

Book opening words

Firstly, I would like to offer my congratulations on the new publication of the 'Mongolian National Intangible Cultural Heritage' as well as extend my gratitude to my Mongolian colleagues who were involved in this publication.

As a UNESCO category 2 regional centre for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in Asia and the Pacific region, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific (ICHCAP) has implemented the Mongolian-Korean Joint Cooperation Project 'Establishing a Safeguarding System for Intangible Cultural Heritage' which was launched in Mongolia from 2007 - 2010 under the sponsorship of the Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea.

Thanks to the devoted partnership of the Foundation for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Heritage and the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO. The cooperative project was successfully implemented over the last four years and we were able to reach a milestone in the development of an intangible cultural heritage safeguarding system in Mongolia.

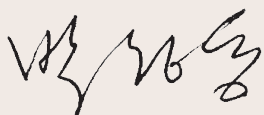
The successful implementation of this project was one of ICHCAP's priority missions. During the period of project implementation, I can still remember the intense discussion among ICH experts of the two countries who were in search for better measures to apply toward the safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. I strongly believe that thanks to their devotion, intangible cultural heritage will be transcended to the next generation in spite of any obstacles which may be endured.

Indeed, this publication is the pearl of a four year long project and it is our honour to present this much-awaited publication, Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Mongols. The publication is the first product to come about as a result of the cooperative project titled 'Establishing a Safeguarding System for Intangible Cultural Heritage'. I am confident that the joint project as well as this publication will provide a good example of constructive cooperation between ICHCAP and Member States in the Asia-Pacific region.

I sincerely hope that this publication will encourage all those concerned, from government officials, ICH experts, NGOs to the general public of Mongolia to raise awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage as well as provide a better understanding of the unique intangible cultural heritage in which the country holds to individuals and communities from outside of Mongolia. We are especially delighted to have this book serve as a model reference for the introduction of the intangible cultural heritage evident in Mongolia.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to Ph.D, Professor Norov Urtnasan and all of the Foundation staff, without their devoted effort, the successful completion of this book may not have been possible. I would also like to offer my deepest appreciation to Mr Yi Kun Moo, Administrator of the Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea and his staff who provided generous funds to make this publication feasible. Last but not least, I would like to express a special thanks to all the organisations and individuals who contributed articles and photographs as well as other assistance to publish this book.

I hope everyone enjoys this publication. Thank you.



Seong-Yong Park

Executive Director

Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific



Book opening words

In the history of human migration, the ancestors of the nomadic Mongolians formed the Mongoloid race and disseminated it widely. The Mongolians, being at the core of the Central Asian nomads, have played an historic role in the formation of cultural diversity worldwide.

Since ancient times, the ancestors of the Mongolian people, one of the early nations in the world, have followed mainly nomadic pastoralism on the great steppes of Central Asia. They created a rich cultural heritage and transmitted it to successive generations. Mongolian 'nomadic civilization' has greatly contributed to the cultural heritage fund of humanity, a fact that is widely recognized.

The Mongolian intangible cultural heritage is rooted in the triple alliance of nature, humanity, and livestock. It is a truly unique and compassionate cultural heritage that features dynamic characteristics as well as the attributes of causing no harm to nature, humanity, or livestock. It is a heritage that, instead, worships these elements. Nomadic civilization has been in harmonic co-existence with sedentary civilization and has shared many things through mutual exchange over history.

As the whole world is currently looking for a way to make development sustainable and to protect and promote biodiversity and cultural diversity, the importance and value of nomadic civilization is further growing. However, it is unfortunate that there have been considerable obstacles to evaluate the essence and importance of nomadic civilization due to the long-lasting predominance of European-centered ideologies in world history and in cultural studies that claim that the nomads are 'barbarians' and even deny the existence of nomadic civilization.

In spite of this, however, we need to appreciate the fact that this great and compassionate culture has been researched, studied, explained, and transmitted by hundreds of researchers, starting from the unknown author of the outstanding creation 'The Secret History of the Mongols' many centuries ago.

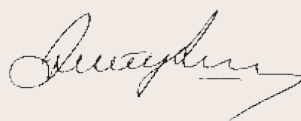
Since Mongolia opened up to the world in the 1990s and gained the rights and freedoms to think and create, researchers and experts have actively developed and enriched the traditions of cultural heritage studies.

Learning, studying, promoting, and transmitting the Mongolian language, culture, and its essence – the intangible cultural heritage – is a sublime obligation for each and every Mongolian today.

It is sincerely meritorious that Mongolian researchers and experts have made possible the publication, in both Mongolian and English versions, of this book, 'Mongolian National Intangible Cultural Heritage.' This publication includes pieces about ancient and living traditions of national culture from abundant written sources that have been studied, reviewed, and created over many centuries by numerous scholars and researchers.

I deeply hope that this book, an important publication in cultural studies, will be of great benefit to future generations of Mongolians who want to inherit, promote, and disseminate the magnificent cultural heritage that has been passed on by their ancestors.

May this book bless all.



ENKHTÜVSHIN Batbold

Dr., Academician, President of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences
State Honored Scientific Figure

