



Cultural Partnership Initiative

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Rituals- Korean and Indigenous Fijian Safeguarding Systems: a Comparative Assessment

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Abstract

In this modern times, the influence of contemporary culture and lifestyle have enveloped communities and societies to the very core and has eroded the foundation of traditional beliefs, values and systems of livelihood with some communities being completely destroyed. Language is also overwhelmed by colonial and modern colloquial which have deprived the true meaning of elements of ICH, its expressions and the sanctity of its observance.

Ritual which the paper will examine inculcates ceremonies and elaborate practices with varied significance that has been the subject of continuous debate as to its relevance, enormous resources invested, economic factor and social cost. This assessment is a comparative contextualizing of the ancient ritual of JongmyoJerye in the traditional Korean society and that of the Veibuli (veivagunuvi) vakavanuapracticed in the iTaukei (indigenous Fijian) community.

These two ceremonies, I will argue, although reflect evolving intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and maybe distinctive have through time experienced changes and these purported transformations is manifested in the style, processes, and practice which to a greater extent affect in some way the mystical powers and positive wave of spiritual “luck” that is derived from dedicated and strict observance of such rituals; it is still maintained with its principles emphasized. Similarly it will be further argued that intangible cultural heritage safeguarding measures put in place by the communities, institutions and governments of both societies have to a greater extent allow for the continuity, recognition, observance and appreciation of the ceremonies in modern societies.

Introduction

Intangible cultural heritage is the source of life common to all, the knowledge, skills, wisdom to survive in an environment. Intangible cultural heritage reveals the creativity of the human

race which has been a vehicle of existence that transcends through time giving people a sense of identity. Intangible cultural heritage signifies the people and nature which includes land and all its richness and the sea with all its biodiversity, and the sky with all its energy.

Intangible cultural heritage or traditional knowledge is the cornerstone of the culture of a community or society. It describes, analyses, create links, promotes social cohesiveness, entertains, strengthens relationships, and facilitates unity, amongst others. Commonly discerned as living body of knowledge that is developed, sustained and passed on from generation to generation within a community, often forming part of its cultural or spiritual identity¹⁾. The 2003 Convention for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (CSICH) defines it as “the knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, the representations, expressions, skills as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts’ and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage”.

Ritual which is listed as one of the domains under the 2003 CSICH is a form of the manifestation of this body of knowledge (ICH) and it embodies spiritual qualities that mostly reflect the very cultural identity of a community. It is a stereotype sequence of activities involving gestures, words, and objects, performed in an appropriated place, and designed to influence supernatural (preternatural entities) or forces on behalf of the actors' goals and interests. Rituals may be prescribed by the traditions of a community, including a religious community and are characterized by formalism, traditionalism, invariance, rule-governance, sacral symbolism and performance²⁾.

There are various kinds of rituals which are a feature of almost all known human societies, past or present. They include not only the various worship rites and sacraments of organized religions and cults, but also the rites of passage of certain societies, atonement and purification rites, oaths of allegiance, dedication ceremonies, coronations and presidential inaugurations, marriages and funerals, school "rush" traditions and graduations, club meetings, sports events, Halloween parties, veterans parades, Christmas shopping and more. Many activities that are ostensibly performed for concrete purposes, such as jury trials, execution of criminals, and scientific symposia, are loaded with purely symbolic actions prescribed by regulations or tradition, and thus partly ritualistic in nature³⁾. Even common actions like hand-shaking and saying hello⁴⁾ may be termed ritual.

We live in an age when science and technology have now served catalyst for confirmation of mystical, natural and ceremonial powers, the Jongmyo Jerye and the veibuli (veivagunuvi)

1) WIPO, 2012, “Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions,” page 8

2) American Academy of Arts and sciences, Victor W. Turner, March 1973, “*Symbols in African Ritual.*” viewed October 2013, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ritual>

3) “*Symbols in African Ritual (16 March 1973)*”. By AAAS (American Academy of Arts and Sciences). Retrieved May 17, 2013.

4) Thomas, Chris (27 August 2009). "Handshake - Priest and two soldiers, 500BC.Pergamon Museum Berlin (SK1708)". Albums. Google. Retrieved 4 September 2011

vakavanua serves as two forms of rituals that have been maintained over centuries in both societies. The two ceremonies are held with high regard in both societies and performed or enacted involving members of the higher rung of society.

Jongmyo Jerye and Veibuli(Vieivagunuvi) Vakavanua - in Context

Jongmyo Jerye, or the Royal Ancestral Memorial Rite is a seasonal Confucian ceremony held at Jongmyo, or the Royal Ancestral Shrine, to honour his ancestors of the Joseon Dynasty, where mortuary tablets are enshrined to honor and worship the Joseon Kings and Queens. The Royal Shrine has Jeongjeon (Main Hall), enshrined 49 tablets in 19 spirit chambers, and Yeongnyeongjeon (Hall of Eternal Peace), and enshrined 33 tablets in 16 spirit chambers⁵⁾.

The Jongmyo Rites originated from the ancient Chinese era, practiced during the Silla era and preserved till last dynasty of Joseon. This ritual considered the highest-ranked rites is practiced along with the ceremony for praying to the gods of the earth for bountiful crops. The ritual event is classified into two categories: regular and extraordinary ceremony. The former is held in January, April, July, and October while the latter is held previously during auspicious occasions (however, after liberation from Japanese rule) and now it is held on the first Sunday of May. The ritual order and procedures were very strict and solemn ranging from the ancestral tablet placing, spirits welcoming, food presenting; first, second and last obeisance; sacrificial food and drink partaking and closing.

During the ritual, the monarch should be prudent in his speech and action for 4 days and cleansed his body for 3 days before Jongmyo Jerye. The ceremonies are tools for enhancing the solidarity of people, bringing them closer together. It is a valuable cultural asset and the music, dance, ritual vessels, and libation of foods of Jongmyo Jerye are essential manifestations of aesthetics of performing arts based on cosmic and Confucian principles⁶⁾.

An important component of the ritual is court music plays (Jerye-ak), bringing an enjoyment for the spirits. The Music was initially created in Joseon Dynasty's 4th King, Sejong's reign, for use in royal palace banquet, and then it was modified as suitable for the ceremony under Sejo's reign, which has been handed down to the present. The music has been performed in Jongmyodaejae, which was discontinued in 1946 but resumed in 1971, on the first Sunday of May every year.

Jerye-ak compositions played in the rites are Botaepyeong and Jeongdaeop. The musicians are divided into the upper terrace orchestra in the foreground, called the Deungga, and the lower terrace orchestra, called the Heonga. Some music pieces of Jongmyo Jeryeak had their roots in the Tang Dynasty and Song Dynasty of China, and some grew in the native environment. These

5) Korea cultural Heritage Foundation, May 6th 2012, "Jongmyo Daeje"2012 International cultural event World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO

6) Jongmyojerye Preservation Incorporated Association, Jongro-gu Seoul Korea, http://www.jongmyo.net/sub/company/eng_com_greeting.asp

three different styles of music pieces are played with different instrumental ensembles. The Jerye's dance is called Ilmu (line dance). Ilmu divided into Botaepyeong-ji-mu (dance to praise achievements of the former kings), and Jeongdaeop-ji-mu, (dance to praise the king's military achievements). Ilmu dances are performed by a group of 84 women dancers wearing purpled-clothing dance. They called Palilmu because they dance in 8 lines and rows. Line dances are performed to the orchestral accompaniment of Deungga or Heonga in accordance with ritual procedures. Line dances aim at delineating the harmony of the negative and positive cosmic forces of yin and yang while they shifts between civil dance (Munmu), delineating the positive force of yang to praise the civil achievements of the Joseon kings, and military dance (Mumu), delineating the nature of negative force of yin to praise the military achievements of the Joseon kings, for which the hand-held props are changed appropriately.

The veibuli (veivagunuvi) vakavanua is a ceremony associated specifically with the traditional installation of a chief and performed only during certain periods of time (sometimes after 100 years) based on consensus of the people, vacancy of Chiefly title, the need for proper leadership in the vanua or over the land. The ritual involved is elaborate and involves months of preparations. The installation ritual is carried out over more than a week reenacting the traditional relations, and observance by the different layers of the hierarchy in traditional society.

Oral history of the indigenous Fijian indicates that traditional hierarchal system was created by ancestors who first inhabited the Feejees on board the Kaunitoni and Rogovoka canoes, settling in Nakauvadra⁷⁾. They agree to install a leader as Ratanivanua (chief of the land) and Lutunasobasoba was selected. There were other titles created and the order is as follows:

- Sauturaga (Komainikoro) : nobleman, keeper of the chiefly title;
- Bete : priests, shaman, keepers of the temple, lead worship for Gods;
- Matanivanua : spokesperson, herald;
- Bati : warriors, guards;
- Gonedau: Fisherfolk, navigators (sailors)
- Mataisau : builders, sculptors, weavers, carvers etc.

On the occasion of installing a chief, the ritual is unique in that the full traditional ceremony (veiqaravi vakavanua) is accorded to the newly installed. This is a deeply symbolic occasion which is taboo, solemn and sacred as the ritual marks the elevation of an ordinary person to status similar to the Gods, the epitome of reverence and goodwill.

The installation follows a specific procedure and each of the stratas (position of hierarchy listed above) have a role each to play in as far as implementation of the installation ceremony is concerned. The sauturaga performs the investiture while the bete facilitates the overall ceremony. The matanivanua is responsible for heralding all kinsmen to the installation and similarly during

7) Bigitbau, S. Veiqaravi Vakavanua [unpublished] 2003.

the ceremony for all the procedures, and sanctity involved. The bati are responsible for securing and guarding the ceremonies. There are two types – those that guard the vicinity immediate to the installation space (called bati lekaleka) and bati balavu are those responsible for guarding other parts of the space thereafter.

Measures leading up to the installation follow the general rule:

- The elders in the chiefly clan or tribe meet and discuss a nominee for the vacant chiefly position. The name is proposed to the noble clansmen who discuss amongst themselves the nomination.
- Before a final decision is made, the sauturaga clan supervises the nominee over a trial period. The trial period varies as the nobles would like to gauge the maturity of the nominee, his/her posture, decision-making principles, mechanisms used when dealing with the vanua (land and people).
- After trial period, if nobles are satisfied than the nominee is appointed through consensus. A date set and various clans are notified to prepare for the scheduled installation including kin relations in other provinces, villages etc. Traditional costume for newly installed is specially made.
- In early years, installation ceremonies were simply done in a rara (ceremonial open space/ field) with elders seated in a circular formation and the installed chief seated at the helm. A hole is dug in their midst and traditional ceremonial drink (kava) is mixed in the whole and the chief drinks the first cup (this drinking ceremony is known as veivagunuvi). In recent times, the installation is done in an enclosed house with the appropriate people present. Often women and children are not allowed. They remain in the periphery. During the installation ceremony, kava is offered to the appointed chief with words uttered to signify the surrendering of mana, sau of the vanua (power) to the newly installed. Should the recipient accept the assignment, he or she will respond back with a yes and a vow that he/she will uphold the responsibilities assigned, abide by the ethical principles associated with the position and more precisely a commitment to love and respect his/her people. The kava is normally presented by the nobles. The noble will thereafter tie a bow made of tapa around the right upper arm of the anointed. The bow is significant as it symbolizes the transfer or resources and power of the people to the hands of the newly appointed. During the ritual there is complete silence, and only the sound of the clapping (deep), uttering of vows and beating of the drums. The presence of the various clan heads signify the unity, their loyalty to the chief and the support for the newly appointed chief by the whole tribe and the survival of the community are given to him.
- After the investiture, the newly installed chief is than taken out into an isolated area for 4 nights. During this period, he is counseled by the clan leaders and abstains from cleansing himself/herself and sexual contact. After the 4 nights, the installed person is than taken to a sacred bathing place where the individual will bathe. It can be in the sea, a pond, a river, or a well and the process of taking a bath symbolizes the birth of a new being, a chief. In

the province of Cakaudrove, the Tui Cakau (traditional title of the Paramount Chief of Cakaudrove) bathes in the sea amongst sharks connecting the chief to their ancestral God (shark god) and it is believed that should the person installed is the right person for the position, the holder will not be attacked by sharks while bathing in sea. After bathing, the person is now complete and a god figure and given the title as chief.

- The appearance in public of the chief is greeted by shout of divine acclamation called the tama. The simple meaning of that word is ‘father’ and therein lies the kernel of the whole system, that of family relationship⁸⁾. Merry making in the province, vanua, village will follow after celebrating the successful installation of the chief.
- Those that participate during the whole process are dressed in either tapa or costumes made out of finely leaves.

The items used in these ceremonies are prepared well before the occasion. For example, the tanoa, (kava bowl and its cup), bilo are prepared many days before the ceremony. Tabua (whales tooth), Masi (tapa cloth made from bark of a tree -paper mulberry), Ibe – serve as carpets (woven from pandanus tree), Yaqona (Piper methysticum) and magiti (taro, pig, fish turtle) are basic gifts items used during the ceremony.

Comparative Assessment

The Jongmyo Jerye ritual of the Confucian community is still practiced today but certain changes have been accepted and adopted by this ritual to continue the practice. The rite used to be held five times a year, in spring, summer, autumn, winter and the annual "sacrificial day" during the Joseon Period is now held once, on the first Sunday of May. It is regarded as one of the rarest cultural events preserved today combining the age-old Confucian memorial ceremony with religious music and dance performances now inscribed to the World Heritage list. The rite was designated as the Important Intangible Cultural Heritage No. 56 in 1975 and then a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2001 which now automatically is an ICH Representative List element. It started to be held as an international event in 2006.

Similarly the processes and costumes used for the veivagunuvi ceremony has changed considerably after the colonization of Fiji by Great Britain in the 1870s. Setting of the ceremony which is often relegated to an open space is now enclosed with limited people attending to the ceremonies proper.

The Jongyojerye ritual involves the royal family specifically the King which is similar also to the traditional investiture of a chief. The rituals surround royalty and are highly elaborate occasions, very auspicious and are colorful pageantry. As joyous as it can be, it also signifies the close connectedness of the main celebrant (chief/King) to the deities, ancestral Gods.

8) Brewster 1922, London "the hill tribes of Fiji" chapter VI Ancient Traditions, pg 69

The transfer of power (mana) and cleansing are significant elements of both rituals and relates to the path between earth and heaven. It connects and opens a space for communication between both worlds. This philosophy is connected the blessings, luck and mana associated with such ceremonies.

The intricate procedures and processes involved delineate the taboos and sanctity of both ceremonies which must be carefully observed so that the ethical principles and aura underpinning its existence are maintained.

The sharing and consuming of the sacrificial offering in the Jonmyo Jerye ceremony indicates the receiving of blessing from the ancestral spirits, which is similar to the drinking of kava in the veivagunuvi ceremony, which indicates the receiving of blessing.

The orchestra performance is similar to that of the traditional kava ceremony (meketaki ni yaqona vakaturaga) accorded to chiefs alone, where a group of man chant in a harmonious rhythm, sometimes this signing is accompanied with the donging sound of a hollow shape wood bell (beating of lali), as a man holding a coconut shell containing kava full dressed in traditional attire, move towards the chief to offer the kava. This is normally performed after a chief is installed and the title been bestowed upon (chief).

There are varying differences between the two rituals which inculcates the participants in the rituals while women are involved in the Korean ceremony, the indigenous Fijian ritual does not allow the participation of women unless the individual to be installed is a woman. It is however, observed in some parts of Fiji, the participation of women, and with heads bowed, sitting on either sides of the path with which the Chief will use to walk to the installation house, cleansing and others.

The costumes used are both elaborate however materials used differ. The Veivagunuvi Vakavanua process involves participants dressed in traditional attire using natural materials such



Welcoming of ancestral spirits –JongmyoJerye ritual
@ www.jongmyo.net/sub/company/eng_com_greeting.asp



JongmyoJeryeak– performance of ancient court music



The veivagunuvi ritual. The appointed individual is escorted to the ceremonial place for the investiture and installation ceremony. @ www.fijianaffairs.gov.fj/Cultural%20Gallery.html#TuiLawa

as leaves, tapa (bark cloth). The Jongmyo Jerye involves the use of colourful and neatly sewn fabric with headdresses.

Viability of the practices (safeguarding mechanisms set)

The application of safeguarding measures differs according across nations. Safeguarding is defined as “measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.” (Article 2.3 of the CSICH). Some safeguarding measures include formulating ICH policy, creation of inventory system, information systematization, the restoration and digitization of records, programs for reviving ICH, to the nominations of ICH elements into the 3 broad lists of the convention.

Member states have developed systems for safeguarding based on the needs and also through the available resources that each is equipped. The Republic of Korea developed the National Living Human Treasure system which was adopted by UNESCO in 1993. The Government of Fiji developed the Cultural Mapping Programme of which emanated the Special Revival Programme. Both safeguarding programmes look at the identification of Living Human Practitioners who are identified and used in revitalization workshops to transmit the knowledge and skills to the younger generation.

Some notable safeguarding measures in both countries which has helped in the viability of both rituals inculcate the following:

A National ICH List for Korea

According to the Cultural Heritage Protection Act, which Korea enacted in 1962, cultural heritage is classified into tangible cultural heritage, intangible cultural heritage, folklore materials, monuments, and traditional structures. The most essential cultural assets are preserved and designated as national treasures, important cultural heritage, historical materials, or natural monuments by government.

ICH selected as national assets are designated by the nation, and local cultural assets are designated by states or cities. In 1964, only 31 items were designated Important Intangible cultural heritage by the nation; however that number has increase to 114 in 2009. The Jongyo Jerye is one.

Korean ICH Associated Institutions and Structures

ICH are learned, practiced and inherited by people and organizations. The authorized individual or organization with skill or ability is encouraged and supported to succeed in maintaining and preserving the traditional culture.

An Inheritance Educational Center has been established in order for people to easily become

acquainted with ICH. It is used as a tour resource by local community and especially helpful for adolescents to experience traditional culture. Additionally, various cultural tour souvenirs have been developed and conventional performances are held with local folk festivals and are used as cultural tour resources, maximizing the opportunity for enjoying local cultural assets⁹⁾.

Mapping the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Indigenous Fijian

An exercise that required enormous resources, the mapping programme manages to capture and make known those cultural heritages of the indigenous people that are unknown, making them more visible. With the primary objective to capture the ICH of all provinces in Fiji, the mapping programme has leveraged ICH especially in its teaching at school level. The Fijian Government supported initiative has completed almost ½ of the total 14 provinces in Fiji. Included in the data collected are cultural elements processes.

The process also involves the documentation of ICH for posterity. The iTaukei Institute of Language and Culture has a range of documented materials regarding the veivagunuvu vakavanua around Fiji. This is available for public viewing and purchase for educational purposes.

Fiji's Special Revival Unit

Transmission of the knowledge is an important process in safeguarding, however, one cannot really transmit the authenticity of it, for the act of transmitting itself will lose certain contents of ICH. iTaukei ICH are transmitted through three main forum; oral teaching, practical performance and mostly inheritance. The inheritance nature of traditional knowledge gives it an authentic meaning.

The inheritance of traditional knowledge is a significant transmission tool in Fiji. The family unit have traditional obligation, duties to serve in maintaining the proper functioning of the whole community. Inheritance of such traditional knowledge gives people a sense of ownership and determination to continue practicing their own unique identity. iTaukei ICH is founded on this mechanism.

In 2010, the government established a Special Revival Unit to look into the revitalization and promotion of cultural elements. Its tasks include organizing skills and cultural product development workshops in communities. Work over the past years was undertaken in five provinces in Fiji (Rewa, Lomaiviti, Ra, Kadavu, Tailevu)¹⁰⁾.

These Workshops are conducted by the iTaukei Institute of Language & Culture in partnership with the Experts, the holders of traditional knowledge and skills. The current safeguarding program is still been modified to best focus on safeguarding ICH in Fiji.

9) Cultural Heritage Administration, "Important Intangible Cultural Heritage"

10) "Fiji National Report on Progress in implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for Further Implementation (MSI) of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA), 2010 – 2012 "Accelerating Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development"pg -28, 5.4.9

Under the special revival safeguarding system, the community takes ownership in the revival project, where it recommends projects through a formal request. The elements are considered culturally unique to a community and are on the verge of extinction, example, traditional house building, canoe building, pottery, basket weaving, and traditional music.

Due to the complex nature of itaukei ICH and its social traditional system, careful consideration on the transmission of ICH are evaluated prior to revival workshops, for instance, the ICH element role in the social system, the taboos of the ICH element which needs to be observed, the consent of the traditional holders. These criteria will greatly determine the revival method.

Different ICH elements will require different method of learning, therefore the special revival system is not limiting its strategies to a system of revival but rather keep an open system to best accommodate the many ICH elements in their various role in the social traditional system.

The social traditional system of living in the itaukei community is safeguarded through holding lectures, seminars, and awareness program targeted at the different groups of people in the community. The oral transmission of ICH, is an ideal learning system for itaukeisociety, where elders gather the villagers and narrate stories around a kava bowl (tanoa);however this transmission tools is diminishing due to the influence of modernization.

Safeguarding of Jongmyojerye Ritual

The rite was restored in 1969 by the Jongmyo Ritual Conservation Committee (Jeonju Yi Clan Council) and has since then continued to be held by the society. In order to provide institutional protection to the heritage, the Korean government has designated it as an important intangible cultural heritage.

Safeguarding measures include protection act, which imposes restrictions on alterations to the property and allocating financial resources for its conservation. The area around Jongmyo is managed by other government institutions that periodically revise the Basic Scenery Plan and District Unit Plan for the areas surrounding the site, recommending systematic management policies and work plans. There are masters (ICH bearers) selected, to oversee the ritual utensils, one master for the ritual dress, another for the reading of ritual text and the third for the utensils and food for offering¹¹⁾.

As for the ritual, various associations, the Jeonju Yi Clan Council, the Association of Royal Ancestral Ritual in the Jongmyo Shrine, the Jongmyo Jerye Preservation Association play an active role for the continual practice of the ritual. Certain key positions of the ritual are selected from this association.

JongmyoJerye music is being passed on by the National Gugak Center, which is the successor to Jangakwon, the Bureau of Court Music of the Joseon Dynasty. There are four masters

11) Periodic report no. 00781/ Republic of Korea.Report on the implementation of the Convention and on the status of elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, C.1 social and cultural functions (page 16-20).

of JongmyoJerye music, most of whom were graduates of the Conservatoire of the Yi Royal Family.¹²⁾

The general public is allowed to enter the heritage area on guided tours only, as general accesses to the interior of the buildings are prohibited.

Performers are recruited by the Jongmyo Jerye Preservation Association and Jongmyo Jeryeak Preservation Association. The Jongmyo Jerye Preservation Association provides training to general members of the public as well as descendants of the royal family, raising possible sustainability. Jongmyo Jerye music is being taught at arts schools and colleges including the Gugak National High School and the number of the people who can perform Jongmyo Jerye music are increasing¹³⁾.

The above institutions are putting effort to try to imitate the original version of the ritual. Every year new changes are being introduced to the ritual by these institutions after intense research.

Conclusion

Given the complexity of Jongmyo Jerye and Jeryeak royal court music, it is interesting to study its safeguarding system, the process of safeguarding such complex ICH and it's the value in the modern era.

The Jongmyo Jerye and Jeryeak ritual has experience dramatic changes yet still being practiced. The value has decreased, resulting in the less number of performances from five times during the Joseon dynasty to only one now. Also, the dynasty has been replaced by democratic governance. The meaning has slightly changed, from a blessing ritual to a symbolic ritual, remembrance ritual and one that exhibits Confucian ritual.¹⁴⁾

The continuous performance of the ritual has signified the effort of safeguarding and the government has invested heavily in trying to keep Intangible cultural heritage alive. The ritual has been institutionalized to promote and safeguard it. The safeguarding measures are enormous, which has assisted this particular ICH element to gain recognition worldwide.

Fiji like other Pacific Island countries, is isolated geographically having the advantage of keeping its intangible heritage unspoiled (communities are living in it). But as it embraces economic development, it may consider safeguarding ICH through identifying certain elements that need to be preserved and adopting a safeguarding system that best fits its cultural structure.

ICH is an important component for indigenous Fijian societies. The transmission of traditional knowledge in the past depended on the oral transfer of such information from

12) Periodic report no. 00781/ Republic of Korea. Report on the implementation of the Convention and on the status of elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, (page 16-20).

13) Periodic report no. 00781/ Republic of Korea. Report on the implementation of the Convention and on the status of elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, (page 16-20).

14) Wonsuk Chang; Leah Kalmanson (8 November 2010). Confucianism in Context: Classic Philosophy and Contemporary Issues, East Asia and Beyond. SUNY Press. p. 68. ISBN 978-1-4384-3191-8.

one generation to the next. However, in today's world, it is important that new mediums for information storage system be utilized to ensure that such knowledge are captured for posterity.

The veivagunuvu vakavanua is one such element which has through time able to maintain aspects of the rituals. However through revitalization and safeguarding mechanisms introduced by the Fijian government, it has become necessary that ICH elements may have the opportunity to be supported and ensure continuity.

Communities (traditional communities) safeguard their ICH, and decide the relevance of these cultural practices in this modern era. The preservation is in the forms of awareness, documentation, research, but the significance of it and its value depends on the belief system of the community. The lower the belief system of the ICH element, the possibility of losing it; they maybe lost, but not extinct. Some are dormant and their revival or otherwise depends on the community.

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