

FONOTECA NACIONAL OF MÉXICO LAUNCHES THE PLATFORM FOR SOUND AND AUDIOVISUAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION OF IBEROAMÉRICA

Álvaro Hegewisch, *Fonoteca Nacional (IASA membership vice-president) and Xilonen Luna, Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas*

The richness of sound and audiovisual collections in Latin America is evident, unfortunately so is their imminent disappearance. The definition of policies and joint actions is crucial to generate conditions of preservation in the region. Many efforts have been made, but usually these efforts approach only one part of the process and result in isolated and sporadic actions.

The creation of the Fonoteca Nacional in December 2008 gave México the leadership in the preservation field and in the promotion of sound heritage not only within the country but in the Latin American region as well.

Since 2010 our challenge has been the consolidation of this leadership to create the Program for the Preservation of Sound and Audiovisual Heritage of Iberoamérica. We are convinced that if we want to have success in the preservation of our sound and audiovisual archives, we need to join *experience, knowledge and resources* in a full process model, with representative institutions of the Iberoamerican region and, of course, with international organizations, mainly with IASA and FIAT.


Drawing on their experience and awareness of this situation, the Fonoteca Nacional de México, with the collaboration and support of IASA and FIAT, promoted a Latin American Meeting of Sound and Audiovisual Archives in August 2010. The purpose of this meeting was to form a working group, representing countries of the region and to define an agenda that would develop *integral projects to rescue collections at risk*.

Conceptual references, priorities and a working agenda were defined in this meeting. The agreements are:

1. Establishment of a basic diagnostic questionnaire
2. Development of a didactic guide
3. Development of a Glossary
4. Production of a video tutorial
5. Model process of a basic preservation plan for archives in risk
6. Pilot Project in México with Indigenist Radios.

As a result of this agenda, the Fonoteca Nacional developed the web-based Platform for the Preservation of Sound and Audiovisual Heritage in Iberoamérica, (www.fonotecanacional.gob.mx), to make available simple and effective tools for the safeguarding of archives from the region, in our language and according to particular circumstances.





One of these tools is the Diagnostic questionnaire of audio and audiovisual heritage. This tool's purpose (which looked at the experiences of TAPE in Europe and the ICRT questionnaire in Cuba) is to identify and understand the condition in which there are audio and audiovisual files at risk in Iberoamérica. The questionnaire has guides (instructional videos and a glossary of terms) which may be consulted on the website of the Fonoteca Nacional of CONACULTA (www.fonotecanacional.gob.mx). This diagnosis will result in an immediate care plan, especially for those files that are at risk of being lost.

It also seeks to promote the integration of an Inventory of Sound and Audiovisual Heritage in Iberoamérica with homologated and approved IASA standards, coordinated by México through the Fonoteca Nacional of CONACULTA.

In addition, this platform provides specialized documentation and literature, in Spanish, about the sound and audiovisual archives, online training, exchange of experiences and advice on creating a plan for immediate attention, especially for those files that are at risk of being lost.

The first goal is to know the conservation condition of the sound and audiovisual files in order to identify archives at risk in the region and implement plans for emergency care.

At the same time we are promoting a “*training for trainers*” program with the National Sound Archive in México, the Phonogrammarchiv of Austria and the Swiss National Sound Archive. In the medium term, this program seeks to:

1. Promote the integration of an inventory of the Iberoamerican Sound and Audiovisual Heritage, with standards approved and endorsed by IASA and FIAT, and coordinated by México, through the Fonoteca Nacional del CONACULTA.
2. Develop a “training for trainers” program, in Spanish, for technical education (basic and specialized) in sound and audiovisual preservation.
3. Establish the Fonoteca Nacional de México as a knowledge resource center within the region.
4. Promote the Iberoamerican IASA branch.

The Fonoteca Nacional provides advice and training in preservation areas in order that each archive has the necessary tools to generate an action plan for the immediate attention of its sound and audiovisual heritage at risk. Until now the Fonoteca Nacional has provided advice to Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras and México.

Recovery of sound documents at Radio XEZON from the Sistema de Radiodifusoras Culturales Indigenista (Indigenous Cultural Radio Broadcasting System) and from the Comisión para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas (National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Communities)

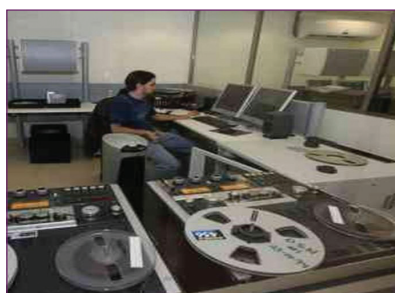
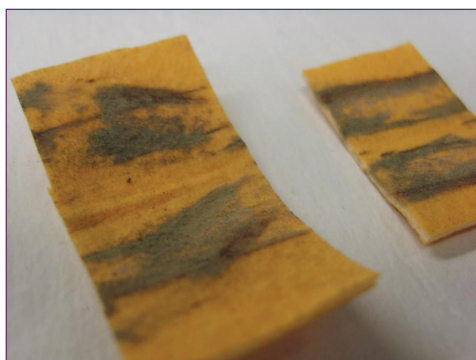
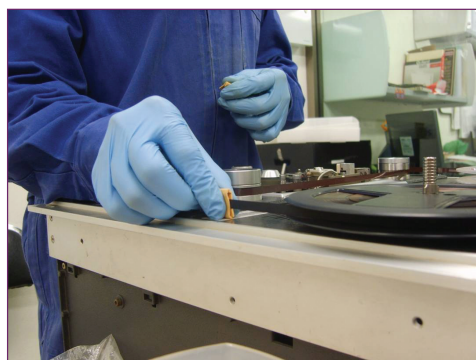
In October 2010, according to the last agreement point in the agenda, the Fonoteca Nacional de México and the Comisión para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas started a joint pilot project in México for the safeguarding of one specific sound heritage at risk, namely, the sound archive of XEZON La Voz de la Sierra de Zongolica, Veracruz.

As a result of this work, 410 tapes from the Radio XEZON The Voice of the Sierra de Zongolica were received at the Fonoteca Nacional, in order to submit them to an action plan for rescue and conservation. These sound documents are of great significance to the *Nahua* people of the Sierra de Zongolica for their historical content relating to traditional music and oral tradition.

The process began with the diagnosis made with the chiefs from the archives of the Radiodifusoras Culturales e Indigenistas through the application of a questionnaire and the provision of a basic course to the Radio XEZON staff. Thanks to this process we were able to identify the materials that had a biological deterioration caused by fungi and crystallized adhesive in the tapes. Within the emergency care plan for its conservation, the

following measures were implemented:

- Replacement of boxes and reels that suffered from mold damage
- Stabilization of the media in the transit vault with temperature and humidity control
- Allocation of inventory numbers for both boxes and reels, in order to keep the original information of the documents
- Digitizing. This process took into account several factors such as: material and brand of tape, winding, state of the reel, original defects and defects caused by the state of preservation.



The rescue of the Sierra de Zongolica community oral history tapes is an example of “good practice” in implementing a model of identification, diagnosis and care of collections at risk with multiple benefits for the sound heritage of the Sistema de Radiodifusoras Culturales Indigenistas.

Conclusion

With the Iberoamerican Platform, Fonoteca Nacional de México promotes the identification, diagnosis and care of sound and audiovisual archives at risk in Iberoamérica. Now the challenge is to have more strategic alliances like CDI in México, IASA and FIAT, and the participation of more archives in the region to achieve the following main goals:

1. Integration of an inventory and a network of Iberoamerican archives in the region
2. Certification of the training of trainers program with direct benefits in the education in Spanish of people responsible for documents at risk
3. Creation of the “Iberoamérica program” with the Secretaría General de Iberoamérica (Segib) and an IASA branch for preserving the Iberoamerican sound and audiovisual heritage using approved and shared standards.