

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA INVENTORY ON THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Name of the Element: Cu'in Nari: "Branch of cu'in plant", A ritual involving the collection of cu'in branches and travelling to the village temple

Brief Description: In this ritual the children go to the mountains. They bring back reeds to make the pens. The pens are made so that the children could use them to make drawings on the walls of the temples. They also bring from the mountains, the branches of a plant; Cu'in. This is an evergreen plant.

The children then make fire and bring all these to a place where fire is made. They put offerings of dry fruits in the fire. A prayer is done by facing the west. The girls gather at one point and boys at another. They sing songs for each other and a small competition between them takes place. The songs being sung are sometimes older ones and at other times they are made on spot.

Later all the participants make a long chain and grab each other by putting a long cloth around each other's stomach. They hold each other firmly and the entire train of people sets off towards the temple singing and dancing. These participants then put the reeds and the branches of the evergreen plant Cu'in on the shelves of the temple. After this, the children then set out for the next mission to make ink for the pens made of reeds. The ink is made by collecting wood from the walnut tree and by burning it. When a black greasy material comes out, it is mixed with water and placed overnight. In the morning the ink is ready to be used by the children to make drawings on the walls of the temple.

Before the start of this event, someone cleans the temple, makes a paste of mud and water and wipe them on the walls of temple to clean the drawings made by the children the previous year on Chowmos. The women of the valley do not comb their hair neither they wash their clothes on this day.

The next day early morning around 6:30 am the children go to the temple, they take reeds, attach a small piece of wool to the pens of reeds and dip them in ink. The children stay quiet and draw figures of goats, shepherds, trees, sun, moon, stars etc. This is practiced for an hour and children mostly only whisper to one another and usually stay quiet.