



30 YEARS  1986  
2016

Traditions for Tomorrow



## Glancing back

In 1986, there was neither the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), nor the International Labor Organization's (ILO) former Convention 107 thoroughly revised in 1989 (Convention 169), nor UNESCO Conventions for the intangible cultural heritage (2003) nor the diversity of cultural expressions (2005). The safeguarding of intangible heritage in the event of armed conflict was not yet on the agenda. Few constitutions recognized the existence of indigenous peoples, and obviously not a right to their territories; there were hardly any indigenous parliamentarians, and in any case no Heads of State.

Contextualized school curricula did not really exist, nor did indigenous teachers, and no prior consent were needed for exaggerated projects. The United Nations had no advisory body composed of indigenous representatives. Intellectual property rights on traditional cultural expressions and knowledge were not an issue. Indigenous peoples could barely access university. No indigenous authors' works were published, and no directors' films produced.

Today, things have changed. Traditions for Tomorrow may not have much to do with this tremendous advancement... with indeed often mixed results. However, far from lounges and conference rooms, life remains hard, very hard for Amerindians. Traditions for Tomorrow, perhaps a forerunner 30 years ago, stays in the race to accompany their struggle for dignity, confidence, self-esteem, in respect of cultural identity. Their future will remain, likely for long yet, fragile and unsure. ■

**Diego and Christiane Gradis**  
Founders of Traditions for Tomorrow



## They too are behind Traditions for Tomorrow

On the occasion of the NGO's 30th anniversary, we thank without limits those who since 1986 have allowed us to meet so many goals we had set:

- the members of our **decision-making bodies** (committee, board of directors) who each have provided their thoughts, experiences and contacts towards choosing the projects, funding them and defining our strategies;
- the hundreds and hundreds of **individuals, members and donors**, who, with great faithfulness, encouraged us and ensured stability in our funding;
- private (family or corporate foundations, schools, corporate sponsoring) and public (UN, EU organizations, national development cooperation agencies, cities, regions) **grant-makers** that funded hundreds of projects in the field;
- the many **volunteers**, without whom nothing would have been possible, whether in the field, for project follow-up, communication, events, administration, etc.;
- the successive **employees** (never more than three) who were fully committed to Traditions for Tomorrow's work;
- the numerous **partner organizations** in a dozen countries of Latin America, that allowed us to collaborate with the beneficiaries of our action, and taught us so much.

## 18 years of work with the Aymaras around Lake Titicaca

This is a "lengthy" project that will end in 2016 after 18 years of exemplary collaboration with our oldest partner, *Chuyma Aru de apoyo* rural in Puno on Lake Titicaca, and its three Aymara leaders, Nestor & Walter Chambi and Victor Quiso. Three personalities, agricultural engineers who, following their first straying in large rural development projects run by international organizations just as ambitious as inefficient because mostly out of context, became fierce defenders of ancestral knowledge.

At the beginning, Traditions for Tomorrow's support consisted in accompanying isolated community initiatives towards asserting cultural expressions (dance, music, costumes, local festivals) for which *Chuyma Aru* acts as an intermediary. The relationship then evolved, from 2006, into setting up a fund financed by different donors: the Dutch foundations Jura and Horizon, the Migros Fund (Switzerland), then via the Geneva Federation for Cooperation (FGC), the SDC - Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the State of Geneva and the Cities of Geneva, Troinex, Le Grand Saconnex and Lancy. These funds allowed *Chuyma Aru* to coordinate initiatives of many Aymara communities - ten to twenty depending on the year, i.e. over one hundred and fifty in total.

These micro-projects had several aims: restoring agricultural landscape (terraces, irrigation, natural fences, paths), diversifying native species, whether agriculture, livestock or reforestation-related, securing knowledge related to the management of natural phenomena, strengthening traditional authorities, developing intercommunity relationships and networks, training managers in negotiation with public authorities, revitalizing Andean beliefs, spiritual leaders, local festivities, village markets and traditional medicine. Moreover, the training provided

by *Chuyma Aru* contributed to preparing leaders, particularly young ones, to developing, running and managing community-level projects.

At the end of this very long relationship, Traditions for Tomorrow expresses its gratitude to *Chuyma Aru* for such a remarkable collaboration that proved so rewarding. ■



*Ceremony for the coming potato harvest*

Photo: Traditions for Tomorrow

## The Maya Chuj youth and its medicinal plants

The ridge line overlooking their village in a forest region located in the depths of the State of Chiapas separates them from Guatemala, their country of origin. The 6,000 Maya Chuj who fled the internal conflict in the 80s and settled in Mexico represent less than 10 percent of this people. Mayas undoubtedly, yet neither Guatemalan nor really Mexican, the young Chuj, born in Mexico, are "segundos" more than ever in search of identity.

The Akib'al group ("our roots") they formed several years ago to manage a scholarship program brings together about fifteen young people. They chose to rebuild their knowledge heritage by rehabilitating knowledge on and use for medicinal plants.

The traditional pharmacopoeia establishes a clear and natural link with the territory - that granted not without trouble to the Chuj by the Mexican authorities. It associates knowledge, practices, a concern for the preservation of biodiversity and a connection with the Elders. For the past thirty years, in this exile that became permanent, the latter are seeking legitimacy with regard to young people themselves in search of identity.

### Various affiliations of Traditions for Tomorrow

- Consultative status with UN-ECOSOC
- Official NGO partner of UNESCO (association status) and accredited to several Conventions for the protection of cultural heritage and of the diversity of cultural expressions, and of cultural heritage including in armed conflicts
- Permanent observer NGO to WIPO
- Member of the Geneva and Vaud Federations for Development Cooperation
- Member of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee representing the International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity
- Board member of the CRID (network of French NGOs)
- Recognized a public utility in France (JO dated August 2, 2013)
- Non-profit organization recognized by the ZEWO (Zürich)



*Meeting of the Akib'al group*

The project includes several components: surveys, intergenerational meetings, production and diffusion of videos and brochures, programs on the local radio. This will be a very first project management experience for these young people, determined to assert their Mayan identity and to serve their community. Furthermore, thanks to Traditions for Tomorrow's contacts with organizations in Guatemala that for long have been working in the field of traditional health care, the youth from Akib'al will be able to establish links with their country of origin. The project received support from the Horizon Foundation from Holland. ■





The team of young people from Canal 22

## The Miskitos and three of their ritual celebrations

**M**iskitos are the largest indigenous group of Nicaragua's Caribbean coast - approximately 100,000 inhabitants. History did not favor them. The regimes in place in Managua, on the Pacific side, never showed an interest in this very remote and minority population, prejudiced in economic and educational terms. The region's political autonomy in 1987 neither opened up the region nor avoided the devastation of natural resources (ore, fish, forests).

Traditions for Tomorrow has for years supported the implementation of the bilingual-intercultural educational system for Miskitos and Mayangnas. Today, here just as elsewhere, outside influences erode the youth's and children's interest in their roots and cultural expressions. The organization CADPI in Bilwi, run by Myrna Cunningham, a Miskito personality recognized at the global, national and regional level, assists in about twenty villages and districts in revitalizing Miskito ritual celebrations: King Pulanka, Sikhru and Urale. Intergenerational exchanges are organized between schoolchildren and Elders. Annual festivities are restored, TV programs and local publications contribute to their revitalization.

Between festivities, the revival of traditional beliefs (Dawan) is promoted in respect of interculturality. Implemented at the regional level, the project allows for awareness-raising, particularly of Miskito children and youth, as regards their peoples' values, and strengthens their sense of belonging. Support from our NGO should also be provided to the local TV channel (Canal 22) towards improving the broadcasting of these actions. ■

### 75 peoples and minorities accompanied by Traditions for Tomorrow

#### **COSTA RICA**

Borruca  
Bribri  
Cabecar  
Ngobe-Bügle

#### **EL SALVADOR**

Kakawira  
Lenca  
Nahuat

#### **BOLIVIA**

Afro-Bolivian  
Aymara  
Chipaya  
Guarani  
Qhara Qhara  
Quechua

#### **COLOMBIA**

Afro-Colombian  
Embera-Chami

Ette Ennaka

Kamentza  
Wayuu

#### **GUATEMALA**

Aguacateco  
Axi  
Chalchiteco  
Ixil  
Jacalteco  
Kakchiquel

K'anjobal

Kiché  
Mam  
Q'eqchi

#### **ÉQUADOR**

Afro-Ecuadorian  
Cañari  
Cofan  
Kichwa  
Puruway

Saraguro

Shuar

#### **MEXICO**

Afro-Mexican  
Akateco  
Chamula  
Chinanteco  
Chol  
Choloteco  
Chontal

Huichol

Mam  
Mazahua  
Mazateco  
Mixe  
Mixteco  
Nahñu  
Nahuat  
Nahuatl  
Purepecha  
Tojolabal

Triqui

Tzotzil  
Yucateco  
Zapoteco

#### **PERU**

Aymara  
Andean farmers  
Quechua

#### **CHILE**

Aymara  
Huilliche  
Mapuche

#### **HONDURAS**

Chorti  
Garifuna

#### **NICARAGUA**

Chorotega

Creole

Garifuna  
Mayangna  
Miskito  
Nahuatl  
Rama

#### **PANAMA**

Kuna  
Naso  
Ngobe-Bügle

Since 1986, Traditions for Tomorrow, an international network, accompanies indigenous peoples and minorities concerned with safeguarding their cultural identity in over a dozen countries of Central and South America.

Several hundreds of very concrete cultural or educational initiatives, chosen and conducted by the groups, were carried out in the field thanks to the support of members and donors, and public or private grant-makers. Traditions for Tomorrow contributes to strengthening confidence, self-esteem and dignity, to the restructuring of communities and to helping them face the challenges they are confronted with: this is “empowerment”.

Traditions for Tomorrow also works towards raising awareness among national and international, public and non-governmental institutions, on issues regarding indigenous people, cultural diversity, cultural heritage, living traditions, the resulting intellectual property rights, as well as the safeguarding of this cultural heritage in the event of armed conflict.

*Our main financial partners or sponsors:* the Horizon, Denis Guichard, Firmenich, Hirzel, Dreyfus Bernheim, Air France and Pictet Foundations, Le Rosey Institute, PricewaterhouseCoopers (Geneva), the Raiffeisen (Gimel) and the Martin Maurel (Paris) banks, Canon, Kosdesign (St-Légier), BSR printers (Gland), Schenk (Rolle), Loterie Romande.

*And amongst public authorities:* UNESCO, particularly through its Participation Program and its International Program for the Development of Communication, the Swiss and French national Commissions for UNESCO, the Geneva and Vaud Federations for Cooperation and Development and their financial partners at Canton and City level, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the City of Rolle.

*Our present partners in the field:* **Mexico:** AFRICA (José María Morelos, Oaxaca), Fundación Santa María Yaviche (Oaxaca), le Grupo Akib'al (Tziscoac, Chiapas). **Guatemala:** Médicos Descalzos (Chinique), FUNDEBASE (Sacatepequez), ACEM (Guatemala City). **Nicaragua:** CADPI (Bilwi). **Colombia:** Red Antorchas (Mahates), Teje Teje (El Rodadero), Cabildo Kamentza (Sibundoy). **Ecuador:** APAK (Otavalo), AJKI (Iluman, Imbabura). **Pérou:** PRATEC (Lima), Chuyma Aru de apoyo rural (Puno). **Bolivia:** CESATCH (Sucre), ASUR (Sucre), Pუსisuyu (Potosi), Sembrando valores (La Paz).

## Celebrating our 30th anniversary !

### Exhibitions

- Photographs by Slawo Plata on Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador presented in Morges and Paris, in 2016.
- Two outdoor exhibitions: one along Quai Wilson in Geneva, in September 2016, and the other around the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, in April and May 2017, about Traditions for Tomorrow's work context in the Andean region. Photos by Olivier Föllmi and Slawo Plata.

These exhibitions are held under the patronage of the UNESCO with the support in Switzerland of the Geneva Federation for Cooperation (FGC), the City of Geneva and Loterie romande.

### An international meeting in Ecuador

With the support of the SDC through the FGC and the Horizon Foundation from Holland, over twenty of Traditions for Tomorrow's main indigenous and Afro-American partners from Mexico to Bolivia will meet. They will evaluate their cooperation with the organization and redefine Traditions for Tomorrow's road map, taking into account these past years' developments on the continent.