

a) Cultural heritage represents the process of culminating in using traditional knowledge and indigenous technologies along with human ingenuity. At the same time, it expresses forms of ingenuity in people's beliefs and views and introduces the long-standing identity and the human interaction with environment based on his requirements. Therefore, one would refer to it as the origin and as everything that is expressed as a symbol of culture, creativity and innovation. Hence one of the most important values in the people's life is their inherited cultural heritage which is identified as a basic and fundamental human right.

Cultural heritage, whether tangible or intangible, is certainly recognized as an expression of human cultural identity and its deliberate destruction is a real deprivation of human rights. However, it is necessary to note that the destruction of intangible heritage poses far more serious threats. Although intangible heritage introduces artistic values and ingenuity of human technology in different ages and it might be developed only once, it is similar to tangible heritage and sometimes the process of developing it seems to contain some degree of ambiguity. It is not clear in those ages how human beings could do things such as raising stone pillars in columned halls of Persepolis and Mesopotamian palaces, or (constructing) huge stone architectural structures in Bronze and Iron ages' tombs and which technology they did use. They did it without (unique) devices for constructing such a structure and for raising building materials up to the altitudes. Although we are not aware of these technologies, ingenuity of artists and practitioners of this indigenous and traditional knowledge and unmatched human performance, we consider, beyond any doubts, intangible heritage the necessary background to developing these tangible works. This has its roots in ideas, human beliefs, crafts, indigenous knowledge and skills which are expressed through these amazing material works and, indeed, it is developed as the fruits of the cosmology, religious beliefs and ideology, indigenous knowledge and skills of people in response to their environment. As the involvement of International organizations and instruments and conventions in the field made it possible for nations to safeguard intangible heritage, one should attempt to record intangible heritage as natural human rights and one should be bound to preserve this knowledge, idea and technology and transmit it to next generation.

Therefore, deliberate destruction of intangible heritage or not safeguarding it and/or not paying attention to intergenerational transmission, dynamics and representativeness of communities' intangible heritage (including knowledge concerning nature and universe, social practices, craftsmanship, indigenous art, oral expressions and performing art) can destruct idea and knowledge of developing tangible heritage over time.

Furthermore, safeguarding intangible heritage would reinforce social cohesion and, in turn, would lead to sustainable development and world peace. Thus this deliberate destruction will be deprivation of natural human rights that have been transmitted from generation to generation and that is relevant to human and their ways of life for a long time. It also will deprive human of everlasting peace which they have always looked for, lost their lives for and considered as a natural human right.

- b) The deliberate destruction, for example, could derive from intergovernmental wars or civil strife, Afghanistan, Syria, Palestine etc. being prime examples of this. Although it often appears that tangible heritage suffers this loss, this civil strife would be sometimes so profound and ruinous that nothing, even intangible heritage (including five expressions described in section a), will be considered significant and taken into account by those community, which is affected by these conflicts and is at the risk of (extinction) except for surviving. Indeed, intergenerational transmission will be ceased and eventually failed and became extinct and, therefore, a major part of international community will fail to link to other people worldwide in the light of social cohesion.
- Another type of destruction, despite of the former one, happens when there is no armed conflicts that governmental agencies have destructed tangible works based on economic and financial incentives and they have misused governmental rents and benefited from the national capital, indeed, this type of destruction is irrecoverable as well as the former one. We would find out that disregard and disrespect for intangible heritage will also lead to irreversible loss when considering destructions which is caused by non-armed conflicts or cold war, since the idea, belief, traditional knowledge and technology that created this tangible heritage has been disappeared and there would be no courage left for recreating and/or promoting it.

c) Naturally, all States which live in normal conditions should protect, conserve and restore tangible heritage present in their territories in compliance with their national cultural heritage legislations and should address these buildings and monuments in their annual funding. Somehow they should manage to participate in this protection by cutting council tax bills and discounting cost of energy used in monuments which is in the public domain etc. They should reclaim the heritage which has been transferred elsewhere and separated from its original context during conflict between States. Those artifacts (treasures of Jiroft etc.) that have been returned to Iran under the rules of international law are examples of these kinds of measures. Taking these measures requires a variety of approaches in the domain of raising public awareness about human rights that has been addressed to some extents in different States.

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These are not appropriate measures that should be taken by only guardians of tangible heritage, since safeguarding intangible heritage is one of the most important requirements for developing and exercising natural human rights. Therefore raising the level of public awareness about the significance of protecting and preserving intergenerational transmission is considered as one of the most important measures towards the sustainable development and world peace. Islamic Republic of Iran has also carried out valuable related activities. It has recognized and identified more than one thousand national intangible heritage items and inscribed them in its national list from which it has succeeded in inscribing 10 intangible items in UNESCO's (Representative) List of Intangible Heritage.

Furthermore, it has inscribed a valuable intangible heritage item referred to as Nowruz jointly with other States as a multinational case, consensus document and a message of peace and friendship. Every year at the request of any other State in which communities acknowledges this heritage, that State will be accepted as a new member in this consensus, if it can provide documentations and evidence for holding Nowruz ceremony in its territory, not to mention that the headquarter of this project is located in Islamic Republic of Iran.

The following activities are involved in the process of protection against destruction in the domain of intangibles: recognizing, identification, inscribing, protecting, raising awareness at the segments of the society

and empowering the practicing communities. These are being dealt with to a considerable extent in Iran; however, the process of protection of tangible heritage against destruction is also running in the country under the sovereignty of Cultural Heritage Organization. These protection measures are within its technical and financial capability and are as follows: Prohibiting other organizations from construction in the protected areas of monuments of historical importance, allocating budgetary fund for conservation and restoration of monuments of historical importance, and dedicating some of these buildings for cultural affairs. Therefore, these measures are considered to be effective.

d) About guardians of cultural heritage

They might be categorized into two groups:

1. Cultural Heritage Organization and other legal and administrative mechanisms that can be a supporting coverage for cultural heritage and its legal requirements, and thus can protect private owners of historical monuments from various threats. Therefore, this organization attempts to safeguard the country's heritage, as far as possible, within its legal capabilities.
2. Non-governmental guardian institutions or associations of cultural heritage that participate actively in safeguarding it. Unfortunately they, unlike other guardians of heritage of historical value, are not well protected and are often likely to be treated unkindly in conflict situations with other organizations. However, some of them are officially recognized as free authorized associate and guardians of cultural heritage through granting license from Cultural Heritage Organization and other cultural organizations. Although very little has been done in Iran thus far, initial steps has been taken to cooperate with NGOs.

Hence it appears that Islamic Republic of Iran needs to redouble its efforts in this section and apply models which have been succeeded in other countries. It should redouble its efforts to preserve material and spiritual values of its heritage in order to achieve sustainable development, mutual respect of other nations, social cohesion and eternal peace, which are the objectives of International organizations (including UNESCO etc.), in the near future.