

Element Form

1. Defining the intangible cultural heritage element

- Name of the element as used:

Judoor

- Other name:

Millah (pl. *millah*)

- Short and useful title of the intangible cultural heritage element (Including domain(s) of cultural heritage manifested by the element):

Skills associated with traditional handcrafts – Making *judoor* and its uses

- Practitioners and groups concerned:

- Men.
- Women.

- Geographical location and range of the intangible cultural heritage element:

Most regions of the United Arab Emirates.

- Brief description of the intangible cultural heritage element (Not to exceed 200 characters):

A variety of cooking and food serving tools were utilised in the UAE in ancient times. In line with the difficult and treacherous lifestyle of those times, people utilised raw natural materials to make different tools and utensils that enriched the

ancient Emirati household, and allowed women to prepare and serve food.

“*Judoor*” or “sing. *jadr*” (also known as *millal* or sing. *millah*) are among the utensils that were used to prepare and cook food.

In the past, *judoor* were made of various materials such as pottery, iron, wood, copper, and brass. The oldest and most common type of *judoor* in the UAE was made of pottery, which was a well-known ancient industry in the UAE. To prepare *judoor*, people would obtain clay from its origins in nature. They would then burn the clay in the “*tannour*” and shape it into clay tablets. They could then shape the tables into any desired shape after undergoing cooling and filtration.¹

Brass *judoor* (made of copper) were made in different sizes depending on their purpose and the number of members in the family. The ancient Emirati people excelled in shaping and engraving copper with various drawings and symbols. Copper was used in making many traditional tools and utensils, including *judoor*. Aluminium was also used in making *judoor*, including circular *judoor* with high edges that were used for frying and cooking fish and other proteins. It was also used for cooking rice, which is a staple in Emirati cuisine, in addition to other Emirati dishes.²

2. Features of the Element:

- Concerned practitioners and performers of the intangible cultural heritage element (including name, gender, occupational category, etc.):

- Men who make *judoor* – cooks who work prepare food – housewives who use *judoor*.

- Other participants whose work relates to the element and contributes to sustaining its practice or facilitates the performance and transmission of the element (including those who attend a performance or those who are responsible for training, supervision or sponsorships):

¹ A field interview with the narrator Ghobesha Umm Turk, Al Dhafra Region, Emirate of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 28/09/2016

² Mariam and Shama Balaa Al Ameri, Excerpts from our local dialect, General Women's Union, Abu Dhabi, Emirate of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, p. 55.

- Copper polishers and blacksmiths who make cooking and serving utensils
- Merchants who sell cooking and serving utensils
- Merchants of foodstuffs and *bazaar* "spices"

- The language (s) used (in the element):

- The local dialects used while making and using *judoor*.

- Tangible elements associated with the practice of the element and its transmission, such as: instruments, equipment, costumes, spaces, and ritual tools (if any):

Tools:

- Brass – pottery – aluminium – fire – spices – blacksmith tools – sharp knives for sawing and cutting.

Spaces:

- Traditional markets.
- In homes.

- Other intangible elements related to the practice and transmission of the element in question (if any):

- While making or using *judoor*, blacksmiths and copper polishers would share folk tales and stories, news, narrate proverbs and riddles, and chant poems and songs.
- Decorating *judoor* with drawings, inscriptions and symbols has special social connotations that reflects a vast variety of societal customs, traditions and practices.
- Women tell stories and chant poems and songs while preparing and serving food. They also boast of their household utensils, including *judoor*.

- Customary practices governing access to the element or any of its specific aspects

The element can easily be accessed by practitioners. There are no restrictions or practices preventing access to the element.

- Modes of transmitting the element to others within the group:

- *Judoor* making skills are passed on from blacksmiths and copper polishers of the older generation to the young. Mothers would also teach girls how to prepare food in the *judoor*.
- Youth can obtain information about old heritage tools and equipment during summer camps and scout association camps, etc.

- Concerned organizations if any (associations/civil society organizations, etc.):

- Heritage clubs.
- Traditional markets that specialise in selling models of traditional household items.
- Artisans houses.
- Heritage societies.

3. Status of the element: its viability and sustainability

- Threats to the practicing of the element in the context of the relevant community / groups concerned:

The element is still practised in society despite many threats, including the competition it faces with modern household tools and utensils, including different *judoor* of different shapes and sizes.

4. Data: restrictions, and private permissions (collectively and access)

- Group / community approval and involvement in data collection:

- Groups, communities and individuals have been involved and have expressed complete approval in providing data.
- All concerned groups have agreed to cooperate with researchers in providing data about the element. Some of these groups have also been actively involved in data collection.

- Restrictions on data access and use

- There are no restrictions on data access and use.

- Experts and narrators (their names, position, and affiliation):

- A field interview with the narrator Ghobaisha Umm Turk, Al Dhafra Region, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 28/09/2016

- Dates and locations of data collection:

28/09/2016

5. Sources of information about the element (if any)

- Literature: books, articles, and others:

- Mariam and Shama Balaa Al Ameri, Excerpts from our local dialect, General Women's Union, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, p. 55.

- Audio-visual materials, records etc. in archives, museums, and private collections (if any):

- There are audio recordings of the field interview with the narrator in the archives.

- Documentary materials and tools in archives, museums and private collections (if any):

- There are documentary materials and traditional tools, including *judoor* in archives, museums, and heritage centres and villages.

6. Data about the inventory process

- The person(s) who performed the classification and collection

Researcher Mahasin Abdul Rahim Waqee Allah

- Date the information was entered into the inventory:

28/09/2016

- Pictures:



Pottery *judoor*



Brass *judoor*



Aluminium judoor

Date created: 28/09/2016

Date updated: 07/10/2020

Username: Mahasin Abdul Rahim Waqee Allah