifest themselves, which were and remain as its essence. Navruz promotes

values of peace and solidarity, reconciliation and neighbourhood, cultural diversity and tolerance, healthy life-style and renewal of living environment. If in the ancient times, with arrival of Navruz, wars, conflicts and disputes were ended, in our days people have an essential desire to forget mutual resentment and reproaches, whereas peace and friendship, harmony and kindness reigns in *mahallas*. The people of Uzbekistan, living as a single united family, with great joy celebrate this wonderful holiday. Each city and village, family and *mahalla* waits for it impatiently.

The grand celebration of Navruz takes place in the central square of Tashkent, which brightly demonstrates invaluable heritage and national traditions of the people of Uzbekistan. And it is in Navruz holiday, that one can see manifestation of almost all domains of ICH, i.e. oral traditions and expressions (oral folk poetic creativity), performing arts (music, dances, spectacular art, folk games), rituals and artistic crafts. Such games and entertainment types as horse racing (*otchopar*), goat hunting (*kopkara, uloq, buzkashi*), wrestling (*kurash, goshtingir*), sheepfight, cockfight, quailfigth contributed to the festive mood of Navruz holiday. Also, rope walkers, acrobats, wisecrackers, puppeteers delight the spectators with their performances. It bears mentioning that main attributes of Navruz and its traditional rituals and customs were folk songs and instrumental music, which always accompanied other performances.

3) Roles for social cohesion/sustainable development

Navruz contributes significantly to social cohesion and sustainable development of society and local communities. In fact, it has already become a tradition to organize *hashars* (mutual assistance in doing certain public works based on a voluntary basis), i.e. to clean *aryks* (ditches), whitewash trees, dig up gardens, plant trees and flowers, etc.. This helps not only to improve the appearance of our cities, villages and street, but also unites all citizens of the country.

Important feature of Navruz is that it promotes mutual respect among people, their living in harmony with each other (for instance people visit each other during the holiday and make gifts; visits are organized to the elderly people of *mahallas* and support is provided, etc.). Navruz brightly demonstrates care for own cultural heritage, reflects succession/continuity of traditions. Before and after Navruz celebrations it is possible to observe traditional rituals and customs as well as different entertainment activities and open air celebrations, bazaars and fairs of folk crafts.

4) Community involvement

In Navruz celebrations all communities, groups and persons take part in Uzbekistan. It is they, who actively participate in organizations of all Navruz-related activities. Navruz is celebrated in all places of Uzbekistan, i.e. inside family circle, in *mahalla*, village, city, district and region. And it is it that it is possible to observe a cultural diversity and creativity of all people of the country.

One bright example is joint organization of Navruz festivities in local communities, which have mixed populations, i.e. Uzbeks, Tatars, Kazakhs, Turkmens; or annual organization of celebrations on the occasion of Navruz by cultural centers of Uzbekistan.

5) Information resource(s)

- Interview by Rustambek Abdullaev (1947), Professor at State Conservatoire of Uzbekistan, Doctor of Art Studies, Honoured Art Worker of Uzbekistan - Tashkent Planetarium, 17 March 2014 (broadcasted by Republican TV Channel);
- Materials of the scientific expeditions carried with the framework of the project "Facilitating ICH Inventory-Making and Utilising Online Tools for ICH Safeguarding in the Central Asian Region";
- "Rituals and Music in Central Asia". Prof. Rustambek Abdullaev, Tashkent, 2007;
- "O'zbek Xalq Bayramlari" ("Uzbek Folk Holidays"), Prof. Usmon Karabaev, Tashkent, 2002.

6) Survey study project carried out by scholars (domestic/international)

Research projects and survey studies on Navruz are conducted by various research institutes of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan and HEIs dealing with cultural and art-related issues. To present several monographs and books were published on Navruz (under authorship of M. Joraev, R. Abdullaev and others), which include collections of poetic texts and folk songs on Navruz, collections of musical notations of folk songs and melodies dedicated to Navruz.

7) Awards received

Not Applicable

8) Safeguarding measures/programme

Main programme for safeguarding ICH elements, including Navruz, is the State Programme "On Safeguarding, Preservation, Popularization (Promotion) and Use of Objects of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2010-2020". It identifies necessary measures to be undertaken, including:

- organization of expeditions and field studies to collect data on sites, which will be closely connected to future creation of database on all issues of preservation (archiving, inventory making, documenting);
- publication of scientific works on the history of Navruz, publication of scientific expedition outcomes;
- preparation and production of audio and video tapes and disks on celebration of Navruz on sites taking into account local traditions and features of organization of traditional rituals and customs;
- attraction of the youth to learning and preservation of Navruz, its traditional forms, a large-scale advocacy of the holiday by means of mass media;
- organization of traditional competitions and contests on all types and forms of folk arts.

1) Basic information

Title: *Askiya*

Background: *Askiya* (or *azkiya*, *aytish*, *zarofat*, *hazil*), the art of wit, genre of folk art, in particular connected with folk-spectacular art. Its integral parts are humor and jokes. It is a mass genre of folk art, which inherently was a part of traditional artistic programme of folk celebrations, festivities and promenades organized on large squares (*registon* and *sayilgoh*) of cities and villages of Uzbekistan as well as family-related rituals, get-togethers (*gap-gashtak*) and in *cheykhana*, which people consider as an integral part of their own heritage.

Askiya was nominated by the Republic of Uzbekistan for inclusion in the Representative List of UNESCO and is currently under consideration (the decision to be made in November 2014). In the National List of intangible cultural heritage it is under index number of 02.06.02

Area: *Askiya* art genre got formed and became widespread predominantly in the Ferghana Valley (consisting of the territories of present-day Andijan, Namangan and Ferghana regions of Uzbekistan) and in Tashkent region. Permanently operating *askiya* groups and teams are to be found in Ferghana, Margilan and Kokand cities, and Koshtepa and Uchkoprik districts of Ferghana region; in Qorasuv, Khonobod, Asaka cities and Baliqchi district of Andijan region. In addition to the above-mentioned areas, *askiya* is practiced, though

rarely, in Jizzakh, Samarkand, Navoi, Bukhara, Kashkadarya and Surkhandarya regions of Uzbekistan.

2) Explanation:

Askiya is the distinct genre of Uzbek verbal folk art, essential component of the folk amusement and widely popular spectacular entertainment, with a deep-rooted history. Being an original eloquence and witticism contest, it is organized predominantly in the form of dialogue between two or more participants around particular theme.

At the center of *askiya* is humor created by its practitioners, whose talent is observable in skillful use of words (in different meanings and for different purposes), in giving impromptu and meaningful reply to certain opinions or questions (based on solid knowledge of various life situations, thorough thinking, performance and speech culture) and making effective use of body movements.

Two distinct types of *askiya* are observed, i.e. “Maishiy *askiya*” (“Everyday life *Askiya*”) and “Sahnaviy *askiya*” (“Onstage *Askiya*”). At present, more than thirty forms of *Askiya* are known, including *payrov*, *qofiya*, *radif*, *okhshatdim*, *safsata*, *gulmisiz* and *terma*. Although, each of them conform to common requirements of *askiya* art genre, still each has its own distinctive features.

Askiya is part of traditional artistic programmes in folk celebrations, festivities, family-related rituals and get-togethers organized in the cities and villages across Uzbekistan. Its knowledge and traditions are passed on from generation to generation and constantly recreated by communities, groups and individuals.

Askiya is a bright reflection of Uzbek people’s feeling of identity and succession. It makes people joke open-heartedly and laugh at some flaws run across in the daily life of contemporaries.

3) Roles for social cohesion/sustainable development

The role of *Askiya* in social cohesion is significant. It promotes humor, ensures simplicity of communication among people, and unites representatives of different communities, irrespective of their age and background, around common event (festivity, family-related events, social gatherings), supports warm relations between performers and spectators – all of which help in strengthening the feeling of identity and unity.

People practicing *askiya* have always been at the center of social and cultural life. They constantly help in raising the spirits of population, and act as mediators or messengers among the people in solving some important problems.

By presenting their traditional repertoire and creating new *payrovs* (*themes*), *Askiya* practitioners play invaluable role in raising local population's awareness of social tendencies and occurrences, in bringing to attention of the people some important issues observed in daily life and in nurturing their aesthetic tastes.

Performances of *Askiya* help in sustainable development of community, in promoting benevolence and intra-community spirit. One important aspect of *Askiya* is that it is guided by certain rules which forbid offending someone. It encourages mutual respect and good relations among people.

4) Community involvement

Askiya is inherently about dialogue between various individuals, groups and communities (such as performers and spectators; between *mahallas* (local communities); different age groups, cultural and professional backgrounds) by means of humor and wit. Being peculiar art genre, *it* is based on certain rules of respect and diversity of participants. At the center of *askiya* is human being and society; but also such principles as social inclusion and appreciation for human creativity.

Indeed, *askiya*-related performances may sometimes involve spectators. The performances of *askiya* can be conducted as part of certain festivity (in such a case it is accompanied by other types of spectacular and performing art) or separately.

5) Information resource(s)

- Materials of the scientific expedition to the Ferghana Valley carried out in March-April 2012;
- Materials of the scientific expedition "Following the tracks of *Askiya*" carried out in January 2014;
- M. Qodirov, "Uzbek Folk Spectacular Arts" textbook, Tashkent, "Oqituvchi" Publishing House, 1981 (in Uzbek);
- H. Sulonov, "Askiya" collection, Tashkent, Literature and Art Publishing House named after Gafur Gulom, 1998 (in Uzbek);
- M. Qodirov, collection of research works on "Fragments from the past of Performing Arts", Tashkent, "Fan" Publishing House, 1993 (in Uzbek);
- M. Qodirov, "Masters of Satire" textbook, Tashkent, 2008 (in Uzbek);

- M. Qodirov, “Uzbek Traditional Theatre Arts” book, Tashkent, Publishing House of the Uzbekistan National Library named after Alisher Navoi, 2010 (in Uzbek);
- 7 articles by M. Qodirov from various books and collections of articles: “Laughter story”, “Life and Works of Yusufjon Qiziq”, “The Art of Buffoonery and Comedy”, “Soyib Khujayev”, “Uzbek Folk Performing Arts”, “Yusufjon Qiziq”, collection of research works on “Fragments from the Past of Performing Arts” (in Uzbek);
- 13 articles published in the Encyclopaedia dedicated to *askiya* and its performers: “Aka Bukhor”, “Laughter game”, “Laughter Story”, “Mizrob Maskhara”, “Nurali Qiziq”, “Okhunjon Qiziq”, “Pulatjon Qiziq”, “Tula Maskhara”, “Khujayev Soyib”, “Yusufjon Qiziq”, “Gofurjon Qiziq”, “Askiya”, “Berdiyov Maskhara” (in Uzbek).

6) Survey study project carried out by scholars (domestic/international)

The survey study project is carried out by the the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan, Republican Center for Folk Art and HEIs dealing with cultural and art-related issues. The most recent study was carried out by the Republican Center for Folk Art within the framework of the project “Facilitating ICH Inventory-Making and Utilising Online Tools for ICH Safeguarding in the Central Asian Region” (2012-2014).

7) Awards received

Not Applicable

8) Safeguarding measures/programme

Safeguarding measures include the following:

- Legal protection through the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Safeguarding and Use of Objects of Cultural Heritage”;
- Implementation of the State Programme aimed at safeguarding, preservation and popularization of objects of ICH;
- Institution of state awards in order to promote development of *askiya* art genre;
- Organization of *askiya*-related competitions;
- Production of films as well as documentaries, publication of books dedicated to *askiya*;
- Organization of researches and scientific expeditions for studying *askiya*.