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# Three-year campaign to create interest in Colombia's living heritage

With over 700 annual traditional festivities and carnivals, and some 67 languages and dialects that have resisted forced migration, armed conflict and decline of the environment, Colombia's intangible cultural heritage ranks as one of the richest in Latin America. This tremendous diversity is hardly surprising given Colombia's varied population, which is made up of more than 83 native groups and numerous communities of African descent. Bearing in mind the role of intangible cultural heritage in promoting creativity, tolerance and peace, UNESCO supported nationwide campaign in 2002 to alert communities, voluntary organisations and scientific and governmental institutions to the importance of safeguarding Colombia's intangible heritage.

Working on several fronts, the project was able to:

- Establish the Intangible Heritage Committee (2004), an advisory body to Colombia's Ministry of Culture to help with the creation of policies and and the elaboration of criteria for inscription on national lists of intangible cultural heritage;
- Broadcast three TV spots on national and regional channels and place 40 messages on some 200 regional commercial and community radio stations – as well as an advertising campaign in major newspapers. A communication strategy based on the theme 'Show Who You Are' raised awareness, especially among Colombian youth, about the importance of looking after Colombia's cultural diversity.
- Organize five regional seminars to encourage communities, cultural agents, native groups, and education and communication professionals to become actively involved in safeguarding measures.

- Organize the First National Encounter for intangible cultural heritage in Medellín (September 2005), which led to the establishment of national networks and encouraged political decision makers to support the ratification of the Convention.
- Publish an educational brochure and a guide with advice on methods for assembling Colombia's first intangible cultural heritage inventory (RIPIC), as well as design a database compatible with existing national systems, which helped with the testing of inventory pilot projects (for example, traditional music and dance in the Gran Magdalena region).
- Develop a website for disseminating awareness-raising messages and other relevant information (links, bibliographical references, information on inventories) for government and other official bodies.



Photo © Enrique Garcia

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The Carnival of Barranquilla



Photo © Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Colombia

The project's main objectives – to involve the general public and shareholders in safeguarding actions and to raise support for intangible cultural heritage protection among policy makers and elected officials – were on the whole achieved.



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# Revival of intergenerational transmission of Georgian traditional polyphony




Photo © UNESCO/Anahtir Minasyan



Photo © Peter de Graaf

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 Georgian  
polyphonic singers

Polyphonic singing, music with two or more separate melodic voices, is a popular tradition that used to be a central part of all areas of everyday life in Georgia, from ploughing fields to curing illnesses and celebrating festivities. Over the past decades, this tradition, usually passed from father to son, has been threatened by issues such as the economic difficulties experienced in the early 1990s, which have weakened the networks of singers and restricted field research and documentation. The teaching of this tradition by the older generation to the younger has also significantly declined because of the shift from country to city living and limited teaching resources.

With the support of UNESCO, a project was launched to support the viability of the traditional polyphony. Besides recording and research activities, the main aim of the project was to support the passing on of singing skills and traditions between generations through non-formal education. Seven Youth Folk Song Centres were set up in different regions to cultivate the communication of this tradition. Local authorities provided a location, free of charge, for the centres. At each centre, 10 to 15 young students received training from elderly Masters for a three-year period. To help the students learn, the International Centre for Georgian Folk

Song (ICGFS) produced teaching materials, audio cassettes, CDs and music scores, and organized seminars on teaching methods and using equipment such as video recorders, video projectors, overhead projectors, DVD players, and Mini Disk recorders.

At these Youth Folk Song Centres, some one hundred young people have been successfully trained in regional songs, reviving the slowly vanishing practice of handing down the singing between generations. Four out of the seven Centres are continuing their work, thanks to funding from local sponsors. A school of the endangered practice of *krimanchuli* (Georgian yodelling) was also set up in the wake of the success of the Youth Folk Song Centres with funding from ICGFS and the Georgian Patriarchate. A majority of the students have gone on to find employment by teaching polyphonic songs, singing in local church choirs, and creating and managing small 'ensembles' performing regional songs at various social events and on stage. Another long-term impact of the project is the proposed addition of the traditional Georgian polyphony into the national school curriculum to be taught by graduates of the Centre.

These developments have helped raise awareness of the value of safeguarding this tradition and intangible cultural heritage in general. The project succeeded thanks to a creative partnership and collaboration from a wide range of stakeholders, and has become a model for other heritage-related activities.



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## Open-air forum on intangible cultural heritage and conflict resolution in Kenya (9 December 2008, Kakamega)



Photo © UNESCO



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Western Kenya is a home to many communities that belong to the second largest ethno-linguistic group of the country called the Luhya. For a very long time the different Luhya communities have co-existed peacefully amongst themselves, as well as with their neighbours, including the Luo and Kalenjin, and groups living across the border in Uganda such as the Teso, Sabaot and the Samia communities. The reason why the region, which is sometimes called the 'land of peace', has so rarely experienced conflicts may be attributed to the traditional mechanisms and cultural practices that the Luhya and their neighbours used to solve disagreements.

In recent times, however, Kenya became subject to tensions cumulating in the crisis following the presidential election of December 2007. The violence resulted in more than 1,000 casualties and about 350,000 Kenyans were internally displaced. Major towns in Western Province experienced looting, destructions of buildings and parts of the population were displaced.

While the situation has calmed down with the establishment of a coalition government in early 2008, an atmosphere of suspicion and tension still exist among many Luhya sub-communities. With a view to contributing to reconciliation amongst them, the Department of Culture, the National Museums of Kenya and UNESCO – in cooperation with communities in

western Kenya – convened an open-air forum in Kakamega to promote elements of intangible cultural heritage which can play a role in preventing and resolving conflicts.

This activity was designed in accordance with the spirit of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which Kenya ratified in October 2007. This international legal instrument recognizes, in its preamble, the 'invaluable role of the intangible cultural heritage as a factor in bringing human beings closer together and ensuring exchange and understanding among them!'

The open-air forum took place on 9 December 2008 in Muliro Garden in the town of Kakamega. More than 25 communities, led by their chiefs and representatives, participated in the event. All around the garden there were tents with demonstrations of medicinal plants, traditional foodways (e.g. ingredients, cooked items, grinding competitions), and craft items depicting peace making scenes. Each group was then called to perform – dancing, singing and showing short theatrical sketches – in the field, forming a large circle. Performers interacted much with the audience, of around 8,000 to 9,000 people.

The event was graced by the presence of the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of State for Culture and National Heritage and the Commissioner of Western Province. Furthermore, a group of Maasai

(a nomadic group living in the neighbouring Rift Valley Province, extending into the Republic of Tanzania to the south) and of the Tessa (representing the neighbouring communities living on both sides of the Kenyan-Ugandan borders) were invited to participate in the open-air forum as witnesses and mediators. The Kalenjin and Luo people – who are immediate neighbours of the Luhya – were also present.

Many symbols associated with resolution and peace-making were observed. Some of which were the exchange of gifts (grinding stones, cloths and ornaments), sharing of locally brewed alcoholic beverage *Busaa* using long, thin straws, greetings and calling of names in recognition of other groups, sharing of food and drinks, numerous references to *murembe* or *milembe* peace tree, and the singing of commonly known songs.

In the run up to this event, the Department of Culture facilitated the organization of consultations within and between different groups. The open-air forum was conceived by many as a natural and festive way to



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conclude a process of reconciliation. One of the chiefs announced during the forum that a regional livestock market in the Mount Elgon and Bungoma districts – whose operation had been suspended since the post-election violence – would be reopened, reflecting the fact that the communities concerned are on speaking terms again.

The open-air forum was also an occasion to inform the general public of the area about the progress of inventorying intangible cultural heritage in Western Province. Forty-

four representatives, chiefs and their assistants had come together, as part of the preparation for the open-air forum in the second half of November 2008, to discuss the 2003 Convention and to identify elements of intangible cultural heritage that are considered important for their communities. So far, some of the aspects identified include practices and rituals associated with initiations, birth, marriage, death, foods and food preparation, beverages, performing arts, governance, architecture, medicinal plants and springs, and oral tradition and languages.



Photo © UNESCO

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# Literacy programme through teaching traditional oral poetry: the case of rural women in Yemen

Improving rural women's ability to read and write has been of great concern in Yemen. Various literacy classes were developed and made available to Yemeni women, but found little success. An investigation into why the project lacked concrete results found that what was being taught was not adapted to the daily lives of these women. Because of this, the course did not keep their interest. The classes, which promoted literacy as a tool for development, ended up supporting a modern economic system rather than traditional herding or fishing activities. The women attending the classes became discouraged as their traditional knowledge and skills in agriculture were often disregarded.

To try to encourage and keep their interest in learning to read and write, the course began to focus on oral, or spoken, poetry. A new programme, 'Literacy through Poetry', was created. This programme was inspired by the prominent role oral poetry plays in Yemeni society, where people use short poems and rhyming proverbs to express deep feelings and opinions. For example, Yemeni women compose their own songs and sing them while doing domestic chores or working in the fields.

The programme first encouraged women to discuss issues that interest them. The women composed poetry and proverbs, and copied them down on large sheets of paper hung on the wall. These women's voices then became texts from which the women learned to recognize the letters of the alphabet, leading to literacy. The typed texts were also handed out to the women to learn to read their own words in a typed form. Each class was different as the teaching material depended on the learners themselves. At the end of the programme, each student received a bound collection of the texts they created.

The results of the pilot project were remarkable. The drop out rate was low, and the success rate high: 72% of the learners in the first phase, and 63% in the second phase, successfully learned to read and write, and nearly all of them expressed an interest in continuing their education. A wider consequence of the programme is increased respect for the women by their family members and more community interest in educating adult women in general. The women learners began actively participating in national elections, composing poems about various issues, and some even

developed new genres of poetry. The success of the programme has been especially important since the tradition of women's poetry, which is usually sung, is increasingly under threat from new media and neo-conservative attitudes that lessen the value of women's traditional songs and stories.

'Literacy through Poetry' is an example of a project where using oral traditions and expressions made the learners, and especially women, interested in adult education. This, in turn, invigorated and added value to endangered oral traditions.

For further information on this project, please see:  
[www.najwaadra.net/literacy.html](http://www.najwaadra.net/literacy.html)

*Text courtesy of Najwa Adra*



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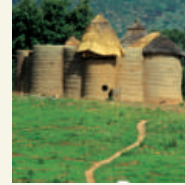
# Safeguarding ICH through sustainable cultural tourism: the case of the Batammariba of Koutammakou, a World Heritage Site in Togo

Koutammakou, a cultural landscape located in the North-East of Togo and spread over the border with Benin, shelters the Batammariba. Their houses with towers made of earth, the *takyièntas* are a remarkable example of a traditional settlement system that remains vibrant, active and changing, and where rituals, traditions and expressions are closely associated with nature. The Batammariba live according to strong traditional rules that define some ceremonial spaces, springs, rocks, sacred small woods or sites for certain cultural practices, such as initiatory ceremonies. Certain parts of the *takyièntas* play important parts in different ceremonies and represent Batammariba's cosmos.

Inscription of the Koutammakou on the World Heritage List in 2004 brought about many changes, and a massive number of tourists started visiting Koutammakou and disrupting the way of life of the Batammariba people. In 2007, UNESCO started a two-year pilot project to safeguard their intangible cultural heritage, including Litammari, the language of Batammariba, with the participation of the Batammaribe community, and in close cooperation with the Togolese Ministries of Culture and of Primary and Secondary Education.

One of the main aims of the project is to promote sustainable tourism that respects local traditions. Sacred places in each Koutammakou village have been mapped out and published to prevent tourists from loitering in sacred sites. A model of a *takyiènta* with no fee to enter has been built for tourists to learn about the Batammariba's environment. A selected number of Batammariba have been trained to become tourist guides, welcoming visitors and explaining their culture.

Information about a code of behaviour that conforms to cultural rules in Koutammakou is now available to tourists, researchers and those wanting to make films on Batammariba. This information on culturally appropriate behaviour is helping to promote respectful tourism, while continuing to provide visitors with the information about the wealth of Batammariba's tangible and intangible heritage.



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Both photos © Direction des Musées, Sites et Monuments du Togo

This approach, which combines safeguarding of both tangible and intangible heritage, contributes to preserving the cultural landscape of Koutammakou, and helps the Batammariba community to continue passing on their traditional knowledge and skills to future generations.

*Batammariba practising divination in front of a 'takyiènta'*



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## Documenting and revitalizing Tham Roc puppetry in Viet Nam



Photo © La Cong Y / Viet Nam Museum of Ethnology

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Ma Quang Chong and Ma Quang Eng learning to manipulate the rod puppets of Tham Roc village.

Alongside its emblematic water puppetry, Viet Nam has a number of lesser-known local puppetry traditions. One such tradition is the rod puppetry of the Tay people of Tham Roc village in Thai Nguyen Province, north of Hanoi. Dating back at least five generations, the puppeteers had not performed for several decades when the Viet Nam Museum of Ethnology commissioned a set of puppets for its collection in 1997. Encouraged by this interest, Tham Roc villagers wondered whether it might not be possible to see them perform once again.

Museum researcher La Cong Y, himself a Tay, suggested the audiovisual department make an ethnographic film of the tradition. The museum mobilized the financial support of the Ford Foundation's Hanoi office, and museum staff members were soon being trained in video documentation and editing. The team went to work in Tham Roc in 1999.

An immediate obstacle was that villagers no longer performed the puppet shows, having rejected them as a vestige of superstition in the wave of revolutionary fervour of the 1950s.

Luckily they had carefully packed the puppets in wooden crates and stored them in the rafters of a village elder's home. The stewards of the tradition explained to the filmmakers, however, that the villagers were reluctant to bring them out because the puppet's spiritual patrons could easily be offended. Special ceremonies had to be performed before they could open the crates and work the puppets again.

With the cameras recording, the puppets were finally brought to light – and to life. The ethnographic video needed a narrative climax, and what could be better than the first performance of the Tay Puppets of Tham Roc in decades? The villagers enthusiastically set to work, with grandfathers teaching grandsons – and, for the first time, granddaughters – how to manipulate the puppets and recount the ancient texts. The performance recorded for the museum was not to be the last. Buoyed by the video's success, Tham Roc puppeteers have since performed several times in their home province and at the Ethnology Museum in Hanoi. As the museum's former director Nguyen Van Huy noted, 'The traditional skills involved in making and

manipulating puppets were re-established ... and the bond between members of the community was strengthened' – all through a documentation project.



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# The value of old recordings today: the case of Papua New Guinea

In the late 1990s the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna collaborated with the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies to make the collection of Papua New Guinean sound recordings in its Phonogrammarchiv widely accessible. In 2000 the Academy published a set incorporating five CDs of music, storytelling and other linguistic material together with a CD presenting the original documentation with a printed 223-page English translation, updated with relevant information about the collectors and the collections' significance\*.

The Austrian anthropologist, Rudolf Pöch, recorded the bulk of the material in three different regions of New Guinea from 1904 to 1906. There are also recordings of a Papua New Guinean teenager in Europe, made in 1907 by Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt, and others made in Papua New Guinea in 1908–09 by Fr. Josef Winthuis, the first missionary to make field recordings in the country. The CD set was distributed to institutions and cultural centres in Papua New Guinea with public awareness promoted through local newspapers and radio stations. So far, few people knew that such historic recordings existed, and the interest in and usage of these materials had been limited. But since recently, linguists and musicologists have benefited from comparing the recordings with present practices. Of particular importance is the first recording of Tok Pisin, or New Guinean Pidgin, now the most widely spoken language in the country.

Some of the recordings document ceremonial songs no longer performed – as they were prohibited by missionaries or replaced by ceremonies from neighbouring groups. Such traditions are today only remembered in a very fragmentary form. Supported by photographs taken during this early fieldwork, the recordings also serve to reconfirm contemporary performance

practices, providing documentary evidence that some traditions are being properly maintained.

Since the names of the singers are documented many community members today can hear the voices of their ancestors. Finally, local performance groups are using the recordings to stimulate village elders to recall performance practices of their youth, which can then be passed on to younger generations. Without these recorded examples as a starting point such revitalizations efforts are almost impossible.

Old recordings, preserved on the other side of the globe have great significance to Papua New Guinea today. They speak of traditions that might otherwise have been lost, and they reconfirm ancestral traditions. Those recorded may have died long ago, but their voices continue to inspire their descendants in many ways.



Photo © Austrian Academy of Sciences

📍 *Baifa men singing into the phonograph. Photo taken during the recording of phonogram 524 by Rudolph Pöch, Cape Nelson, 12 November 1905*

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*Text courtesy of Don Niles (Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies) and Dietrich Schüller (Austrian Academy of Sciences)*



Photo © Rudolph Pöch / Phonogrammarchiv – Austrian Academy of Sciences

\* *Tondokumente aus dem Phonogrammarchiv der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Gesamtausgabe der historischen Bestände 1899-1950. Series 3: Papua New Guinea (1904-1909). Dietrich Schüller (ed.), commentary by Don Niles (www.oeaw.ac.at/verlag).*



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# Safeguarding board games of the Afar and Somali people of the Horn of Africa



Photo © UNESCO / Fumiko Ohnara

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☞ *Demonstration of the traditional game 'Ri'yo Ka Dhalis' at the launch of the project in February 2007*

Traditional board games have long been an important pastime for the nomadic societies of the Horn of Africa. The practice and passing on of these games is now at risk due to urbanization and the effects of globalization.

In 2007, UNESCO started a project to revitalize the practice of these traditional games among all age groups. The Centre for Studies and Research in Djibouti carried out fieldwork for the project in various parts of the country, interviewing knowledgeable players and collecting information on the practice, function and history of the games. Using this research, local association Paix & Lait created a model kit, containing all the materials to play the games.

In December 2007, the Ministry responsible for culture organized the first national tournament of traditional board games. One hundred and twenty players fought their way through regional competitions to participate in the national tournament, which was covered extensively by the national media.

Enthusiasm for game play increased. Using the above-mentioned kit, the Association Paix et Lait organized several workshops, at the University of Djibouti and in high schools in different parts of the country, in which experienced board game players taught students how to play traditional games while discussing the value and

the function of such practices of intangible cultural heritage. Students were also encouraged to continue playing these games as part of their after-school or extra-curricular activities. At the project's end, those involved reviewed the results and discussed strategies for a national safeguarding plan for traditional Afar and Somali games.

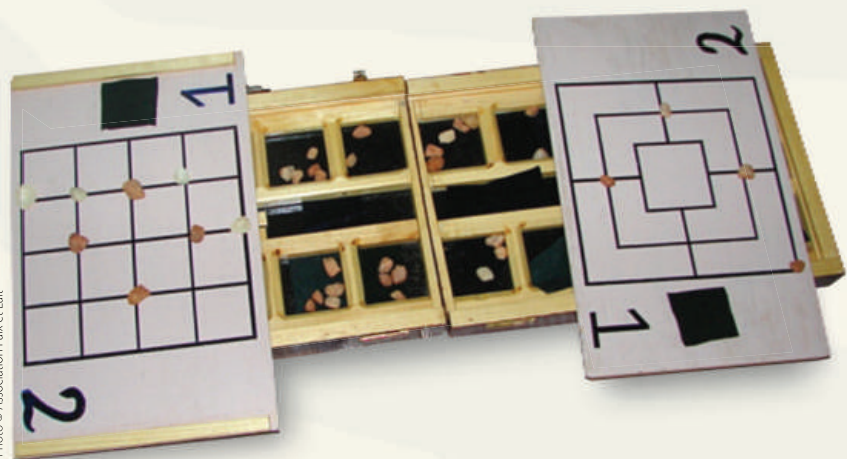


Photo © Association Paix et Lait

☞ *Compendium containing all the materials to play traditional games in the Horn of Africa*

## Traditional money banks in Vanuatu

In Vanuatu, items like pig tusks, woven mats and stringed shells have a generally recognized cultural value. They also have economic value due to their use in the local economy and give social prestige.

In 2004, the Vanuatu Cultural Centre (VKS) launched a project designed to strengthen and promote a banking system based on traditional wealth items instead of regular money. With the support of UNESCO, VKS's voluntary 'fieldworkers', who are in fact community members motivated to participate in the project, were provided with materials, such as pig fences and barbed wires that helped them to secure their existence within the local economy and for which they had to pay in traditional wealth items. This had the effect of supporting the continuous production of items of traditional wealth, stimulating income generation, and encouraging the revival of traditional Vanuatu values and practices.

A field survey identified communities that may be suitable for traditional banking. Strategies were then created to promote the production and banking of various traditional forms of wealth. A national campaign was also organized to increase awareness of the functions and values of traditional economic approaches. The Vanuatu Government declared 2007 the 'Year of the Traditional Economy'. This cemented traditional economies – and the safeguarding of the knowledge and practices involved, within government policy. The project was successful by involving both chiefs of local communities and government representatives. VKS made active use of its unique network of fieldworkers – the most far-reaching network of any organization in Vanuatu – and the most effective grassroots cultural network in the Pacific, successfully extending the project across the country.



Photo © Kirk Huffman

Chief Paul Tahi Hubwehubwen Vanua, from North Pentecost island, President of the Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs, wearing pig tusks, 'Bari memea' money mats and 'Homu' shell bead necklace, Port Vila, September 2004.

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Photo © Kirk Huffman

The procession on 18 November 2006 in Port Vila celebrating the Vanuatu Government's official declaration of 2007 as the 'Year of the Traditional Economy'.



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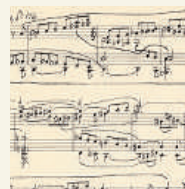
# Documentation of musical heritage in Hungary

After more than 100 years of research and documentation, an enormous volume of musical recordings and related photographic, audiovisual and written documentation on traditional music has been accumulated in East European State archives. UNESCO's 2003 Convention provided an impetus for exploring new uses for these archives beyond their traditional roles in the areas of research and education. Increasingly, materials from these archives are being used to reinforce or revitalize music and dance traditions in the communities concerned.

The Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, together with European partner academies, has developed a project called 'Open Musical Archives on the Internet' to provide the general public with free and easy access to these invaluable music and dance databases. The 'Bartók System', already part of the

Institute's website ([www.zti.hu](http://www.zti.hu)), contains over 14,000 traditional songs and associated information collected by Béla Bartók, Zoltán Kodály, and their collaborators and successors between 1896 and 1940. The database of 'Musical Sound Publications' on the same website contains another 6,000 traditional songs and melodies published on vinyl records, magnetophone or other media between 1950 and 2000.

A mapping tool is integrated into the database search engine to help communities find musical expressions from their own region. Visitors to the site can listen to or download all of these musical expressions. The online databases are receiving many visits from communities that are gradually including earlier musical documentation in educational curricula and cultural programmes. In return, community members provide new documentation of contemporary expressions.



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*György Martin is recording folk songs from a Gypsy woman in Hungary*



Photo © Bartók Archives of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences/Institute for Musicology



Photo © Bartók Archives of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences/Institute for Musicology



Photo © Bartók Archives of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences/Institute for Musicology

*Béla Bartók collecting folk music in Anatolia at Jürük*

*Béla Bartók transcribing folk music from phonograph recording*

Text courtesy of Laszlo Felföldi, Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences



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# The Cocolo dancing tradition, Dominican Republic



Photo © Diego Félix



Photo © UNESCO

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 *First Festival of the Cocolo Culture in the streets of San Pedro de Macorís, Dominican Republic*

The Cocolo dancing tradition first emerged in the mid-nineteenth century among Caribbean-English speaking immigrant workers who had come to the Dominican Republic. The community remained culturally and linguistically distinct and established their own churches, schools, benevolent societies and mutual assistance lodges. Their dancing drama performances were their most distinctive form of cultural expression. Blending music and dance, the tradition draws stylistically from African origins, while adding elements taken from European traditions.

Cocolo drama performances takes place at Christmas, on St Peter's Day and at carnivals. Troupes weave together themes and performances from a variety of cultures, including Christmas carolling, masquerades, or the staging of theatrical adaptations of well-known stories or themes, like 'David and Goliath' 'Moko-Yombi' or 'Cowboys and Indians'.

Today, the descendants of the Cocolos are well integrated within Dominican society and spread across the country. While the elders still speak Caribbean-English at home, most members of the Cocolo communities speak Spanish. As a consequence, the Cocolo dancing drama tradition is endangered. There is

only one troop of elder actors committed to actively passing the tradition on to younger generations. UNESCO, in close cooperation with community members, developed a project to contribute to the revitalization of the tradition. It aimed to improve practice conditions by enhancing recognition of the tradition and increasing financial support.

The main feature was a festival that took place in December 2007 for the first time in San Pedro de Macorís, the 200-year-old birthplace of Cocolo history. The festival, named Good Morning Wavaberry after a traditional Cocolo song, highlighted the Cocolos' contribution to Dominican culture. It was also an opportunity for the Cocolo community to discuss strategies to safeguard their cultural expressions, and helped raise awareness at a national level. Another vital step was the legal registration of the Cocolo community, which in the long term may secure the tradition bearers' official status and recognition within Dominican society.



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# Shashmaqom – safeguarding of a common heritage, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan

Shashmaqom is the classical music tradition of Central Asia. This urban music tradition has evolved over more than ten centuries in the towns of what today are Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and is closely associated with the cities of Bukhara and Samarkand. The word ‘Shashmaqom’ means ‘six maqoms’, ‘maqom’ meaning a musical suite that combines instrumental music with vocals. An orchestra of lutes, fiddles, frame-drums and flutes accompanies the singer or singers.

The practice of Shashmaqom requires special training involving oral teaching from master to student, as standard notation only records the basic framework. Since the 1970s, many Shashmaqom performers have migrated. Following independence in 1991, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have taken measures to safeguard Shashmaqom, but only a few performers have maintained local styles.

In 2005 UNESCO started a two-year safeguarding project, which included training programmes and master classes, traditional instrument-making, the preparation of an inventory, archive

support and the publication of research and audio recordings.

One aspect of this project was the joint organization by Tajikistan and Uzbekistan of an ‘International Festival of Shashmaqom Performers’ in November 2006. The festival took place in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan. Joint performances by Tajik and Uzbek artists made the event a celebration of cultural dialogue and mutual understanding. The event received wide media coverage and was followed by a round table on the Safeguarding of Shashmaqom Traditions, which gathered scholars, performers and composers from the two countries.

The project united Shashmaqom practitioners from both sides of the border, which will certainly contribute to its continuation. The project also resulted in the organization of master classes on performing and instrument-making, while inventory work and training has begun at the Tajik National Conservatory in Dushanbe and the Research Institute of Fine Arts in Tashkent (Uzbekistan).



Photo © UNESCO

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*The tanbur, or long-necked lute, is used extensively in Shashmaqom*

Photo © The National Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan for UNESCO



Photo © The National Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan for UNESCO



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Heritage

Intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.