



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Intangible  
Cultural  
Heritage

Original: English

## CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Fifth session  
Kenya  
November 2010

#### NOMINATION FILE NO. 00377 FOR INSCRIPTION ON THE REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN 2010

<b>A. STATE(S) PARTY(IES)</b>
<i>For multi-national nominations, States Parties should be listed in the order on which they have mutually agreed.</i>
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
<b>B. NAME OF THE ELEMENT</b>
<b>B.1. Name of the element in English or French</b>
<i>This is the official name of the element that will appear in published material about the Representative List. It should be concise. Please do not exceed 200 characters, including spaces and punctuation. The name should be transcribed in Latin Unicode characters (Basic Latin, Latin-1 Supplement, Latin Extended-A or Latin Extended Additional).</i>
The ritual dramatic art of Ta'zīye
<b>B.2. Name of the element in the language and script of the community concerned, if applicable</b>
<i>This is the official name of the element in the vernacular language corresponding to the official name in English or French (point B.1.). It should be concise. Please do not exceed 200 characters in Unicode (Latin or others), including spaces and punctuation.</i>
Honar-e Ayini namayeshi-e Ta'aziye

**B.3. Other name(s) of the element, if any**

*In addition to the official name(s) of the element (B.1.) please mention alternate name(s), if any, by which the element is known, in Unicode characters (Latin or others).*

Shabih Khani

**C. CHARACTERISTIC OF THE ELEMENT**

**C.1. Identification of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned**

*According to the 2003 Convention, intangible heritage can only be identified with reference to communities, groups or individuals that recognize it as part of their cultural heritage. Thus it is important to identify clearly one or several communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned with the nominated element. The information provided should allow the Committee to identify the communities, groups or individuals concerned with an element, and should be mutually coherent with the information in sections 1 to 5 below.*

Ta'aziye is played by the Iranian Muslims all over this country. The main practitioners of this area include:

The Dramatic Arts Center of the Culture and Guidance Ministry,

The Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicraft Organization

The Dramatic Arts Association

Theatre Forum

The Ritual Traditional Theatre Office

Religious Circles

Ta'aziye Performing Groups

The Iranians Ta'aziye Association

And individuals such as: Mohammad Hosein Naserbakht, Seyyed Azim Musavi, Jaber Anasori, Laleh Taghian, Davoud Fathali Beigi, and Ardeshir Saleh Pour.

**C.2. Geographic location and range of the element and location of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned**

*This section should identify the range of distribution of the element, indicating if possible the geographic locations in which it is centred. If related elements are practiced in neighbouring areas, please so indicate.*

All cities and villages and especially the central areas of Iran

**C.3. Domain(s) represented by the element**

*Identify concisely the domain(s) of intangible cultural heritage manifested by the element, which might include one or more of the domains identified in Article 2.2 of the Convention. (This information will be used primarily for visibility, if the element is inscribed.)*

Dramatic arts: this work is considered a dramatic art because of its performing nature and presence of audience and the use of scene and music.

Traditional craftsmanship: there are clothes and tools in this type of play which are prepared in a traditional way. Also the skill of playing Ta'aziye is a tradition which is handed down by word of mouth over generations.

The oral heritage: in this work of art poem and verse are used which are handed down orally.

**D. BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENT**

*The brief description of the element will be particularly helpful in allowing the Committee to know at a glance what element is being proposed for inscription, and, in the event of inscription, will be used for purposes of visibility. It should be a summary of the description provided in point 1 below but is not an introduction to that longer description.*

In the recent 400 years, especially after the powerful government of Safaviye who had religious tendencies came to the throne, Ta'aziye was formed as the most important ritual, traditional, and religious art; and in Ghajariye dynasty it reached its utmost efflorescence. But in fact the roots of Ta'aziye should also be sought in the mourning customs and the manifestation of ontology of Iranian culture in pre-Islam era.

Ta'aziye is a play with numerous and various characters, as the number of them goes up to a hundred. But generally the roles are divided into historical, religious, political, social, supernatural, real, imaginary, and fantasy characters, each of them has its own peculiarities, differences, colour, and tools; and all of them are known and obvious features in producing a work of art for the audience.

Symbols and signs, being based on religious and popular codes, are clear for everyone, and their presence in the popular culture has created vast dimensions, and has been transmitted to literature and proverbs as well.

The teaching method of Ta'aziye is based on the traditional and family method, and there are people who have been Ta'aziye performers for generations and had dramatic talent and creativity, stage innovations, poetic touch and good voice.

## 1. IDENTIFICATION AND DEFINITION OF THE ELEMENT (CF. CRITERION R.1)

*This is the key section of the nomination to satisfy criterion R.1: “The element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention”. A clear and complete explanation is essential to demonstrate that the nominated element meets the Convention’s definition of intangible heritage. This section should address all the significant features of the element as it exists at present, and should include:*

- a. an explanation of its social and cultural functions and meanings today, within and for its community,*
- b. the characteristics of the bearers and practitioners of the element,*
- c. any specific roles or categories of persons with special responsibilities towards the element,*
- d. the current modes of transmission of the knowledge and skills related to the element.*

*The Committee should receive sufficient information to determine:*

- a. that the element is among the “practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills — as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith —”;*
- b. “that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize [it] as part of their cultural heritage”;*
- c. that it is being “transmitted from generation to generation, [and] is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history”;*
- d. that it provides communities and groups involved with “a sense of identity and continuity”; and*
- e. that it is not incompatible with “existing international human rights instruments as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development”.*

*Overly technical descriptions should be avoided and submitting States should keep in mind that this section must explain the element to readers who have no prior knowledge or direct experience of it. Nomination files need not address in detail the history of the element, or its origin or antiquity.*

Literally the word Ta’azyeh means “mourning”, and figuratively it refers to a kind of ritual and religious theatre based on religious events, historical and mythical stories, and Iranian folk tales, and there are four basic elements in it: poem, music, song and motion. Ta’azyeh is a type of theatre with many different characters, each of which having its own features, differences, colors, clothes, tools and requirements. It is performed in the form of symbols, conventions, codes and signs which are known by Iranian spectators, and on a stage which is placed in the centre without any lighting and decoration. The place where a Ta’azyeh is performed is called Tekyeh. Apart from some feel-good Ta’azyehs, the main subject of most of them is the conflict between “good” and “evil” and the source of Ta’azyeh scripts has often been the event of Karbala where the third Imam of Shiites, Imam Hussein, and his family were killed after a strong resistance in a battle between seventy two members of the “good” and twenty thousand members of the “evil” army in the Moharram month of the year 60 in the lunar Hegira calendar (a Muslim system of dividing the year of 354 days into 12 months and starting to count the years from the Hegira i.e. the migration of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina in AD 622). It is lunar because it is based on the movement of moon around the earth. This calendar is used in Arab countries. There is also a solar type of Hegira calendar based on the movement of earth around the sun which is officially used in Iran). Therefore, this theatre is performed in Moharram more than other months of the year in Tekyehs, streets, and in the garden of houses.

Performing Ta’azyeh has a prominent role in the Iranian vulgar culture, literature and art. The concept and the performance style of Ta’azyeh leads to the maintenance of spiritual values, altruism and friendship. It motivates the religious emotions of the masses, purifies the soul, inspires the audience to ethics and a sense of resistance against oppression, and creates cooperation and sympathy among the performers and the spectators. Taazyieh preserves the old traditions, the national culture and the mythology of Iran, and plays a major role in preserving other types of art as well. Its effect on the audience is so great that many of the proverbs of ordinary people are taken from this type of theatre. Moreover, because of its flexibility, it has

been able to adjust itself with different cultures of Iranian tribes; therefore, Ta'azyeh has become the common language of different tribes and has been prominent in creating "unity" among them and helping them communicate and share creativities.

Ta'azyeh performers are divided into two main groups: agreeing performers (the Good forces) and disagreeing performers (the Evil forces). Agreeing characters wear green, white and blue costumes as a symbol of goodness and peace and sing Iranian folk songs. Disagreeing characters on the other hand wear red, orange and bright colors as a symbol of cruelty and brutality and speak aggressively in a declamatory style. Music is used in two forms: with songs and with musical instruments. Moeen-ol-boka, the director of Ta'azyeh, who has complete knowledge of music, poetry and all the techniques of Ta'azyeh, is actively present on the stage. Women are less involved in Taazyieh and the roles of women are also played by men drawing a veil over their faces. Each Ta'azyeh script has its own subject and requires its own special tools, costumes, conventions, symbols and music. Observing the rules of performance, the audience also cooperates in some scenes by chorusing the song or the poem. There are even some people who have taken vows of food (taking a vow to give food to people, especially poor people is very common in Iran) who serve the spectators during the play and fulfill their vows.

Business people and official fraternities and small public groups called "religious groups", the number of which reaches three thousand, attempt to perform Ta'azyeh in many areas and provide the tools and costumes, and also decorate the area where Ta'azyeh is going to be performed.

In general, all the script writers, actors, spectators, and sponsors of this ritual play are from the people in the street who have different jobs during the year and perform this theatre only to reap otherworldly rewards.

Taazyieh has also caused many skills to develop. For instance: calligraphy artists by writing Ta'azyeh scripts, musicians by holding classes of singing and playing instruments, painters by painting the events on large curtains, "curtain narrators" by narrating the stories painted on the curtains with a good voice for people, poets by composing new poems for the dirges in the intervals of Ta'azyeh, industrial workshops by making different tools and instruments used in Ta'azyeh, tailoring and handicraft workshops by making different costumes and masks and accessories for Ta'azyeh, cultural institutes by making films of Ta'azyeh and making them readily accessible to the public, documentarists by making documentaries about Ta'azyeh and preparing them to be shown on TV, each help develop a special skill through Ta'azyeh.

Ta'azyeh is taught by word of mouth and from tutor to pupil. Since the very childhood the pupils are trained by seasoned professionals (some of whom have been Ta'azyeh performers for generations and played this theatre in their family). These training sessions are held during the year and in the houses of people or in the Tekyehs and include the knowledge of different symbols, conventions, gestures, singing, martial skills and horse-riding, music and all the other techniques of Ta'azyeh. All these have helped enormously to preserve this national Iranian art, while there are university subjects as "Ta'azyeh, the Iranian play" in art universities of Iran and it is also taught to students at schools.

**2. CONTRIBUTION TO ENSURING VISIBILITY AND AWARENESS AND TO ENCOURAGING DIALOGUE (CF. CRITERION R.2)**

*The nomination should demonstrate (Criterion R.2) that "Inscription of the element will contribute to ensuring visibility and awareness of the significance of the intangible cultural heritage and to encouraging dialogue, thus reflecting cultural diversity worldwide and testifying to human creativity".*

*Please explain how the element's inscription on the Representative List will contribute to ensuring visibility of the intangible cultural heritage and will raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of its importance. This section need not address how inscription will bring greater visibility to the element, but how its inscription will contribute to the visibility of intangible cultural heritage more broadly.*

*Explain how inscription will promote respect for cultural diversity and human creativity, and will promote mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals.*

Ta'azyeh is an intangible national heritage of Iranians which includes parts of Iranian culture and art such as literature, religious and traditional opinions, and social beliefs, and knowing it by other countries can lead to a better cultural relation and dialogue of civilizations; as in the past many researchers and foreign orientalists (since AD 1800) have introduced this art to the world and pointed to its positive capabilities. It is worth mentioning that this type of theatre was warmly welcomed by the world in the Forty Fifth Avignon International Theatre Festival (1991) which shows the significance and the value of this ritual play. Also, in Iran, theatre artists are trying to create a "national theatre" using the constituent elements of Ta'azyeh.

Registering this ancient heritage can result in greater attention from the cultural authorities of Iran and other countries of the region, and this can lead to thinking of schemes on how to preserve it. When the native artists and ones from the neighboring countries get more familiar with this form of theatre, the unity among the countries of the region will increase and they will have closer relationship, for these countries share some similar stories and all make use of Ta'azyeh in a way.

Iran is a land of various tribes and cultures and languages and Ta'azyeh, which is the result of the experiences of Iranians in using allegories and symbols in order to express their ideas and philosophies, has been able to adopt a sense of folklore and become an axis of unity and solidarity among the tribes. It has become a common language and created the opportunity for the tribes to communicate and share their creativities, and therefore has provided a beautiful image of the variety of cultures and symbols. Undoubtedly, if Ta'azyeh is registered on the list of the world Intangible Heritage, it will be able to introduce its experiences to the world and provide new ways to make mankind united; and this will be an opportunity to recreate an atmosphere which brings spiritual peace and therefore love and friendship; it will also help the maintenance of arts related to this ritual. Ta'azyeh is capable of transmitting ethical values to other societies and also adjusting itself to other arts.

The "distancing" techniques used in Ta'azyeh, which is mainly because of religious beliefs and in order to avoid unifying the actor and the sacred or evil character, is also used in "Epic" by Bertolt Brecht. Using symbols and signs in acting, stage conventions, and stylized acting are also qualities which make Ta'azyeh similar to new performing styles in the modern theatre of the world. Therefore, we could say that Ta'azyeh has potential capabilities to help the modern theatre.

### **3. SAFEGUARDING MEASURES (CF. CRITERION R.3)**

*Items 3.a. to 3.c. request the elaboration of a coherent set of safeguarding measures as called for in Criterion R.3: "Safeguarding measures are elaborated that may protect and promote the element". Such measures should reflect the broadest possible participation of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned, both in their formulation and in their implementation.*

#### **3.a. Current and recent efforts to safeguard the element**

*Please describe the current and recent efforts of the concerned communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals to ensure the viability of the element. Describe efforts of the concerned State(s) Party(ies) to safeguard the element, taking note of external or internal constraints, such as limited resources.*

1. The existing religious groups, the number of which reaches three thousand, hold Ta'azyeh ceremonies every year in a public self-directed attempt and with the financial support of the members of the group who are from the very people in the street.

2. Business people, members of fraternities and the sponsors of Ta'azyeh hold Ta'azyeh ceremonies every year according to a traditional trend; these supports are mostly during Moharram and other ritual occasions and have helped to preserve and develop Ta'azyeh, to equip old Tekyehs and to make new ones. Also people who are well off seek to hold Ta'azyeh ceremonies themselves. Some of these sponsors who have been significant for both making Tekyehs and performing Ta'azyeh include: Mr. Muhammad Khatami who made the "Ghurjan" Tekyeh in "Khansar", Mr. Yazdan who made the "Baraghan" Tekyeh in "Karaj", Mr. Hussein Saljoughi who made the "Hazrat-e-abolfazl" Tekyeh in "Kerman", Mr. Hejazi who made the "Seyyed-o-shohada" Tekyeh in "Isfahan".

3. Apart from various ceremonies the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance has managed to hold more than 210 Ta'azyeh ceremonies and has made great attempts to develop this art by allocating a fund to the Taazyeh of other cities of Iran, publishing Ta'azyeh scripts, recording the performances on film, and providing coverage for the Ta'azyeh actors who are over 60 years old.

4. The Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, which has sought to register Ta'azyeh in the National List of the country, has also given great help to the Iranian and foreign researchers by publishing reference books about Taazyeh and allocating some parts of anthropology museums to this art.

5. The state television has been useful in preserving this art by broadcasting Ta'azyeh on different TV channels.

6. The Ministry of Education is trying to make the new generation more familiar with this old ritual theatre by putting some lessons about Ta'azyeh in course books, and the Ministry of Sciences, Research and Technology is also attempting so by allocating some university credits to it under the title of "Ta'azyeh, the Iranian Play"

7. The Iranian Ta'azyeh Association, which is one of the most prominent NGOs of Ta'azyeh, is actively helping this art by holding classes and performances, and also finding and completing locations of performance in the country.

8. The Dramatic Arts Association (Non-governmental) plays a considerable role by holding seminars and festivals.

### **3.b. Safeguarding measures proposed**

*For the Representative List, the safeguarding measures are those that may help to solidify the element's current viability and to ensure that its viability is not jeopardized in the future, especially as an unintended result of inscription and the resulting visibility and public attention.*

*Identify and describe the various safeguarding measures that are elaborated that may, if implemented, protect and promote the element, and provide brief information concerning, for example, their priority, scope, approaches, timetables, responsible persons or bodies, and costs.*

1. Ta'azyeh archive: the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance has set to work to establish the Ritual-Traditional Theatre Centre, and has so far collected 380 films and 135 Ta'azyeh scripts from all over the country. It has published 12 scripts so far and aims to publish 100 Ta'azyeh Ceremonies until 2015, and a budget of around \$20 million is predicted to be spent.

2. Opening the museum and research centre of Ta'azyeh: thanks to the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, there are about 300 anthropology museums and a few local museums which hold some Ta'azyeh documents and exhibit them. However, the Iranian Ta'azyeh Association (Ta'azyeh NGO) is attempting to open an independent museum for Ta'azyeh, where the tools, equipment, costumes, and scripts could be kept; and it is predicted that it will finish by 2017. The fund is mainly provided by Ta'azyeh groups all over the country and public donations, and partly by governmental art and culture institutes. On the other hand, due to the variety of cultures, languages, clothes, and customs in Iran, Ta'azyeh has adopted a sense of folklore, and therefore a research centre besides the museum can take responsibility for publishing all the works of researchers such as film, slide, photograph, and scripts. The research centre is predicted to finish by 2017 and a \$90000 fund is estimated.

3. Activating Tekyehs: the inactive Tekyehs and Ta'azyeh performing locations, which have been identified so far, are being reconstructed and activated by the Iranian Ta'azyeh Association (NGO) using donations from the public and from religious groups. At the moment once a week some of these places are holding those Ta'azyeh ceremonies which are not performed very often (called "obscure ceremonies"). This association is going to proceed with this activity in the future as well.

4. Teaching Ta'azyeh: in addition to training sessions held in some public locations, some researchers are attempting to establish the Ta'azyeh School in the Ministry of Education so that the new generation will proceed with the old tradition. Although at the moment there are some credits in art universities about Ta'azyeh, Iranian researchers and the Ministry of Sciences, Research and Technology are seeking to include Ta'azyeh on BA and MA levels in the list of university majors.

5. The Dramatic Arts Association (Non-governmental) has been considerably active in this area. It has held many seminars and festivals and will proceed with it.

6. Religious groups build "temporary locations" in all areas during Moharram in order to perform Ta'azyeh and this is included in the future plan as well.

The fast and increasing improvement of technology and modernity across the world has caused the dissolution of ritual arts, as for instance many Tekyehs have gone to ruin. On the other hand, the entrance of non-Iranian music in Ta'azyeh and the influence of historical television series on traditional costumes of this theatre are damages that can make this art so vulnerable. Therefore, registering this type of art will lead to the seriousness of cultural authorities to try to protect it. Also, in order to prevent the damages which threaten this traditional art, a technical committee will form consisting of experts from all the cities supported by the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance to supervise the performance qualities of Ta'azyeh ceremonies.



### **3.c. Commitment of communities, groups or individuals concerned**

*The feasibility of safeguarding depends in large part on the aspirations and commitment of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned. This section should provide evidence that the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned have the will and commitment to safeguard the element if conditions are favourable. The best evidence will often be an explanation of their involvement in past and ongoing safeguarding measures and of their participation in the formulation and implementation of future safeguarding measures, rather than simple pledges or affirmations of their support or commitment.*

1. More than three thousand religious groups (self-directed public groups) are active in holding Ta'azyeh, and there are more than two thousand personal sponsors including business people and fraternities who undertake to invest in Ta'azyeh according to the vows they have taken and because of the spiritual reward of it; and every year a great deal of Ta'azyeh performances is carried out by these public sponsors.

2. The Iranian Ta'azyeh Association, one of the most significant Ta'azyeh NGOs, has managed to activate a number of Tekyehs and Ta'azyeh performing locations across the country with the public cooperation and contribution and the support of some governmental cultural centers to perform this theatre on different occasions; and it is at the moment attempting to activate some other Tekyehs. This association has also taken steps to transmit this art to the new generation by establishing an academy. Besides, it has recorded more than 40 videos of Ta'azyeh ceremonies so far. The Iranian association will, in the future as well, proceed with teaching Ta'azyeh and activating Tekyehs and will also contribute to the government in establishing a Ta'azyeh museum.

3. The Dramatic Arts Association, as a non-governmental organization, has managed to hold ten rounds of seminars and fourteen rounds of ritual-traditional and Ta'azyeh festivals. It has also published nine volumes of research documents about Ta'azyeh. All these activities are still being carried out and this associations aims to proceed with researching and providing the grounds for the performance of Ta'azyeh.

### 3.d. Commitment of State(s) Party(ies)

*The feasibility of safeguarding also depends on the support and cooperation of the concerned State(s) Party(ies). This section should provide evidence that the State Party concerned has the commitment to support the safeguarding effort by creating favourable conditions for its implementation and should describe how the State Party has previously and will in the future demonstrate such commitment. Declarations or pledges of support are less informative than explanations and demonstrations.*

1. Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance, holding the Dramatic Arts Centre and the Ritual-Traditional Theatre Centre, constitutes a most prominent governmental authority. Its activities in the area of Ta'azyeh include: holding research seminars, supporting Ta'azyeh actors from all over the country, tracing the actors over 60 years old to provide them with financial support, making documentaries about Ta'azyeh, dispatching Ta'azyeh groups to festivals in other countries, holding Ta'azyeh ceremonies in religious occasions using professional actors, and holding special festivals for Ta'azyeh. The ministry, continually, extends the scope of these activities, while trying to collect a Ta'azyeh archive.
2. Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization is another governmental institution concerned with Ta'azyeh interested in protecting and preserving national arts. The organization is opening the Ta'azyeh software research centre, allocating a place in museums to works of Ta'azyeh, and cooperating with Iranian Ta'azyeh Association. Generally, the organization is in charge of policy making, planning and coordinating with the organs related to Ta'azyeh. Besides it remains active in research; it takes steps to reconstruct historical Ta'azyeh locations (Tekyehs) as well. In addition, it agrees to cooperate with the Iranian Ta'azyeh Association to create the Ta'azyeh museum and research centre.
3. Ministry of Education, besides including Ta'azyeh in coursebooks, intends to establish the Ta'azyeh art school, to give a Ta'azyeh diploma to the graduates, to create a link among generations.
4. Ministry of Sciences, Research and Technology, besides the existing university credits on Ta'azyeh, intends to establish the major in BA and MA levels.

### 4. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND CONSENT IN THE NOMINATION PROCESS (CF. CRITERION R.4)

*This section asks the submitting State Party to establish that the nomination satisfies Criterion R.4: 'The element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent'.*

#### 4.a. Participation of communities, groups and individuals in the nomination process

*Describe how and in what ways the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned have participated actively in the nomination process at all stages, as required by Criterion R.4. States Parties are further encouraged to prepare nominations with the participation of a wide variety of other concerned parties, including where appropriate local and regional governments, neighbouring communities, NGOs, research institutes, centres of expertise and other interested parties. The participation of communities in the practice and transmission of the element should be addressed in point 1 above, and their participation in safeguarding should be addressed in point 3; here the submitting State should describe the widest possible participation of communities in the nomination process.*

1. The Dramatic Arts Center of the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance has taken useful steps by providing archive films of Ta'azyeh and sending suggestion forms to all the cities in order to identify and organize Ta'azyeh groups. It has also helped the researchers by providing them with written documents.
2. The Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization as an employer signed an official contract with the contributors to this project. The research department of this organization as a technical consultant has had the responsibility for supervising the concepts

and also providing parts of historical documents.

3. Seasoned researchers and actors have contributed to this project by providing photos, films, and old scripts from their personal archives. Some of the fixed Ta'azyeh groups include: "seyyed-o-shohada" group under the management of "Alaeddin Ghasemi", "Hazrat-e-Ali Akbar" under the management of "Mozaffar Ghorban Nejad", "Hazrat-e-Abbas" under the management of "Ahmed azizi".

4. The Iranian Ta'azyeh Association has drawn the attention of Ta'azyeh actors to this project by holding different meetings, and so the actors have also provided the association with their personal films; this has resulted in an archive with scattered films which has been helpful for the contributors to the project.

5. Finally, Mr. Seyyed Azim Mousavi has been responsible for this project with the cooperation and contribution of Mr. Ardeshir Saleh Pour, Mr. Davoud Fath Ali Beigi, and Mr. Muhammad Hussein Naser Bakht who are researchers and professors in university and have made efforts to the best of their ability.

#### **4.b. Free, prior and informed consent to the nomination**

*The free, prior and informed consent to the nomination of the element from the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned may be demonstrated through written or recorded concurrence, or through other means, according to the legal regimens of the State Party and the infinite variety of communities and groups concerned. The Committee will welcome a broad range of demonstrations or attestations of community consent in preference to standard or uniform declarations..*

*Please attach supporting evidence demonstrating such consent and indicate below what evidence you are providing and what form it takes.*

The consent of related individuals, groups and communities is enclosed in form of letters.

#### **4.c. Respect for customary practices governing access**

*Access to certain specific aspects of intangible cultural heritage is sometimes restricted by customary practices governing, for example, its transmission or performance or maintaining the secrecy of certain knowledge. Please indicate if such practices exist and, if they do, demonstrate that inscription of the element and implementation of the safeguarding measures would fully respect such customary practices governing access to specific aspects of such heritage (cf. Article 13 of the Convention). Describe any specific measures that might need to be taken to ensure such respect.*

There is not any limiting activities or special secrets about Ta'aziye which is a popular and ritual play, and it has been preserved so far owing to the absence of such limitations and its oral and secret-free method of transmission.

## 5. INCLUSION OF THE ELEMENT IN AN INVENTORY (CF. CRITERION R.5)

*This section is where the State Party establishes that the nomination satisfies Criterion R.5: "The element is included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies) as defined in Articles 11 and 12".*

*Identify the inventory in which the element has been included and the office, agency, organization or body responsible for maintaining that inventory. Demonstrate that the inventory has been drawn up in conformity with Articles 11 and 12, in particular Article 11(b) that stipulates that intangible cultural heritage shall be identified and defined "with the participation of communities, groups and relevant non-governmental organizations" and Article 12 requiring that inventories be regularly updated.*

*The nominated element's inclusion in an inventory should not in any way imply or require that the inventory(ies) should have been completed prior to nomination. Rather, a submitting State Party may be in the process of completing or updating one or more inventories, but has already duly included the nominated element on an inventory-in-progress.*

This element was inscribed, under No. 13-28 on 14 February 2009, on the National Inventory of Iran. The above-mentioned Inventory has been shaped respecting Enforcing By-laws of the Law on Jointing of Iran to the Convention on Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003.

In drawing up the By-laws of the Inventory, a Committee of experts in the field of intangible cultural heritage, affiliated to governmental and non-governmental entities was active and the said experts prepared the said By-laws within one and a half years. In the Enforcing By-laws of the Law on Jointing of Iran to the Convention 2003, the related governmental organizations, the concerned communities, social groups and individuals were responsible for identifying, documenting and safeguarding the ICH elements. The ICH Workgroup that comprises representatives of ten governmental organizations supervised the proper observance of the regulations of the Convention 2003, the Enforcing By-laws as well as necessary policy-makings for identification of the heritage and its protection.

The Inventory houses 78 elements and around other 150 elements are being identified and documented and it is expected that the registration practice would be continued to register all national ICH elements.

The official administrator of the Inventory is the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization (ICHHTO), the General Office for Registration of Cultural, Historical and Natural Properties and the Directorate for Protection and Rehabilitation of Intangible and Natural Heritage under the ICHHTO. The associations of Fans of the Cultural Heritage and local researchers identify, document and introduce the elements for registration/inscription. (Up to now, 2200 elements have been registered on the unofficial Tentative List for the ICH Elements). Subsequently, the collected data shall be submitted to the above-mentioned General Offices (under ICHHTO) for registration and enforcement of the safeguarding collaborations for the element and/or elements in question.

The Performing Arts Centre of Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance and Iranian Ta'azyeh Association have documented and introduced this element for registration among the element(s) on the National Inventory and the Directorate for Protection and Rehabilitation of Intangible and Natural Heritages is responsible for synchronizing the governmental entities, with the non-governmental bodies, groups and individuals, and Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Iranian Broadcasting, Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Science and Higher Education and Iranian Ta'azyeh Association, among others, are engaged in safeguarding the element in this particular dossier.

## DOCUMENTATION

### a. Required and supplementary documentation

Required documentation provided.

<b>b. Cession of rights including registry of items</b>
Required cession of rights provided.
<b>c. List of additional resources</b>
<p>Shahidi, Enayato'llah. Ta'aziye in Tehran from beginning to the end of Ghajar era. Tehran: Iranian National Commission for UNESCO publication, 2001.</p> <p>Naserbakht, Mohammad Hosein. Role Playing in Ta'aziye(Naghsh Pushi Dar Shabih Khani). Tehran: Namayesh Publications. 1999</p> <p>Chelkovski, Pitter. Ta'aziye, the domestic developing art. Trans. Davood Hatami. Iran: Elmi Farhangi Publications, 1981.</p>

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<b>b. Competent body involved</b>
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**SIGNATURE ON BEHALF OF THE STATE PARTY**

Name: Mr Masoud Alavian Sadr

Title: Deputy for Preservation,  
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Date: 13 January 2010

Signature: <signed>