



Digital Archiving for a Volatile Planet: An Update on the Modern Endangered Archives Program

CNI Spring 2022

Image Credit:

Archives and Research Centre for Ethnomusicology,
American Institute of Indian Studies.
*MEAP Collection: Recordings of Hereditary Musicians in Western
Rajasthan*



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1. **MEAP UPDATE: TENSIONS + CHALLENGES**
Supporting at risk projects with an ethic of care
2. **CASE STUDIES: GEOPOLITICS + CULTURAL HERITAGE**
Digitizing in Afghanistan, Russia, Lebanon, and Haiti
3. **DATA COLONIALISM**
Can we risk losing knowledge?
4. **MISSION + RISK TAKING**
What does a more ambitious path forward look like?



Modern Endangered Archives Program

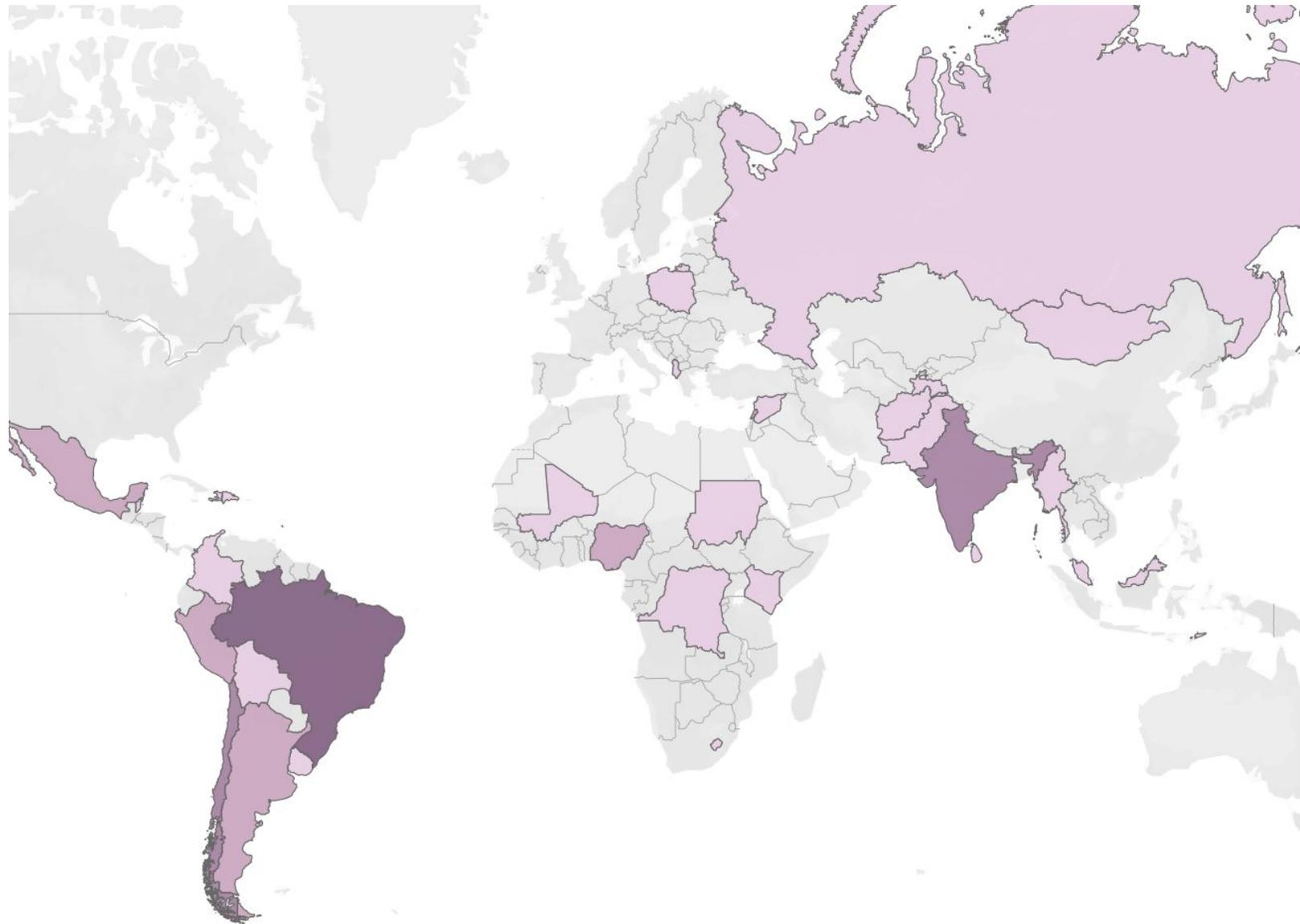
The Modern Endangered Archive Program (MEAP) **provides grants** to preserve **global cultural heritage** collections **at risk of loss** due to environmental conditions, political uncertainty, inherently unsustainable media, inappropriate or inadequate storage, climate change, or social strife. We fund projects outside North America and the EU to document, digitize and make accessible endangered archival materials from the **20th and 21st Centuries**, including print, photographic, film, audio, ephemeral, and born digital objects.

In its first three years, MEAP has funded projects in 32 countries around the world, tracking social movements and historical patterns across national and regional borders.

MEAP Funding Breadth

ARCHIVAL CONTENT
DOCUMENTED +
DIGITIZED

- Cohorts 1 - 3
- 62 Projects
- 32 countries



Post-custodial Collecting



Collection holders retain ownership and physical custody of all collections.

Fund survey work + digitization for collections around the world. Work with collection stewards + researchers with a range of experience with digitization.

Open Access Publishing

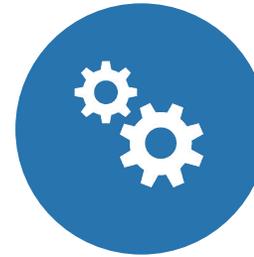


All content is published at meap.library.ucla.edu.

Challenge to politicized and nationalized historical narratives by providing broad public access to primary source materials.

Rights: contemporary + communal content

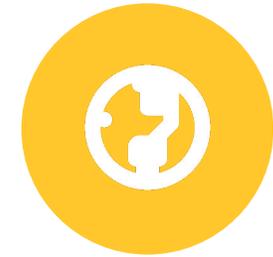
Focus on At-Risk



MEAP is intentionally working with at-risk collections.

Recognize broad categories of risk, including: climate change, political instability, generational shifts, migration, storage...

Global Grant Giving



Aim to fund 20–30 projects per grant cycle

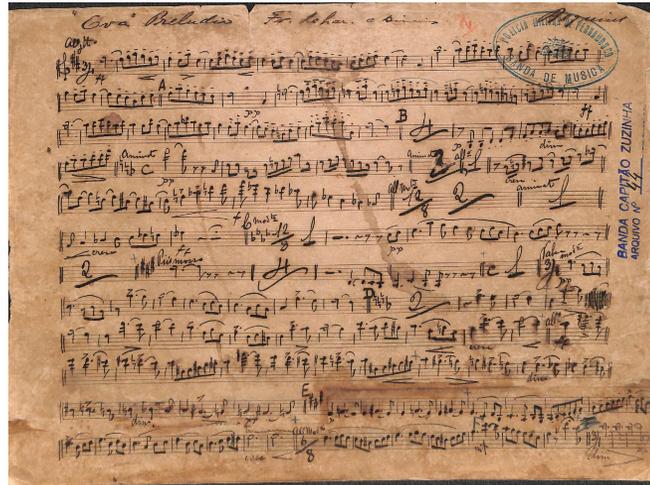
MEAP team manages all administrative components of grant giving and disbursement of funds around the world. Want to offer support to each team.

Ethics of Care

- Community defined priorities + documentation process
- Budget for labor, training, community involvement
- Multilingual documentation*
- No cost extensions + top ups
- Budget for PPE, personal transportation, online training

Copyright, Privacy, Safety

- Declaration of Human Rights
- The Right to be Forgotten
- The Right to be Remembered
- Whose voices at-risk? Whose stories? Whose histories? Whose cultures?
- Challenges of documenting history in real time
- Structures for ongoing consent



✓ Ethic of Care

MEAP has adopted a range of strategies over the past two years that prioritize the health, safety, and dignity of our project teams. Includes, continued no-cost extensions, flexible adjustments for budgets and work plans, and other forms of support.

✓ Sustaining, Strengthening Relationships

Post-custodial collecting requires relationships built on trust. To build + sustain relationships with each project team, we meet regularly and work with teams to troubleshoot or brainstorm challenges from procurement issues to virtual trainings to unexpected delays and changing financial laws.

✓ Support from Arcadia

Arcadia announced early in the pandemic that project teams should prioritize health and safety. They continue to support our efforts to meet needs around the world as the pandemic changes including approval of small top-up grants where costs have changed.



*Ephemera from the Ramakatane Archive
(Lesotho)*

2900 Portrait photographs now available online at meap.library.ucla.edu

✓ Print + AV Digitization

MEAP provides guides for print, audio and video digitization that detail workflows, equipment, and file management best practices.

✓ Equipment recommendations

Recognize shifts in global supply chains and the need to be more flexible with equipment recommendations.

✓ Metadata

New toolkit to meet project teams where they are - specificity around metadata categories to basic onboarding about why metadata matters.

✓ Jump to Digital + Global Context

Aim to help teams understand how metadata effects findability and user experience. How does data go from the MEAP template to our online repository to other catalogues?

Deliverables

INFOGRAPHIC

Created using Adobe Illustrator; helps project teams better understand how their metadata is translated onto the publication site

UCLA Library
MODERN ENDANGERED ARCHIVES PROGRAM

METADATA 101

The metadata that you enter into the UCLA Digital Library template, or spreadsheet, is necessary to describe and contextualize your digital collection.

It ensures that your content is properly cited and understood alongside other non-related collections.

It also ensures that users understand each individual item, especially when items are found outside the context of their broader collection.

The spreadsheet that you fill out will be translated onto the publication site.

When you create good metadata, you are ensuring that users understand your content on the MEAP website, where it is outside the context of your organization, institution, or archive.

It is important that your metadata be related to an individual item because this is how the item will be published on the MEAP website.

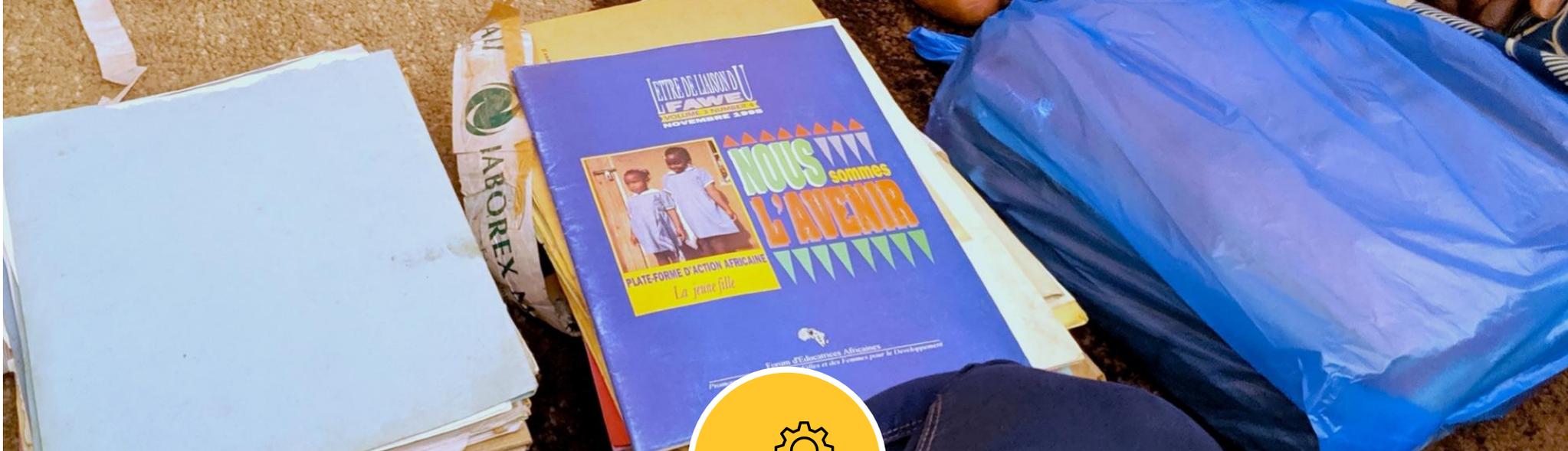
How your Metadata is Translated onto the Publication Site
meap.library.ucla.edu

Current IDEP Template	On site
Title Translated Title Alternative Title	▶ Title
Creator Contributor	▶ Creator
Abstract (both the English and translated column) Note (both the English and translated column)	▶ Description
Language code	▶ Language
Publisher columns Volume Issue All of the Date columns	▶ Publication Information
All Subject columns Note.keywords	▶ Subjects
Genre	▶ Genre
Digital Collection Title	▶ Used to identify your collection items
Institution/repository	▶ Repository
File Name Local ID	▶ Local Information
Latitude/Longitude	▶ MEAP website does not represent geographic data.
Extent Dimensions Medium	▶ MEAP website does not represent the physical descriptive fields.
Archival collection name Archival collection number or identifier box number Folder number	▶ MEAP website does not represent the archival information fields. For preservation reference only
Rights.copyrightStatus Rights.publicationStatus Rights.servicesContact	▶ MEAP website does not represent the rights information fields.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Subject headings will be linkable and able to aggregate information across collections.
- Fields that are facetable on each item page include: Collection, Genre, Language, Institution/Repository
- Fields that are linkable on each item page include: Creator, Language, Subjects, Genre, Repository
- All data published in a text field is searchable. The following fields are published as text fields: Title, Description, Publication Information

Documentation created by Kimber Thomas



Case Studies

MEAP is built to address risk. But, unexpected political, environmental, and other forms of volatility have challenged our projects around the world. We apply the same ethic of care to specific, local challenges as we do across the globe, working to ensure the safety of our project team as committed partners.



Photo negatives from the Arab Image Foundation.

Emergency Grant to digitize 2200 photo negatives at risk of fire was completed in 2021.

✓ Explosion, Energy Limitations in Lebanon

MEAP has funded 2 projects with the Arab Image Foundation in Beirut, Lebanon. In the August 2020 explosion, their offices were damaged although all collections remained intact.

Since 2020, the government has limited individual access to energy and MEAP supported AIF in creating an experimental solar program to sustain their server, air conditioned storage spaces, and ongoing digitization.





Image sample of Frevo Music Score. Image credit: Imago Institute.

Project: Captain Zuzinha's Band: Digitization of the manuscripts scores of frevo from the early 20th century as a world heritage (Brazil)

✓ Assassination, Hurricane in Haiti

MEAP funded a project in Haiti (ISPAN) in association with DLoc and the project has been delayed, by a series of administrative and local concerns:

- Staff changes
- Covid-related closures
- Political violence
- Extreme weather

✓ Coup, Violence in Sudan

October 2021 military coup in Sudan paused a planning project underway. Field team had been collecting and documenting personal collections of women activists and were unable to continue their work. MEAP support:

- No-cost extension
- Additional \$1000 top up funds to pay staff while they wait out violence across Khartoum

Taliban take Kabul



✓ American Center at Kabul University

Cohort 1 project funded to digitize photographic slides from the ACKU Dupree Collection.

Archaeologist Dr. Louis Dupree and his wife, Nancy Hatch Dupree, photographed Afghanistan from the 1950s to the 2000s as part of their ongoing research across the country. The ACKU's project to digitize this collection invites users to study the nature, architecture, culture, and history of Afghanistan.

✓ August 2021

Project team was in touch and sent in a progress report day after Taliban Takeover. Within a week, the three primary point people on the project had left the country.

UCLA offer for support and assistance came too late. Lesson learned.

Followed example of Smithsonian and took down the collection in conversation with project PI who was - at the time - in India.

Taliban take Kabul



Aerial Panorama of the City of Kabul 4.

Louis Dupree and Nancy Dupree Collection.

Learn more:

<https://meap.library.ucla.edu/dupree-collection-acku>

✓ Since September 2021

Collection went back online in November 2021.

MEAP team has been in regular touch with 2 project team members: one now in Pittsburgh and one now in Germany.

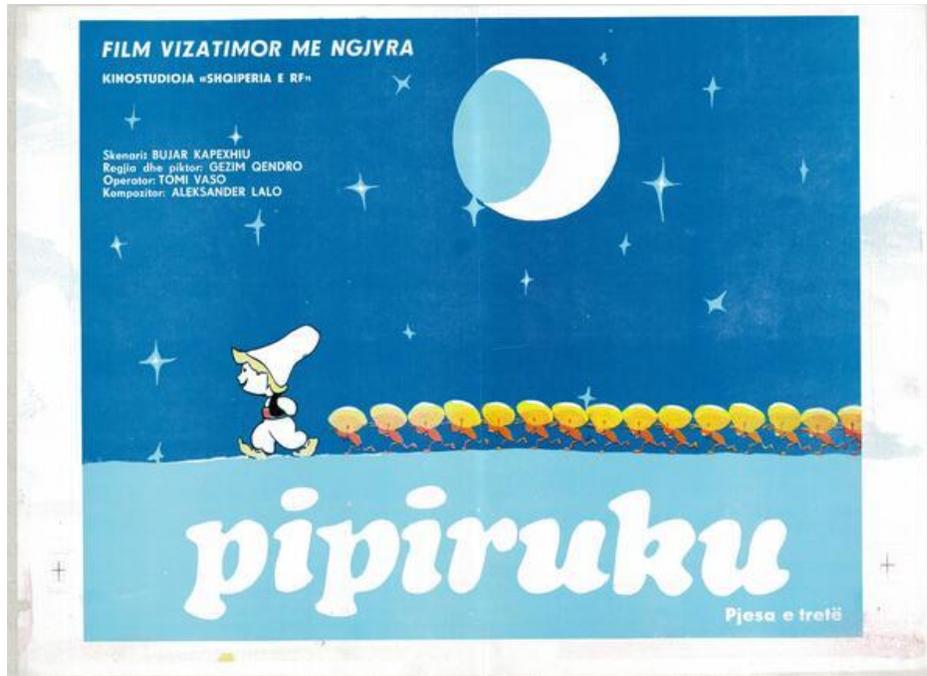
Raised funds and sent necessary resettlement items like strollers, books, toys for their kids. Connected them with personal and professional networks and continue to try to help find employment.

✓ March 2022

MEAP attempted to restart the project with the team outside of Afghanistan with materials stored on the cloud.

ACKU has now reopened and restarted the work in Kabul. Remain committed to the project, finishing the digitization, and full and robust metadata with a team made up of some new people and some heavily promoted people.

Unfortunately, not willing to pay team out of Afghanistan.



Original color poster release for Albanian animated short film "Pipiruku Në hambar" (Pipiruku in the Granary). Albanian Photographic and Graphic Art Collection - AQSHF

✓ Project funded to digitize indigenous voices at Pushkin House, St. Petersburg

Project, hosted at University of Aberdeen, set to launch this month.

Team developing plans to work within global sanctions, but MEAP not willing to start project with the risk that will never be able to access and digitize the materials.

✓ Competing Urgencies

Ethics of supporting the Ukrainian fight and joining global community in denying funds and services in Russia.

Project set to digitize and make accessible indigenous voices from Siberia before Sovietization at the exact moment Russia is trying to minimize minority voices.



Data Colonialism

Data Colonialism, according to Nick Couldry and Ulises A. Mejías in *The Costs of Connection: How Data is Colonizing Human Life and Appropriating it for Capitalism*, is an “emerging reality.”

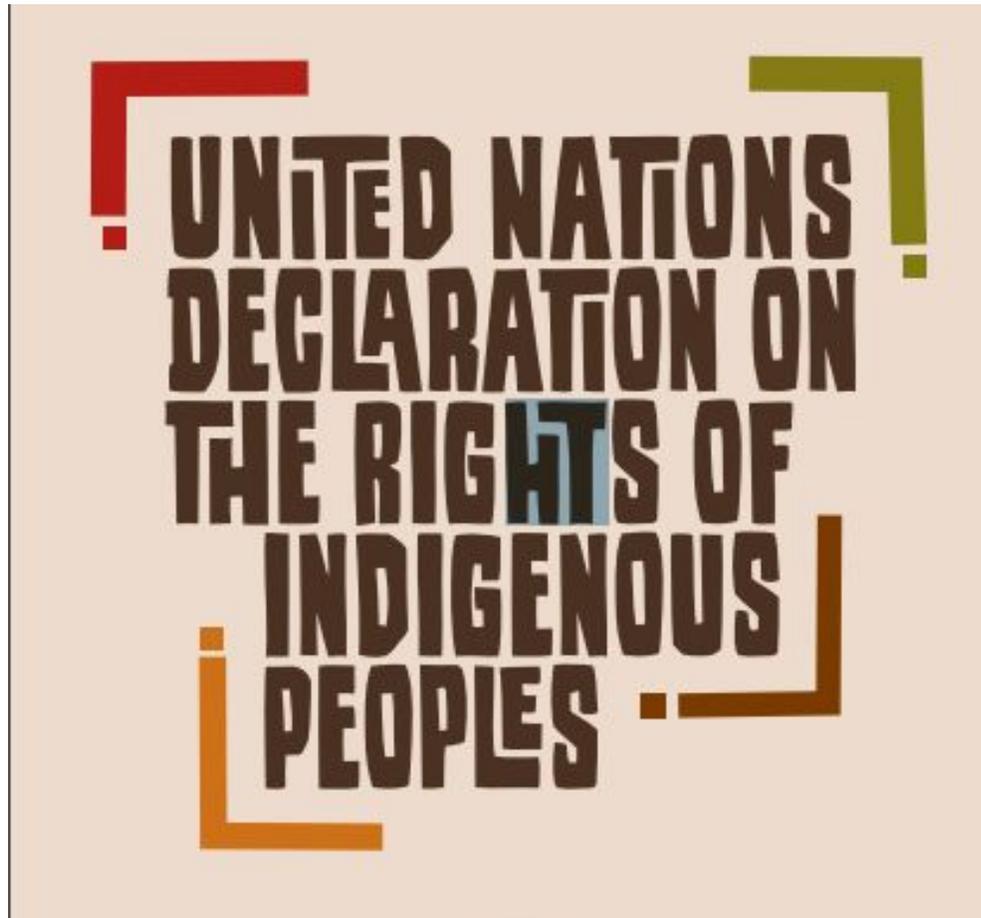
A new phase of colonialism “that prepares the ground for a new mode of capitalist production.” It co-exists with a neocolonial legacy.

UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights

1948

“Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights @
www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/



Article 31

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. **They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.**

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 13 September 2007

- At the forefront of individual rights, is the question of how indigenous rights, can align when HR has been fundamentally individualistic?
- Alexandra Xanthaki has argued that recognition of collectivities “is one of the most contested issues in international law and politics.”



Image source: Urban Outfitters

Cultural and Economic Heritage at Stake

- According to Helfer and Austin Human Rights and Intellectual property regimes have grown and their intersections expanded. (xii)
- For one, Human Rights issues increasingly engage issues of IP and vice versa. The evolution of Human Rights to include special covenants Indigenous peoples involves IP more directly after the 1990s.
- Prior to these developments, HR and IP were seen as unrelated. (xiii)
- Indigenous Peoples increasingly invoke IP rights as legal recourse to preserving their cultural and economic heritage as recognized by international human rights.



Image source: Urban Outfitters

As Related to Trade

- Strengthening IP standards by industrialized nations and enforcement in developing countries especially as it relates to trade.
- Cultural Rights of Indigenous Peoples by International instruments.
- Protection of Traditional Knowledges or TK's
- A shift of IP protection from international orgs such as WIPO to trade agreements

High Profile Cases



Image source: CocaNasa <https://cocanasa.org/>

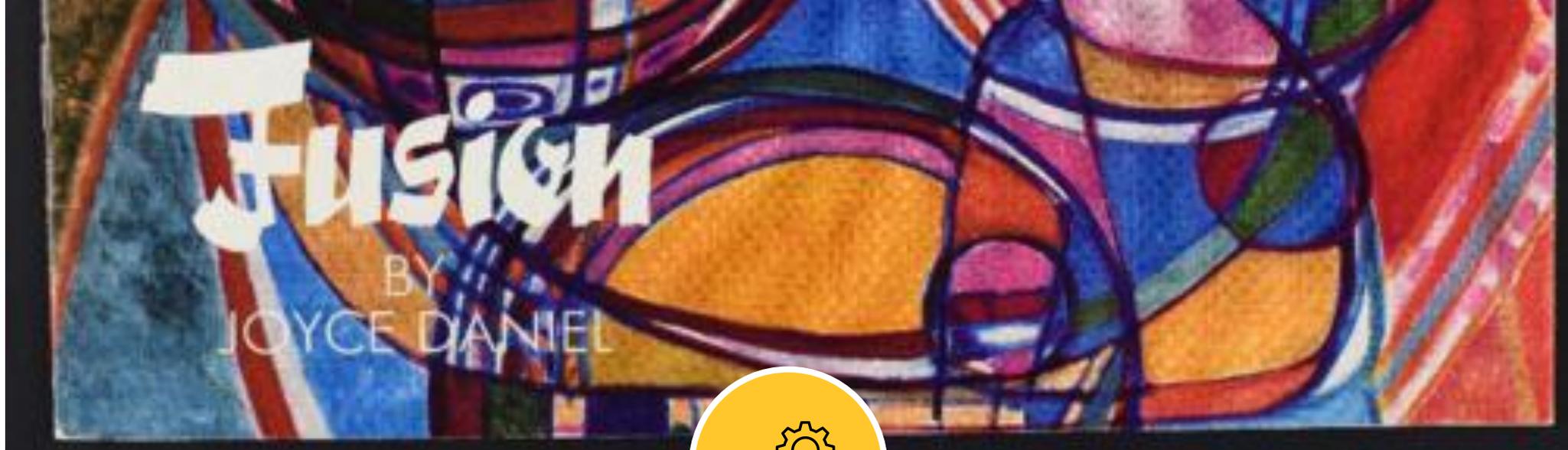
- The correlation between intellectual property and human rights goals is strongest in the area of copyright. These are high profile cases. Human Rights and Intellectual Property: Mapping the Global Interface by Laurence R. Helfer and Graeme W. Austin
- 1986 Lori Miller applied to patent ayahuasca
- 1990 American scientists wanted to patent a Guaymi woman's cell line claiming its invention
- 2012 Navajo nation sues Urban Outfitters
- 2021 Coca-Cola issues a letter to Nasa community over their use of Coca Pola.



MEAP Project, "Curation and digitalization of the Instituto de Lengua y Cultura Aymara archive" (Bolivia)
Photo courtesy of Denise Arnold

- ✓ **Funding concerning Indigenous Peoples, projects must demonstrate**
 - Awareness of Indigenous Rights as related to TK
 - Previous consultation
 - **Securing consent from communities**
- ✓ **Benefit to communities first before Open Access benefits**

- How do we not participate in DATA colonialism? *
- How can we logistically move from English requirements to making institutions more linguistically diverse?
- How can we use technologies to mitigate monolingualism in the cyberverses?
- Can we make the applications more community centered rather than reproducing academic conventions?



Mission + Risk Taking

Working to preserve cultural heritage and knowledge around the globe is central to the mission of the UCLA Library. Any risk is mitigated by the goal of ensuring knowledge is not only documented, but shared widely. See the opportunity to make a difference as urgent and essential for the University of California.

**Library + Archive Directors:
What relationships do we currently
invest in? How do we sustain them?**

- Commercial Publisher Licensing of Content and Collections
- Non-Transformative BIG deals
- Support Teaching and Research
- Preservation

What would a different path look like?

- Community Centered Collecting
- Community Relationship Building
- Empowering Voices Communities
- Preserving Unique At-Risk Content and Collections NOT commercially available
- Shared Expertise and Knowledge Networks
- Training opportunities
- Facilitating and co-creating professional development opportunities
- Organically grown relationships regardless of grant timelines
- Local/national digital preservation infrastructure and training

FILM MULTIPLIKATIV
SHQIPTAR ME NGJYRA

ZANA DHE MIRI

AUTORE REALIZUES
Vlash Drobotiku
Tomi Vasa



Original color poster release for Albanian animated short film "Zana Dhe Miri". New Albania Film Studio

<https://meap.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/aqshf:3>



Thank you to **Kimber Thomas** for Slide Design and Presentation support.

Image Credit: The Peruvian Peasant Confederation Archive (Confederación Campesina del Perú)

Resources for Further Reading

- *The Color of Creatorship: Intellectual Property, Race, and the Making of Americans* by Anjali Vats. Stanford University Press, 2020
- *The Copyright Thing Doesn't Work Here: Adrinkra and Kente Cloth and Intellectual Property in Ghana* by Boatema Boateng. University of Minnesota Press, 2011
- Hathcock, April M. (2017) Confining Cultural Expression: How the Historical Principles Behind Modern Copyright Law Perpetuate Cultural Exclusion, *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy & the Law*: Vol. 25 : Iss. 3 , Article 1. Available at: <http://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/jgspl/vol25/iss3/1>
- Reed, Trevor, Fair Use as Cultural Appropriation (April 4, 2019). Forthcoming, *California Law Review*, Vol. 109, 2021, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3456164> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3456164>
- Okediji, Ruth, Traditional Knowledge and the Public Domain, *Series CIGI Papers Series* June 15, 2018 . Available <https://www.cigionline.org/publications/traditional-knowledge-and-public-domain/>
- April M. Hathcock, *Digital Commons @ American University Washington College of Law: Confining Cultural Expression: How the Historical Principles Behind Modern Copyright Law Perpetuate Cultural Exclusion* (2017)
- [Fair Use As Cultural Appropriation](#) (SSRN)
- Centre for International Governance Innovation, [Traditional Knowledge and the Public Domain](#)



Thank You + Questions



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