



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Intangible  
Cultural  
Heritage

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## CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

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

Fifth session  
Nairobi, Kenya  
November 2010

**NOMINATION FILE NO. 00441**  
**FOR INSCRIPTION ON THE REPRESENTATIVE LIST**  
**OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN 2010**

<p><b>A. STATE(S) PARTY(IES)</b></p> <p><i>For multi-national nominations, States Parties should be listed in the order on which they have mutually agreed.</i></p>
<p>France</p>
<p><b>B. NAME OF THE ELEMENT</b></p>
<p><b>B.1. Name of the element in English or French</b></p> <p><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></p>
<p>Compagnonnage, network for on-the-job transmission of knowledge and identities</p>
<p><b>B.2. Name of the element in the language and script of the community concerned, if applicable</b></p> <p><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></p>
<p>Le compagnonnage : réseau de transmission des savoirs et des identités par le métier</p>

### 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).*

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## 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.*

Broadly speaking, the compagnonnage movement involves almost 45,000 people, a quarter of whom form a core of permanent active members. The remainder are people who have benefited – for varying lengths of time, within the framework of apprenticeships, vocational education or continuing professional development – from the transmission of knowledge from qualified craftspeople or *compagnons*. These individuals belong to one of three groups of *compagnons*, each of which has its own structure and sensibilities:

-**Association Ouvrière des Compagnons du Devoir du Tour de France** (AOCDTF), which has nearly 5,200 active members with widely varying levels of status and commitment, in addition to 20,000 people who have had experience working alongside them;

-**Fédération Compagnonnique des Métiers du Bâtiment des Compagnons des Devoirs du Tour de France** (FCMB), which comprises an equally varied group of 3,350 members in the strict sense, as well as 10,000 trainees a year in the broader sense;

-**Union Compagnonnique des Devoirs Unis** (UCDDU) which, depending on the narrow or broad definition mentioned above, comprises almost 1,200 members or around 5,000 people.

Each of these groups is highly structured and organized around a network of lodges, mostly located in metropolitan France (see maps provided). Knowledge and know-how linked to the profession and life of the *compagnons* are transmitted at these lodges. Consequently, they constitute unique “places of knowledge”, which nurture both creation and preservation of the respective knowledge and know-how of the *compagnons*.

### 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.*

The network of compagnon lodges (see Additional documents – Maps) specific to each group forms the geographical basis of the compagnonnage movement. This static dimension, however, is complemented by a more dynamic practice which is central to the movement’s training process, i.e. the journey also called “Tour de France”. Only part of the process takes place at the compagnon lodges located throughout **metropolitan France**. It also includes a mobility component which, for the past thirty years or so, in addition to moving from one lodge to another, has involved a more international experience, initially in **Europe** and, increasingly, **worldwide**. Nowadays, *compagnons* can complete their “Tour de France” training in some forty different

countries.

### 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.)*

The compagnonnage approach encompasses two of the domains identified in Article 2.2 of the 2003 Convention:

-“**social practices, rituals and festive events**”, as it involves an initiatory journey (the Tour de France), initiation rites, patron saint’s festivals, etc.

-“**traditional craftsmanship**”, as the *compagnons* consider it a duty to pass on their knowledge, particularly techniques and practices of traditional trades, some of which have become modernized (mechanic), while others are dying out (stringed instrument maker, saddler, among others).

### 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.*

The compagnonnage movement, which has its roots in the trade brotherhoods of XIII<sup>th</sup> century Europe, is a unique way of conveying knowledge and know-how linked to the trades that work with stone, wood, metal, leather, textiles and food. This knowledge is applied within three separate communities which share most aspects of the life of the compagnonnage movement.

The originality of this movement lies in its experimentation with and implementation of extremely varied methods and processes of knowledge transmission: national and international educational travel (the “Tour de France” period), initiation rituals, school-based teaching, customary learning and technical apprenticeship. Rich in traditions, the knowledge passed down from generation to generation in the compagnonnage movement is constantly redefined to adapt to technical and social developments in the professions concerned.

The importance given to the transmission of knowledge forms the cornerstone of the movement’s identity. The first duty of the compagnon is to “re-transmit”. Members are connected by a powerful “link of knowledge”, which is reinforced by ritualistic practices (chain of alliance, initiation rites) and a social organization based on the family model and centred around the *Mother*.

## 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.*

The *compagnonnage* movement, mainly represented by the three communities, the AOCDTF, FCMB and UCDDU, constitutes a unique way of transmitting trade knowledge and know-how, which is both rich in traditions and open to technical developments, and has its roots in the crafts brotherhoods of 13<sup>th</sup>-century Europe. The organization of the communities in their current form has gradually been established since the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

### **The apprenticeship process of the *compagnonnage***

Anyone aged 16 years or over who wishes to learn and/or develop their skills in a given profession can apply to join a *compagnonnage* community. After a period of reciprocal observation and evaluation at the lodges in the networks specific to each community (see maps provided), new apprentices are integrated into the group and begin their training which, on average, lasts 5 years: this is the “*Tour de France*” period. Apprentices regularly move from town to town (every 6 or 12 months, depending on the profession), both in France and internationally, to discover other types of knowledge and ways of passing it on. This integration process is strengthened by an initiation ritual, usually referred to as *Adoption*, whereby the individual is given a new nickname based on his or her geographic origin (Limousin, Parisian, etc.) and symbolic attributes such as the *colour* (coloured silk ribbon stamped with symbols). The individual then becomes an *Aspirant*.

The range of professions covered by the *compagnonnage* movement varies hugely between the communities, but mainly encompasses five domains: stone crafts (masons, stonecutters, etc.), wood crafts (carpenters, joiners, etc.), metal crafts (mechanics, blacksmiths, etc.), leather and textile crafts (leatherworker, tapestry maker, etc.) and food crafts (chefs, pastry cook, etc.). Originally, these crafts were only performed by men. Consequently, the *compagnonnage* approach, its rituals and practices, have long been imbued with the movement’s traditional male culture. However, changes in working conditions and the place that has been made for women

in these trades have not been ignored by the *compagnons*, who started opening the movement up to women some thirty years ago. For example, since 2005, the title of “compagnon” can be given to women who have completed their “Tour de France”.

After a period of itinerant training, there is a second initiation rite, *Reception*, which gives apprentices access to the status of compagnon. Like the previous ritual, this ritual is also shrouded in secrecy to preserve its magic and effectiveness. However, it is possible to describe its basic format, which consists of assigning a “compagnon name” (adding a quality to the first nickname: Paris Sincerity, for example), issuing a new *colour* and the compagnon’s staff, and the unveiling of the of the Rule (which contains the history, customs and rules of the community). Depending on the trade, elements such as a symbolic journey may be incorporated into the ritual, which can last for up to two days. Due to the secrecy and solemnity that surround it, after this ritual, apprentices feel solidly connected to their community, becoming a “lifetime compagnon”, as attested by the existence of funerary rites specific to the compagnonnage movement.

### **Transmission of knowledge between the generations**

This stage is suspended until the individual in question has proven his or her worth in the chosen trade. For that, he or she must perform a piece of work of a highly technical nature called the “masterwork”, which is examined and assessed by the *compagnons* to determine whether or not the applicant is worthy of being “admitted”. The “masterwork” is a way of demonstrating that the transmission of knowledge has been effective and that the applicant is now ready to assume the role of transmitter, as one of the main duties of *compagnons* is to “re-transmit” what they have learnt to the younger members of the community. A strong “link of knowledge” is forged between individuals of different generations within the communities. This link can be established via various routes. One is the transmission of the trade, either practical transmission in workshops or theoretical transmission in classrooms. Another is in the context of *talks* given by a *senior* member (a active or retired *compagnon* who has completed his/her “Tour de France”) who recounts the collective history and identity through stories (myths and legends from the compagnonnage movement, for example) and the explanation of symbols (the intertwined set square and the compass, the beehive, the Tower of Babel, and so on).

### **The framework of a collective identity**

The various practices that create a strong sense of identity and continuity among *compagnons* are supported by a social structure that allows them to grow. “People of knowledge” can prove themselves in a hierarchical system of statuses (trainee/junior member, aspirant, admitted compagnon, qualified compagnon) and roles, such as that of the person responsible for preserving customs, the *Rôleur* (derived from the former name of the community’s Rule, the “*Rôle*”) or the head of a lodge, known as the *Prévôt* or *Premier en ville*. Moreover, the links forged between individuals are further strengthened by an emotional dimension. A compagnon lodge is seen as a family that embodies an important female figure, the *Mother*, established by the *compagnons*. The unity around this character particularly comes to the fore during festivals celebrating the patron saint of the trade, which involves the *chain of alliance* ritual, where the *compagnons*, linking arms with their arms crossed across their chests, encircle the *Mother* and turn around her, singing *Les Fils de la Vierge*, a traditional song of the movement.

Finally, the existence of terms such as “civilians” or “lay people” to denote people from outside the movement clearly reflects the deep attachment that *compagnons* feel to their distinctive collective identity.

## 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.*

*Not to exceed 1,000 words.*

### **A structure representative of ICH**

In the popular imaginary of Western Europe, *compagnons* are perceived as the "last": the "last" to practice and teach certain ancient craft techniques (the scribing technique in woodwork, joinery or stonecutting, for example), the "last" to deliver true excellence in craft training (reflected by the practice of preparing the masterworks), the "last" to integrate the development of the person and the training of the worker so closely, the "last" to perform trade initiation rites. But in all these areas where they seem to be the guardians of tradition who have succeeded in preserving the ancient ways of living and thinking about the trade, *compagnons* have always been concerned to keep in step with the times. So, ancient craft techniques such as the scribing technique are taught alongside modern techniques of computer-aided design or trigonometry which are also used to determine what cuts to make in the materials. Therefore, by including the *compagnonnage* movement in the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, those interested in the Convention will have a clear example of a living tradition. It will contribute to spreading the crucial idea, highlighted by UNESCO, that heritage elements are also dynamic elements that are constantly updated. It is clear that this inscription will help ensure the promotion of the *compagnonnage* movement and brush away the idea held by certain ill-informed groups that it is backward-looking and obsolete.

Furthermore, in France and other European countries where the *compagnons* are known, there is a close association between those craftspeople and built heritage, particularly historic monuments for the restoration of which *compagnons'* expertise is often called upon. Consequently, this inscription will illustrate, through the comparison of and proximity between these two instances of safeguarding heritage (tangible heritage and intangible heritage), the evolution of the idea of heritage and its diversity of forms.

In addition, the *compagnonnage* movement also highlights one of the key stakes of intangible cultural heritage, namely the experience of cultural diversity and the daily exercising of respect for that diversity. Indeed, the approach adopted for the *compagnonnage* varies greatly between each of the movement's communities. For example, the total duration of the "Tour de France" varies according on trades and individuals (from three years to ten years, to show an approximate difference); the duration of each stage also varies (from a few months to one year, generally). With regard to the initiation rituals, there are variations around a common basic format (the presentation of symbols such as the staff and *colour*, the assigning of a *compagnon* name, the explanation of new rights and duties). People who learn about the *compagnonnage* movement thanks to its inclusion in the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage will therefore become aware that an element of intangible heritage, in this case the *compagnonnage* approach to training tradespeople, can take many forms. The *compagnonnage* movement is a living example of the spirit of the 2003 Convention, namely that intangible heritage manifests itself above all in the continuous sense of belonging and identity that it gives to a community (the term "*compagnon*", or "*companion*", is the simplest illustration of this) rather than in the fixity of a structure or form.

### Concern for others

During their period of vocational training and improvement, the *compagnonnage* movement invites individuals to discover other ways of doing, thinking and living. This is the spirit of the “Tour de France”, the travel element and, more specifically, the meetings regularly organized for the past fifty years between European branches of the movement within the framework of the CCEG (Confédération des Compagnonnages Européens/Europäische Gesellenzünfte). Turning their back on the standardization of practices and ways of life, the *compagnons* embrace differences and invite their itinerant apprentices not to smooth over but to enjoy the unevenness of cultural peculiarities, seek them out and let them be felt. The increasingly global scope of the “Tour de France” and the settling of *compagnons* in numerous countries creating opportunities to host itinerants, heighten the experience of cultural diversity in the movement. In this sense, making the *compagnonnage* movement a representative element of intangible cultural heritage will not only enhance a unique form of on-the-job training (thus bearing witness to the cultural diversity in this domain), but will also be a way of highlighting the great benefit that a respectful experience of otherness in all its forms (other cultures, other people, other techniques) can generate within the framework of the general training of individuals.

In this spirit, various international cooperation programmes have been set up to compare excellence training within trades (the “Université Européenne des Métiers et des Arts” for example, as well as exchange agreements with Institut Gaudí de la Construcció in Barcelona, Scuola Edile in Milan or Brazil’s public body for vocational training and technical education, among others), organize training sites to demonstrate techniques and knowledge (particularly in Eastern Europe) and participate in exchanges of skills and knowledge with certain countries of the South (China, Laos). So, the *compagnonnage* movement does not only focus on the production of *knowledge of Others*, in which it nevertheless plays a key role; it is more about *attention to Others*, which is a more sensitive approach (that is, based on the senses: listening, observing, touching), which is in keeping with the 2003 Convention and would be further promoted by the inclusion of the *compagnonnage* movement in the Representative List.

### 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.*

#### Keeping up with the times and with civil society

For several decades, the *Compagnon* groups have tried to develop the events associated with them. The organization of “open days” and setting up of internet sites aimed at explaining the purposes and goals of the *Compagnon* system demonstrate this desire for dialogue and mutual comprehension. The holding of debates at the level of *Compagnon* groups on the admission of women (until recently, only men were accepted for this sort of training) is without doubt – independent of the diverse range of attitudes adopted to the issue of women (total, partial or minimal integration) – a major indication of the efforts undertaken by the *Compagnons* “to keep the *compagnonnage* movement up with the times”. With regard to techniques and trades, the *compagnons* are anxious firstly to propose the *compagnonnage* system for new trades, and secondly to adapt *compagnon* training to the changing needs and techniques. At the Association, for example, the think tank “Le Devenir des Métiers” is responsible for the latter. The idea of sustainable development as applied to the field of trades underpins the whole of this

concept and the activities associated with it, thus rooting the future of *compagnonnage* in the wider framework of the evolution of work in modern societies.

More broadly, *compagnons* have developed a genuine policy of openness towards civil society through keeping up traditions (*compagnon* marches on saint's day festivals for some corporations; the pilgrimage to Sainte-Baume) and by organizing exhibitions on *compagnonnage* in general ("Le *compagnonnage*, chemin de l'excellence" in 1995-1996) or on some of its aspects ("Du cœur à l'ouvrage. Chefs-d'œuvre des *compagnons* du Devoir" from February to August 2009 at the Museum of Arts and Industry, Paris). Above all, the attention given to this by each *compagnon* movement, enabling *compagnon* museums to exist in many cities of the "Tour de France" and ensuring the visibility and promotion of living *compagnonnage*, indicates a strong willingness to make the traditions, customs and objects of the *compagnon* identity accessible and comprehensible.

### **Assistance of State authorities**

These efforts have been able to be supported by the State in many ways, direct and indirect. Thus, the Museum of *Compagnonnage* in Tours, which has one of the most beautiful collections of *compagnon*-related heritage material in the world, is entirely funded by the city of Tours. Also, the Federation and the Association are officially recognized as being "of public utility". This means, for example, that, with regard to the training and general education service for which it is responsible, the State has recognized, albeit in an as yet incomplete manner, levels of equivalence between the *compagnon* course and the courses offered by traditional training bodies such as apprentice training centres (CFAs) or professional colleges. Work is currently under way on establishing equivalences at higher levels, those of university degrees, and this indicates the desire of *Compagnons* to be fully involved in civil society, as well as the difficulties encountered because of the unique nature of the *compagnon* system of education.

### **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..*

### **An institution not under threat?**

*Compagnonnage* today is not subject to a significant threat to its existence. It even seems that, over the past ten years, there has been a revival of interest in *compagnon* training, even if communities regret the fact that more and more young people leave the system prematurely and therefore do not complete their course. However, there is a threat which puts into doubt the meaning and function of the *compagnonnage*. Broadly, from a cataclysmic perspective, *compagnons* are seen as "the last" and old-fashioned. But the most significant risk is found in the views of some who, thinking themselves well-informed, see *compagnonnage* as, at best, a traditional and declined type of freemasonry (with which the *compagnonnage* system is fundamentally not associated), and at worst as a sect that doesn't say its name.

In addition, the efforts undertaken by *compagnons*, with or without the support of the State, certainly deserve to be complemented by some measures enabling *compagnons* to be recognized more accurately than they are at present. These measures could be implemented through three types of activity: raising increased awareness of what already gives visibility to the *compagnon* system; developing current and future studies on *compagnonnage*; encouraging and supporting documentation and knowledge projects on the *compagnon* communities, whether conducted by *compagnons* themselves or by external actors (e.g. students and researchers).

### **Enhancing the *compagnonnage* heritage**

Firstly, it would be feasible to give greater publicity to *compagnonnage* museums than they receive at present and, possibly, to support those which are in the most difficulty and are entirely



dependent for funding on the good will of volunteering former *compagnons*. As well as being financial, this support could also consist of organizing training for *compagnons* on heritage management and exhibition, as well as on issues related to heritage status. Certainly, a greater theoretical and practical knowledge of heritage issues could only increase further the quality of *compagnons'* participation in enhancing the *compagnonnage*. Finally, the implementation, as in Tours, of a series of lectures open to the general public on *compagnon* premises (*compagnon* houses or museums) could be an important tool, if needed, for the cultural mediation of *compagnonnage* heritage.

### **Spreading knowledge about *compagnonnage***

It should be further noted that there is currently an important study activity on *compagnonnage* issues that has not yet achieved wider public awareness. This activity, it should be stressed, was originally the work of *compagnons* themselves through self-publishing of popularizing works and historical texts, along with biographical accounts, whose distribution has remained very limited owing to a lack of resources. The State has had relatively little involvement in the process of spreading knowledge of *compagnonnage* except on rare occasions: at the beginning of the 1990s it supported, through the Imprimerie Nationale, a new edition of the Memoirs of Agricola Perdiguer, a *compagnon* carpenter who lived in the 19th century; and in 2008, the Ministry of Culture supported the publication of Nicolas Adell-Gombert's *Des hommes de Devoir: Les Compagnons du Tour de France (XVIIIe–XXe siècle)*. However, there are other works which deserve a similar platform, such as the works of François Icher, and those undertaken at the Museum of *compagnonnage* in Tours by Laurent Bastard, not to mention numerous *compagnonnage*-related biographies and autobiographies. To take one notable example, a project to produce an "Encyclopedia of Trades" was begun more than thirty years ago by members of the Association Ouvrière which aims to set out all the knowledge, expertise and customs of each trade (i.e. from the history of the trade's costume to showing the most recent working techniques, with each trade spread across several volumes), of which some elements have been published to date. However, the costs involved in this long-term project have prevented *compagnons*, to their considerable distress, from distributing it on a large scale (a solitary university library possesses a collection, still incomplete, of several volumes of this "Encyclopedia").

### **Support for research and documentation projects**

Lastly, it is necessary to encourage and support documentation and research projects aiming to improve and spread knowledge of *compagnonnage*. This could be done in a range of ways: through offers of funding for research into the *compagnon* community; through support for meetings which would make it possible to improve (seminars, conferences) or spread (lectures aimed at the wider public) knowledge about *compagnonnage*. There is also a degree of urgency for such efforts to be made. In fact, in the areas where the term is seen positively and denotes a very high level of professionalism (the worlds of craftsmanship and labour, for example), the title of *compagnon* may be hijacked for publicity purposes by self-proclaimed *compagnons*. There are also cases where the *compagnon* system is made out to be a secret doctrine by those who would strip *compagnonnage* of its social function. Certainly, the aim is not to freeze the *compagnon* system now by declaring, at a given moment, the definitive truth of *compagnonnage*: this would be to lose sight of the lessons of the history of the movement itself. But this should not prevent us from determining, in a specific context and environment, what *compagnonnage* is, without prejudice to the fact that the forms of this nature are kept up in other contexts and other environments. If that were to be done, *compagnonnage* would be a "dead" tradition, which it is not.

### **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.*

The desire of *compagnons* to preserve the original nature of their educational system is indicated by the close links that they maintain with civil society. First of all, they play a vital role in the integration into social and professional life of the young people they have responsibility for. By providing their general and technical training by all appropriate methods (lectures, conferences, practical teaching, workshops, on-site training, etc.) and by making efforts to get the quality of this training recognized according to common criteria at national level (by offering diplomas and/or equivalences for the appropriate levels of study), *compagnons* ensure that these young people's qualifications, which are atypical to say the least, are recognized by society. Further, the connections made on the Tour de France with the working world and with the world of business in particular, are a spur to constant adaptation to the modern world, while also providing opportunities for the small but important part of a trade that is employment.

The existence of museums of *compagnonnage* and the voluntary work which is provided at most of them by retired *compagnons*, is a good indication of the commitment of *compagnons* to developing *compagnonnage*. The increasing number of exhibitions of *compagnon* masterworks (one exhibition on carpentry is currently on show in Paris at the Museum of Arts and Industry), and the concern to support the publication of *compagnons'* biographical accounts, demonstrate the constant attention paid to the continuation and passing-on of the specific characteristics of *compagnonnage* (see bibliography provided).

### 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.*

Importantly, the relationship between *compagnonnage* and civil society is two-way in nature, since while the *compagnons* provide a service to the State in various ways – i.e. the education, training and integration into the working world of young people – the French State is involved to a certain extent in supporting this effort by creating favourable conditions for it. Thus, through the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Ministry of National Education, the State has allowed, with the signing of framework agreements, the unique nature of *compagnon* training to be maintained by recognizing the unique nature of the Tour de France, the quality of education and the possibility of being involved in the frameworks envisaged by the Ministry of National Education, granting apprentice training centre (CFA) status to several *compagnon* houses, and permitting the establishment of *compagnon* colleges (such as the Mouchard College in the Jura region) which are entirely funded by the apprenticeship tax which the *compagnons* have been made legally capable to collect.

This legal mechanism, which marks out *compagnonnage*'s unique nature, continues to be one of the conditions that make *compagnonnage* viable. To put these conventions of its operation into doubt would be to put the continuity of the *compagnon* system under grave threat. Finally, the support provided by public funds to some *compagnon* events (the exhibition of masterworks in Paris, the running of the museum in Tours) demonstrates the interest that continues to be devoted to *compagnonnage*.

## 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.*

*Compagnons* took a lively interest in intangible cultural heritage from an early date: a spontaneous nomination was even instituted by the AOCDF as soon as France had ratified the Convention in 2006. This forms part of the debates that have been ongoing for several years on the concept of heritage, to which *compagnon* magazines have given voice. This framework has been continued and focused by holding working meetings run by the *compagnons* themselves, with the participation, on a consultative basis, of representatives of external bodies such as the University of Toulouse II – Le Mirail (a meeting between the three *compagnon* groups and Nicolas Adell-Gombert in Toulouse on 17 January 2008) and the Ethnology Mission of the Ministry of Culture (working meetings on 1 April and 11 June 2008). Each of these steps has allowed the representatives of *compagnon* groups to complete the nomination file accurately, thanks first to regular exchanges among *compagnon* groups, and then between *compagnon*

groups and academic consultants.

Remarkably, the participation of *compagnons* has not been limited to the involvement of those *compagnons* who have a role to play by virtue of their institutional position (Presidents, First Councillors). Thanks to the production of a questionnaire on the links between the concept of cultural heritage and *compagnonnage*, and its distribution to all members of *compagnon* groups in the framework of the large national meetings which take place every year (Assizes, Congress, etc.), it has been possible to inform the whole *compagnon* community of the intention to achieve nomination as intangible cultural heritage. A large number of *compagnons* (almost 600 for the AOCDF, 250 for the FCMB, 150 for the UCDDU) have thus been able, through written responses (several examples of which have been compiled in a combined volume at the request of the Secretariat in the “Supplementary Information” section), to propose that, in their view, one of the particular courses of *compagnonnage* constitutes the specific character and identity of their community.

Beyond the diverse range of the suggestions and opinions, transmission of knowledge and solidarity (fraternity, mutual support, respect) between the generations have been developed with remarkable consistency in accordance with the modalities and unique terms (initiation, “Work”, songs, meals), concepts which undeniably form the heart of *compagnon* culture. For example, a *compagnon* cook writes: “The specific nature of the organization is based on a daring ideal: to pass on traditional knowledge and expertise without betraying them when adapting them as is appropriate to current and future technical developments. It could even be seen as avant-garde.” How to better say what is a “living” tradition?

#### **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.*

Such consent has been demonstrated in two ways:

1. A joint written text, approved and signed by the three *compagnon* groups (c.f. Annex “Consent of Communities”).
2. Three videos showing, through the voices of the presidents of each group, the reasons why each of them is involved in the project of achieving inscription on the representative list of the intangible cultural heritage of UNESCO (c.f. Annex “Consent of Communities”).

#### **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.*

*Compagnonnage* is not a heritage object that can be grasped right away. Its boundaries are blurred. In fact, one of its specific features is precisely that the ways of gaining access to it are extremely varied, thus exhibiting something of the diversity contained in the general concept of intangible cultural heritage. The exhibition of masterworks, a visit to a *compagnon* house (for example, during “Open Doors” events), or watching a *compagnon* march during a saint’s day

festival are all ways of accessing *compagnonnage*. But access to *compagnonnage* is not found only in the public dimension. An important part of the *compagnon* system is a restricted space and practices which, without in any way contravening fundamental human rights or mutual respect among individuals, lose their purpose and function if they are practised outside the precise times and places with which they are associated, whether these practices contain an element of secrecy (initiation rites, for example) or not (*compagnon* songs or some customs such as the chain of alliance or union do not make sense outside their context).

The inscription of *compagnonnage* as intangible cultural heritage could not be done without taking into account respect for these practices, which involve the transmission of knowledge and the establishment of the *compagnon* system's own special solidarity. Thus, in no case could heritage inscription require *compagnons* to make their houses, which are essential locations for the development of communal ties, into places permanently devoted to meeting with the public. The development of *compagnon* museums, as well as the support provided to research and documentation activities intended for the public, could enable access to the element without putting into doubt its fundamental principles.

## 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.*

*Compagnonnage* is included in the General Inventory of Cultural Heritage, in the section "Intangible Heritage", set up by the Ethnology Mission, part of the Directorate of Architecture and Heritage within the Ministry of Culture.

In France, the Ethnology Mission of the Ministry of Culture (Directorate of Heritage, Sub-Directorate of Archaeology, Ethnology, Inventory and Information Systems) is responsible for coordinating the inventories in collaboration with the other directorates affected by the field of application of the convention. At present, two inventories are being produced. The first, begun in August 2007, has taken the form of an "inventory of inventories", established in accordance with a documentary principle of taking an inventory of pre-existing inventories and already-completed works or databases, whether available on the internet or not. The result of this work is available on the website of the Ministry of Culture, under "subject files / ethnology / inventory of inventories of intangible cultural heritage":

[http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/dp/ethno\\_spci/invent\\_invent.htm](http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/dp/ethno_spci/invent_invent.htm)

The second inventory aims to record living practices, in collaboration with communities, groups and individuals. It was begun in March 2008, and the first results were published in the last quarter of 2009. The members of the communities concerned were invited to complete forms, details of which are provided below. This form was tested during 2008, and some minor modifications were made. The form provided below was developed in 2009. The goal of this inventory, in addition to that of meeting convention obligations, is to be a knowledge tool available to all of the public. This is why it has been available on the website of the Ministry of Culture since the end of 2009 and includes, in addition to the forms, photographs and audio extracts related to the practices in the inventory.

For the case of *compagnonnage*, its record in the inventory can be consulted at the following address:

[http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/dp/ethno\\_spci/pdf2/compagnonnage.pdf](http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/dp/ethno_spci/pdf2/compagnonnage.pdf)

The compagnonnage form is the result of studies and surveys conducted by Nicolas Adell-Gombert, an ethnologist, in collaboration with *compagnons* from the different groups. All the points in the form in the General Inventory of Cultural Heritage, which were discussed with the leaders of the different *compagnon* communities who met in individual working groups and then worked collectively through meetings, reflect the commitment of *compagnons* to the process of drawing up the inventory.

## Inventory form Overview

*Name*

Basic details

*Person(s) interviewed*

*Location (region, department, municipality)*

*Category*

### (A) Details and location

(1) Name and role and/or position of the person(s) interviewed

(2) Details of the person(s) interviewed

Address:

Town:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Fax:

Email address:

Website:

(3) Details of the place of work

Area:

Address:

Town:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Fax:

Email address:

Website:

### (B) Description

(1) Description

(2) Place of work

Description of locations and facilities:

Type of place:

(3) Apprenticeship

Type of apprenticeship:

Place of apprenticeship:

Length of apprenticeship:

Description of apprenticeship:

(4) Transmission

Description of transmission:

Place of transmission:

### (C) History

(1) General history

(2) Individual history of the enterprise, person or body, type of expression or cultural space

being examined

(3) Updating the technique, place or craftsmanship

(D) Cultural interest and development

(1) Methods of development

Development actions:

Dissemination:

Activities related to tourism:

(2) Methods of public recognition (local, national and international levels):

(3) Documentation/bibliographical details/existing inventories:

(E) Safeguarding measures

(F) Information techniques

Date and place(s) of interview

Date of inventory form

Name of interviewer(s)

Name of the person who drafted the form

Audio resources

Video resources

Photographs

Comments

## DOCUMENTATION

### a. Required and supplementary documentation

#### Documents obligatoires

- 10 photographies :

1. « Chefs-d'œuvre des charpentiers »
2. « Dans la cité - Une *guitarde* à Châteauroux »
3. « Défilé compagnonnique »
4. « Des symboles - Cannes et Couleurs »
5. « Fête de la Sainte Anne pour les menuisiers »
6. « La chaîne d'alliance »
7. « Repas communautaire »
8. « Un changement - jeunes femmes aspirants »
9. « Une épure - l'art du Trait »
10. « Une tradition - La conduite »

-1 vidéo de 10 minutes « Le compagnonnage »

#### Documents supplémentaires

-3 cartes de situation géographique de l'élément :

1. « Les villes de l'AOCDF »
2. « Les villes de la FCMB »
3. « Les villes de l'Union compagnonnique »

- 3 livres :

1. **Ouvrage de référence** : ADELL-GOMBERT, Nicolas, *Des hommes de Devoir. Les compagnons du Tour de France (XVIII<sup>e</sup> – XX<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, Paris, Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'Homme, coll. « Ethnologie de la France » (30), 2008.
2. **Catalogue d'exposition** : *Le Compagnonnage, chemin de l'excellence*, Paris, Réunion des musées nationaux, 1995 (livre épuisé, photocopies fournies).
3. **Récit** : JOURDAIN, Pierre, *Voyage dans l'île de Moncontour, ou un demi-siècle de la vie d'un Compagnon tailleur de pierre du Devoir*, Paris, Librairie du Compagnonnage, 1997.

### b. Cession of rights including registry of items

Required cession of rights provided.

### c. List of additional resources

#### Ouvrages généraux et usuels :

BLONDEL, Jean-François, BOULEAU, Jean-Claude, TRISTAN, Frédérick, 2000, *Encyclopédie du compagnonnage. Histoire, symboles et légendes*, Paris, Éditions du Rocher.

HAUTIN, Christine, BILLIER, Dominique, 2000, *Être compagnon*, Paris, PUF.

ICHER, François, 1995, *Les compagnons ou l'amour de la belle ouvrage*, Paris, Gallimard / Découvertes.

#### Ouvrages et travaux universitaires :

GUÉDEZ, Annie, 1994, *Compagnonnage et apprentissage*, Paris, PUF.

TRUANT, Cynthia M., 1994, *The Rites of Labor. Brotherhoods of Compagnonnage in Old and New Regime France*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press.

#### Catalogues d'exposition et iconographie :

*Le compagnonnage vivant*, Paris, Caisse nationale des monuments historiques et des sites, 1973.



*Le compagnonnage, « hier et aujourd'hui » dans notre région*, La Rochelle, Musée d'Orbigny-Bernon, 1988.

MOURET, Jean-Noël, 1996, *Les Compagnons. Chefs-d'œuvre inédits, anciens et contemporains*, Paris, Hatier.

BASTARD, Laurent, 2008, *Chefs-d'œuvre de compagnons*, Paris, De Borée.

Récits, mémoires et autres ouvrages de compagnons au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle :

BERNARD, Jean, 1972, *Le Compagnonnage, rencontre de la jeunesse et de la tradition*, Paris, PUF.

CACERES, Benigno, 1974, *Le compagnon charpentier de Nazareth*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil.

Collectif, 2009, *Le compagnonnage. Échantillons d'enquêtes sur le patrimoine culturel*, volume joint au dossier.

DUGUET, Marguerite, 1979, *Mémoires d'une mère en Devoir*, Paris, Librairie du compagnonnage.

MORIN, Pierre, 1994, *Compagnon du Devoir au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, Librairie du compagnonnage.

VERGEZ, Raoul, 1995 [1957], *La pendule à Salomon*, Paris, Éditions Jean-Michel Garnier.

Échantillons d'enquête sur le patrimoine culturel et le compagnonnage (fournis en annexe)

Filmographie

*La pendule à Salomon* (1961), réal. Vicky Ivernel, SEFC, d'après le roman du compagnon charpentier des Devoirs Raoul Vergez.

*Ardéchois Cœur Fidèle* (1974), réal. Jean-Pierre Gallo, ORTF.

Sites internet :

Site de l'Association ouvrière : <http://www.compagnons-du-devoir.com>

Site de la Fédération compagnonnique : <http://www.compagnons.org>

Site de l'Union compagnonnique : <http://www.lecompagnonnage.com>

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### A. Contact person for correspondence

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- Christian HOTTIN  
Chef de la Mission Ethnologie  
Mission Ethnologie  
Direction de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine  
Ministère de la Culture  
182, rue Saint-Honoré  
75033 PARIS Cedex 1  
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### B. Competent body involved

- LISST – Centre d'Anthropologie sociale (UMR 5193)  
Université de Toulouse II – Le Mirail

Maison de la Recherche  
5, allées Antonio Machado  
31058 TOULOUSE Cedex 9

- Mission Ethnologie  
Direction de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine  
Ministère de la Culture  
182, rue Saint-Honoré  
75033 PARIS Cedex 01

### **C. Concerned community organization(s) or representative(s)**

- Association Ouvrière des Compagnons du Devoir Tour de France  
82, rue de l'Hôtel-de-Ville  
75004 PARIS
- Fédération Compagnonnique des Métiers du Bâtiment des Compagnons des Devoirs du Tour de France  
7, rue Petit  
75019 PARIS
- Union Compagnonnique des Devoirs Unis  
Maison des Musiciens Italiens  
15, rue Champ Lagarde  
78000 VERSAILLES

### **SIGNATURE ON BEHALF OF THE STATE PARTY**

Name: Catherine Colonna

Title: Ambassadrice de la France auprès de l'UNESCO

Date: 25 August 2009

Signature: <signed>