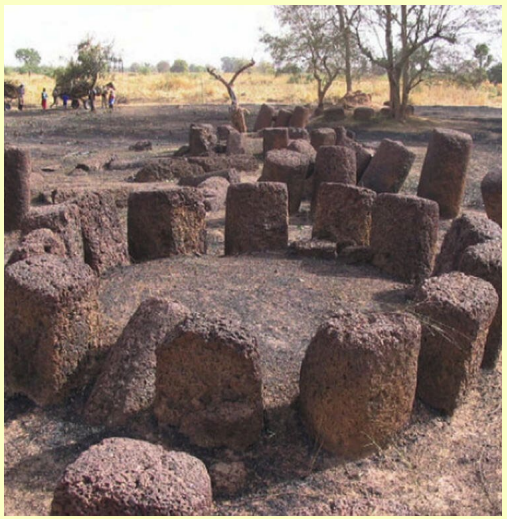
# From Nara to Nairobi and the international reflection on authenticity

# NARA

- Nara Document provides a broad basis on the heritage conservation principle for recognizing cultural diversity, tangible and intangible expressions, community responsibility, oral sources, use and function, traditions, techniques, spirit and feeling. These concepts were never invented in Nairobi.

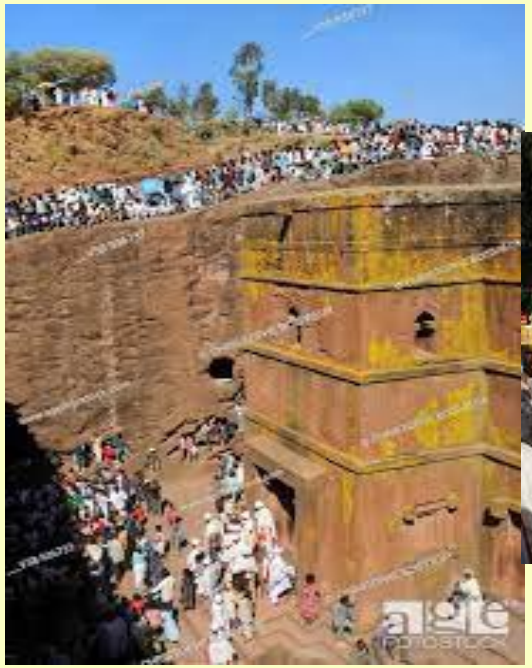


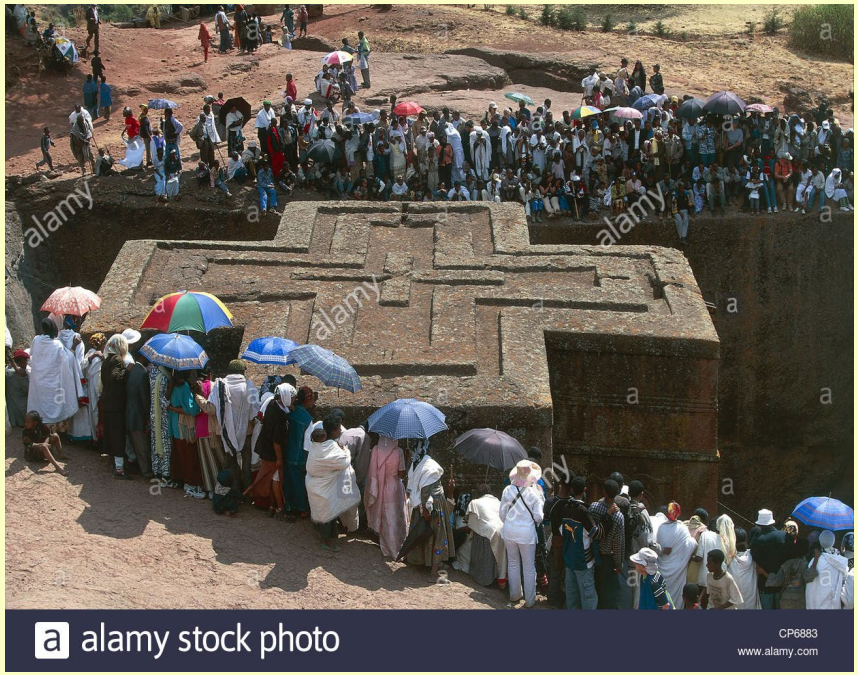
Nairobi Outcome goes further by converting general recognition into more explicit operational principles.

# Communities as participants in defining authenticity

While Nara recognizes the responsibility of the cultural community that generated the heritage conservation principles, it does not establish a clear operational requirement for communities and knowledge holders/bearers to participate directly in identifying attributes, evaluating authenticity and making decisions throughout nomination, management and monitoring.

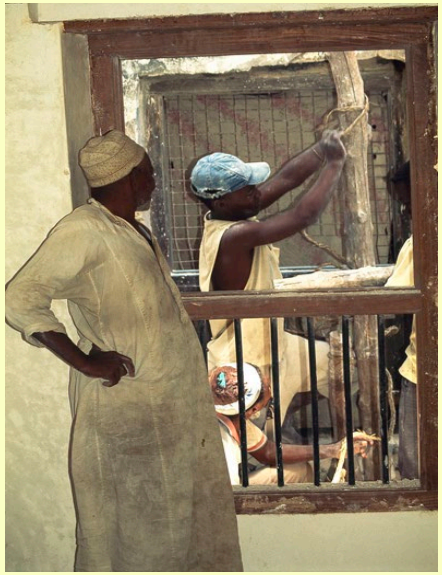
This is critical

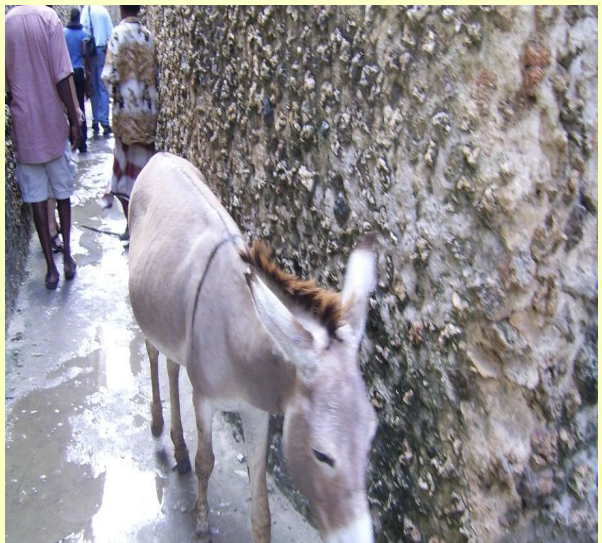




# Authenticity as continuity through change

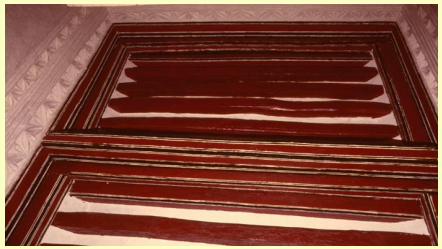
Nara refers to original and subsequent characteristics, but it does not clearly explain that transformation, evolution, adaptation and renewal may sustain authenticity rather than diminish it. Nairobi Outcome makes continuity of meaning, practice, use and knowledge—not simply the survival of inherited material fabric—a central consideration.

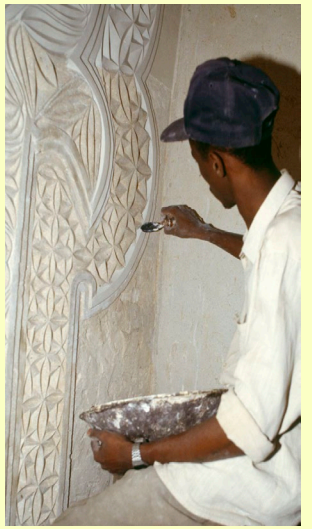




# Tangible and intangible heritage as interdependent

Nara recognizes both tangible and intangible expressions, but largely treats traditions, use, spirit and feeling as “sources of information” for assessing a property. Nairobi Outcome recognizes that practices, rituals, oral traditions, skills and knowledge holders may themselves constitute attributes through which the values of a place continue.





# The nature–culture continuum

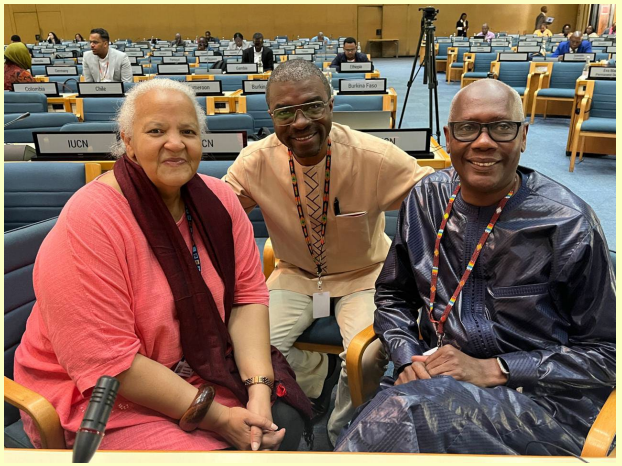
This is not developed in Nara although is common in Africa, Asia , North and South America. The Nairobi Outcome stresses the indivisibility of spiritual, ecological and cultural relationships with land, water and other natural features that have direct implications for identifying attributes, defining boundaries and managing cultural landscapes and other properties.

# Translation into national law and institutional procedures

Nara does not require States Parties to recognize communities and knowledge holders/bearers formally in national heritage legislation, inventories, tentative lists, nomination processes or management systems. This is a significant operational gap that need to be considered in the recommendations to States Parties.

# While conceptual space exists in Nara, the procedures, actors, evidence and decision points are not sufficiently specified

- **<u>Hanoi Document should just "promote" Nairobi Outcome Document.</u> It should identify a number of mechanisms for operationalizing the Nairobi Document including:**
- revisions or supplementary guidance concerning paragraphs of the Operational Guidelines, that particularly concern the identification and assessment of authenticity and attributes;
- a requirement to document how communities and knowledge holders participated in identifying values and attributes;
- recognition of living processes, transmission, adaptation and renewal as possible attributes supporting authenticity;
- methods for using oral, spiritual and customary knowledge as credible sources of information;
- stronger integration of nature–culture relationships;
- corresponding changes to Tentative List, nomination, management and monitoring procedures and;
- review of national legislation to ensure formal community participation.



**THANK YOU**