



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

**Celebration of anniversaries
with which UNESCO will be associated
in 2008-2009**

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Foreword

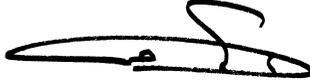
Celebrating personalities, works or events that have contributed to the mutual enrichment of cultures helps to promote international understanding, closer relations among peoples and peace. Since 1956 UNESCO has been participating in the commemorations of historic events and in the celebrations of anniversaries of eminent personalities by Member States and Associate Members, in order to give them worldwide significance.

During the 2008-2009 biennium, UNESCO will be associated with the celebration of 67 anniversaries proposed by Member States and approved by the 34th session of the General Conference (November 2007), in accordance with the selection criteria, adopted by the Executive Board for such association (Decision 7.5 of the 159th session, May 2000):

- (a) Each proposed anniversary should be indisputably linked to the Organization's ideals and missions in the fields of education, science, culture, social and human sciences and communication and should promote closer relations among peoples, tolerance, and the ideals of peace, cultural dialogue and mutual understanding among peoples.
- (b) Commemorations of the birth, independence or institutional regime of a State, historical empires and dynasties will not be eligible for consideration; similarly the anniversaries of military events will be excluded.
- (c) The anniversary should concern personalities of genuinely universal stature and works or events of genuinely worldwide or at least regional significance in order to reflect the ideals, the values, the cultural diversity and the universality of the Organization.
- (d) The anniversary should be a fiftieth anniversary, a centenary, or a multiple thereof; some flexibility should nevertheless be used in applying this criterion.
- (e) The anniversary should be the occasion for nationwide events already planned and for the organization of which certain resources have been allocated in the Member State or group of Member States directly concerned.
- (f) Any anniversary proposal involving more than one State should be submitted by all.

Anniversaries 2008-2009

The present publication, which is at its third edition, aims to present the anniversaries with which UNESCO will be associated for the period 2008-2009, to make this programme better known and also to encourage Member States to participate in it for a wider knowledge of their historical and cultural heritage.



Ahmed Sayyad
Assistant Director-General for External Relations
and Cooperation

Afghanistan

2008: 150th anniversary of active life of Sayyed Jamal-ud-Din Afghani, philosopher (1858)

Supported by the Islamic Republic of Iran

Sayed Jamal-ud Din Afghani, who is considered to be the founding father of Islamic modernism, was a philosopher, thinker and an Islamic reformist. He spent a great deal of his life to invoke the sense of freedom and understanding among the nations, democracy, and human rights, particularly the right of women to education and knowledge.

2008: 850th anniversary of the death of Abu-l-Majd Majdud Sana'i of Ghazna, poet and philosopher (circa 1080-1158)

Supported by the Islamic Republic of Iran

Abu'l Majd Majdud Sana'i Ghaznawi was an eminent Dari language poet, philosopher and thinker who spent the entire of his life for advancement of knowledge and sciences. Sana'i was called by Mawlana Jalal-ud-Din Balkhi-Rumi, Mawlana's spirit and heart and he followed Sana'i's thoughts and mystic life. Abu'l Majd Majdud ibn Adam is most commonly referred to in historical texts as Hakim Sana'i, which he used as his pen name and is best known for his classic mystical poem *The Garden of Truth*.

Argentina

2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of Atahualpa Yupanqui, music composer (1908- 1992)

Singer, guitarist, poet, composer and humanist, defender of the humble and Amerindian people, Héctor Roberto Chavero, also known as Atahualpa Yupanqui, was born in 1908 in Campo de la Cruz, in the province of Buenos Aires. He is an emblematic figure of Argentine folk music of the twentieth century. Writer of more than 12,000 musical compositions, he became a troubadour and made solitary journeys on the back of a mule in the most remote areas of the continent, in search of accounts of experiences and musical relics of ancient Amerindian cultures. Married to French Canadian artist Antoinette Paule Pepin Fitzpatrick, Atahualpa Yupanqui composed his most famous work with her. He died in France in 1992.



Armenia

2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of Victor Hambardzumyan, astronomer and astrophysicist (1908-1996)

Supported by the Russian Federation

Victor Hambardzumyan was one of the pioneers of theoretical astrophysics who worked on the cosmogony of stars and galaxies, stellar dynamics, and gaseous nebulas. In 1947 he discovered stellar associations. Victor Hambardzumyan was the first to suggest that T Tauri stars are very young and to propose that nearby stellar associations are expanding. He also showed that evolutionary processes such as mass loss are occurring in galaxies; worked on interstellar matter, radio galaxies, and active galactic nuclei.

2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of William Saroyan, writer (1908-1981)

William Saroyan was an American author, novelist and playwright of Armenian origin, whose stories celebrated optimism in the middle of trials and difficulties of the Depression era. Several of Saroyan's works were drawn from his own experiences, although his approach to autobiographical facts can be called poetic, therefore many of his plays and short stories are about growing up impoverished as the son of Armenian immigrants. These stories were popular during the Great Depression. Saroyan grew up in Fresno, the centre of Armenian-Americans in California, where many of his works are set. He worked tirelessly to perfect a prose style that was full of zest for life and was seemingly impressionistic. The style became known as "Saroyanesque". Among Saroyan's best known plays is "The time of your life" (1939) which won a Pulitzer Prize. Saroyan refused the honour but accepted the New York Drama Critics Circle award. The short story collection "My name is Aram" (1940) is an international bestseller. It has been translated into many languages.

Austria



2009: 200th anniversary of the death of Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809), Austrian composer and conductor, was one of the most prominent composers of the Classical period. He is considered as the "Father of the Symphony" and "Father of the String Quartet". He also wrote many piano sonatas, piano trios, divertimentos, and masses, which became the foundation for the Classical style in these compositional types. Although other composers were prominent in the

Anniversaries 2008-2009

earlier Classical period, Haydn had undoubtedly the strongest overall influence on musical style in this era. A life-long resident of Austria, Haydn spent most of his career as a court musician for the wealthy Esterhazy family. Isolated from other composers and trends in music until the later part of his long life, he was, as he put it, "forced to become original".

Azerbaijan

2008: 100th anniversary of the first opera in the East: "Leyli and Majnun" (1908)



The opera "Leyli and Majnun" was premiered in the Taghiyev Theater in Baku on 12 January 1908. The work became identified as the "First Opera of the Muslim East". The plot, based on an immortal love story, can best be compared to "Romeo and Juliet", though in the oral tradition the legend of "Leyli and Majnun"

predates Shakespeare by more than a thousand years.

Uzeyir Hajibeyov (1885-1948) was the composer of this opera. He was 22 at the time of its premiere. He and his younger brother, Jeyhun (1891-1962), wrote the libretto based on the poetic rendition of "Leyli and Majnun" by the Azerbaijani poet Fuzuli (1480-1562). Many of the verses were kept in their original form.

The "Leyli and Majnun" opera is based on traditional Azerbaijani mughams, which are performed in their original form. Entire segments of the opera feature specific mughams, depending on the emotional effect the composer was trying to convey. The mughams called Mahur-Hindi, Segah, Chahargah, Kurd-Shahnaz, Bayati-Shiraz, Shushtar, Bayati-Kurd, Shabi-Hijran and Gatar are among those featured in this opera.

2008: 100th anniversary of Musa Aliyev, geologist (1908-1985)

Musa Aliyev was a prominent scientist in the field of geology, palaeontology and biochemistry and his works contributed to the development of the world's science. His works were published in Azerbaijan, but also in Mexico, Egypt and Lebanon

2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of Mir Jalal Pashayev, writer (1908-1978)

Mir Jalal Pashayev (1908-1978) is recognized as both writer and literary critic. He was one of Azerbaijan's most gifted short story writers when it came to satirizing Soviet bureaucracy. A professor of literature at Baku State University, he wrote hundreds of short stories during his spare time. Seventy of his books are in print. Some have been translated into French, Czech, Persian, German and English. He also co-authored the three-volume, *History of Azerbaijani Literature* (1957-1960). His most well-known books include: *Resurrection Man* (Dirilan Adam, 1936), *Manifest of a Young Man* (Bir Ganjin Manifesti, 1938), *Where Are We Going?* (Yolumuz Hayanadir, 1957) and *People of the Same Age* (Yashidlar, 1984).



2009: 100th anniversary of the birth of Sattar Bahlulzade, artist (1909-1974)

Sattar Bahlulzade (1909 - 1974) is the founder of modern Azerbaijani landscape painting. He began his professional education at the National Art Institute in Baku (1927-1931). In 1933, he studied in the Drawing Department at the Moscow Fine Arts Institute. He developed his own impressionist style to express his emotional feeling. Bahlulzade described his own works as paintings of big lyrical landscapes and pictures with the singing of the nature of his native country. His major talent was landscape painting. He loved to travel around his country – Azerbaijan – exploring its beauty, which was the source of his inspiration. Many of his works depict specific areas of Azerbaijan. Sattar Bahlulzade won many prizes. He received the title of Honoured Art Worker of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 1960 and was named People's Artist in 1963. His works have been exhibited all over the world, including personal exhibitions in the United States of America, United Kingdom, Turkey and Russia. He also created around 30 sketch diaries that contain his reflections on life and art.

Bahrain

2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of Ebrahim al-Arrayed, poet (1908-2002)

Ebrahim Al-Arrayed (1908-2002) is one of the greatest poets of Bahrain and the Gulf. He grew up in Bombay, India without speaking any Arabic, and it was only after his family moved back to their home in Bahrain when he was 18 did he learn the language. His first poetry was published in Baghdad in 1931. A polyglot, he translated the works of poets between Farsi, Hindi, Urdu, English, and Arabic. Today, he remains one of the most popular writers in Bahrain. He was also a noted reformer setting up a school, and was appointed head of the Constitutional Council. In 2006, his old house, in Gudaibiya, was turned into a cultural centre, the Ebrahim Al-Arrayed Poetry House, open to tourists and as a meeting-place for poets.

Belarus



2008: 600th anniversary of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha/Białowieża Forest Reserve

The Belovezhskaya Forest is located in Brest and Hrodna oblasts (provinces) of Belarus and in Białystok, Suwałki, and Lomża wojewodztwos (provinces) of

Poland. Belovezhskaya Pushcha/Białowieża Forest, the oldest nature reserve in Europe, is the largest remnant of the primeval lowland forests that have existed in Europe since prehistoric times. In 1979 the Białowieża National Park (the Polish part of the site) and in 1992 the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park (the Belarusian part) were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

2008: 200th anniversary of the birth of Vincent Dunin-Martsinkevich, poet, playwright and actor (1808-1884)

Prominent Belarusian writer, poet and playwright Dunin-Martsinkevich stood at the origins of the New Belarusian literature and the Belarusian literary language. The phenomenon of mixing the Belarusian and Russian language, which is nowadays denominated "trasianka", is older than the denomination itself and has a relatively long history. Examples can be found in the nineteenth century especially in a play by Vincent Dunin-Martsinkevich. Moreover he is considered to be a founder of the professional national dramatic art. His works have been translated into Czech, English, German, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, Ukrainian, etc.

Benin

2008: 100th anniversary of the death of King Toffa I (1874-1908)

Toffa I was a ruler of the kingdom of Hogbonu, or Ajase, which in modern-day Benin is known as Porto Novo. His reign (1874-1908) coincided with the colonization of the African continent, but King Toffa favoured a policy of openness and cooperation with the West. An enthusiastic advocate of tolerance and cultural diversity, King Toffa called on his subjects to attend French schools in order to master there the “miraculous arms” of Western technological prowess. That policy consisted in assimilating European values selectively and in acquiring technical knowledge while safeguarding the national cultural identity in order to promote economic growth while preserving peaceful coexistence. The reign of King Toffa I also coincided with the cultural apogee of the “Agoudas”, descendants of Africans from Brazil and the Caribbean who, after the abolition of slavery, had been encouraged by King Toffa I to settle in his Kingdom. The new trades that they brought to the country and the skills that they had acquired abroad marked and continue to mark the architecture and many aspects of the intangible cultural heritage of Porto Novo and Benin. Lastly, continuing a genuinely African tradition, King Toffa I promoted and strengthened a policy of peaceful coexistence and triangular dialogue between endogenous religions (voodoo or Orisha) and the two new faiths of foreign origin (Islam and Christianity).

Bulgaria



2009: 100th anniversary of the birth of Nikola Vaptsarov, poet (1909-1942)

Nikola Yonkov Vaptsarov was born on 7 December 1909 in the town of Bansko. He is among Bulgaria’s most loved poets and also respected for his antifascist resistance activities which led to his arrest, trial and execution. His most famous book of poems is *Motor Songs*. Vaptsarov's poems have been translated into numerous languages.

2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of Lubomir Krastanov, scientist (1908-1977)

Lubomir Krastanov (1908-1977) is a prominent Bulgarian meteorologist, physical chemist and geophysicist. An important achievement of Lubomir Krastanov is the solving of the question of the formation of ice particles in the atmosphere which cause the formation of precipitation products. The scientific and the practical importance of these studies is connected with the formation of cloud elements and precipitation and with the developing of methods for artificial precipitation, for the dispersion of mists or for their stabilization. With Prof. Dimitar Jordanov, he invented a new theory on the turbulence in the substratum of the atmosphere.

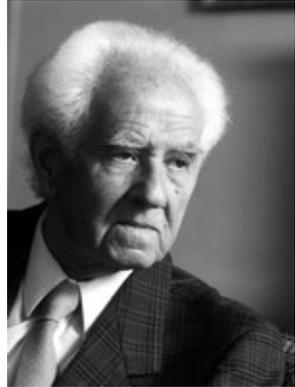


2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of Rostislav Kaishev, scientist and linguist (1908- 2002)

Rostislav A. Kaïshev is considered to be one of the founding fathers of the theory of crystal nucleation and growth. His research work on two- and three-dimensional nuclei thermodynamics made a significant contribution to the development of the crystal growth theory. He founded the Institute of Physical Chemistry at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (1958), and facilitated the birth of two academy institutions in the field of physical chemistry in his country. He was a member or fellow of national and international scientific organizations, including several academies of sciences, and served as Vice-President of the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics. He worked as a professor and a researcher, and contributed to building an international reputation in the field of crystal growth theory for the Bulgarian School of Physical Chemistry.

2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of Marin Goleminov, musician (1908-2000)

Teacher, violinist, composer and conductor, Marin Goleminov (1908-2000) composed numerous works that have their roots in the melody, metres and rhythm of Bulgarian folk music. His work initiated a music movement in Bulgarian culture marked by the use of Bulgarian traditional music elements interwoven with an original style and vision. He educated generations of Bulgarians. He studied in different countries, Bulgaria, France and Germany.



Since 1943, and for over four decades, he had taught music instruments, orchestration, conducting and composition at the State Academy of Music in Sofia. He was elected Rector (1954-1956) and Director of the Sofia Opera (1965-1967). He won the Gottfried von Herder Award of the Vienna University (1976). He joined the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and was promoted to Academician (1989). He died on 19 February 2000 in Espinho, Portugal. His influence spread throughout the region.

Burkina Faso

2008: 50th anniversary of the intellectual career of professor Joseph Ki-Zerbo (1922- 2006)

Joseph Ki-Zerbo (1922-2006) is a Burkinabe historian and politician. He is one of the thinkers of contemporary Africa to have made an impact on his era. Together with Cheikh Anta Diop, he placed studies on the history of Africa on a new footing, and established the National Liberation Movement in Dakar in 1957. His famous *History of Black Africa, from the origins to our times* was published in 1972 and became the reference publication on African history. He refuted the description of Africa, then prevalent in Europe, as a continent with no culture and no history. The year 2008 will mark the 50th anniversary of the intellectual career of this great African thinker.

Côte d'Ivoire



2008: 50th anniversary of the intellectual career of Georges Niangoran-Bouah, ethnosociologist/anthropologist (1935-2002)

Tenured professor of ethnology and founder of drumology, Georges Niangoran-Bouah dedicated his life to enhancing the status of African cultures. Although his work is restricted to specialized circles, it is of great value and importance and stands as a reference work in its field.

Croatia

2008: 500th anniversary of the birth of Marin Držić, playwright and lyricist (1508-1567)

Marin Držić (1508-1567) is considered the finest Croatian Renaissance playwright and prose writer. He was trained and ordained as a priest in spite of his rebel temperament but he was extroverted and had a warm personality. He had different careers as Rector of the University of Siena in Tuscany, interpreter, scrivener and church musician. Držić's works cover many fields: lyric poetry, pastorals, political letters and pamphlets and comedies. His pastorals and comedies are still highly regarded as masterful examples of the genre, and are among the best in Renaissance European literature. (

2009: 500th anniversary of the death of Ivan Duknović (Iohannes Dalmata), sculptor and architect (1440-1509)

Giovanni Dalmata was a famous sculptor who was active in Dalmatia, Italy and Hungary and considered to be one of the leading sculptors in Rome in the second half of the fifteenth century. He was born in the Dalmatian town of Mandoler (today Vinišće in Croatia). His creations can be admired in many places including the World Heritage properties of "Historic City of Trogir", Croatia and "Historic Centre of Rome, the Properties of the Holy See in that City Enjoying Extraterritorial Rights and San Paolo Fuori le Mura", Italy/Holy See.

Cuba

2009: 100th anniversary of the creation of the National Library José Martí's magazine (1909)

The Magazine of the José Martí National Library, in its one hundred years of existence, has published very important aspects of Cuban cultural life, as well as articles on and by major cultural figures of the country in every field: literature, arts, fine arts, etc. It provides information about collections of great value to the heritage, many of which have not been published and are held by the National Library of Cuba. It has also adapted to changing times, which has enabled archival and library specialists from prestigious specialized institutions in the country to publish their works, thus enriching and updating the Cuban technological culture. It is a publication that combines tradition and renewal and, by rigorously selecting articles and authors, informs readers about the work of the most outstanding Cuban intellectuals.

Czech Republic

2008: 100th anniversary of the death of Josef Hlávka, architect (1831-1908)

Supported by Austria

Josef Hlavka (1831-1908) architect, entrepreneur and patron of the arts has made a great impact on the architectural physiognomy of several towns in central Europe; the historical centres of three of these (Prague, Kutna Hora and Vienna) are inscribed on the World Heritage List.

2009: 50th anniversary of the death of Bohuslav Martinů, composer (1890-1959)

Bohuslav Martinu is a great classical composer of Czech music. He made a very important contribution to twentieth-century music. Exiled to the United States of America during the Second World War, he acquired the nationality of that country. A prolific worker (he has left 387 compositions behind), his creative wisdom is reminiscent of Joseph Haydn whom he admired both as a man and as an artist, believing that creative spontaneity is the result of prolonged creative activity. Martinu's work evinces obvious joy, adding touches of hope or consolation to his most dramatic works, which are never melancholy.

2009: 400th anniversary of the death of Jehuda Löw ben Bezalel, writer and philosopher (1520(1512?)-1609)

Jehuda Löw ben Bezalel, writer and philosopher (1520(1512?)-1609) was an important Talmudic scholar, Jewish mystic, and philosopher who served as a leading rabbi in Prague (now in the Czech Republic). He is widely known to scholars of Judaism as the Maharal of Prague and was the author of philosophical and mystical works. The Maharal also became famous among non-Jews for his

great secular knowledge of mathematics, astronomy, and other sciences. He was a great friend of the astronomer Tycho Brahe and Johannes Kepler.

Ethiopia

2008: 1000th anniversary of the foundation of the Harar Jugol – the Fortified Historic Town – and the celebration of the Ethiopian Millennium

The Government of Ethiopia has submitted to UNESCO the celebration of the Ethiopian Millennium (Ethiopia 2000), which will extend from 11 September 2007 to 11 September 2008. This celebration marks the uniqueness of the Ethiopian calendar which is the result of the association of a major African scientific discovery: the solar or sidereal year discovered by astronomers of the Alexandrian School, closely related to Ethiopia, with the cultural specificities and religious beliefs of different Ethiopian peoples. The Millennium is a unique occasion to celebrate major achievements which occurred in this part of the continent, of which some are recognized as World Cultural Heritage. The African Union, in its Summit of 29-30 January 2007, has declared the Ethiopian Millennium as an African Millennium, since Ethiopia was the epitome of the entire Sub-Saharan Africa ecosystem. The celebration of this event is an occasion for Africa and the international community to express their shared ownership and attachment towards with respect to the Ethiopian Millennium.

The solar Coptic (gbi) calendar is closely related to Ancient Egypt and it is one of the oldest in history. The new year of the ancient Egyptians started in Meskerem (just like the Ethiopian New Year) signalling the end of Noah's flood, in the highest point of the Nile. This calendar dates back to three millennia before the birth of Christ. The Ethiopic and Coptic calendars have 13 months in a year, 12 of 30 days each and an intercalary month at the end of the year of 5 or 6 days depending whether the year is a leap year or not. The year starts on 11 September in the Gregorian Calendar (G.C.) or on the 12th in (Gregorian) Leap Years. The Coptic Leap Year follows the same rules as the Gregorian so that the extra month always has 6 days as in a Gregorian Leap Year.

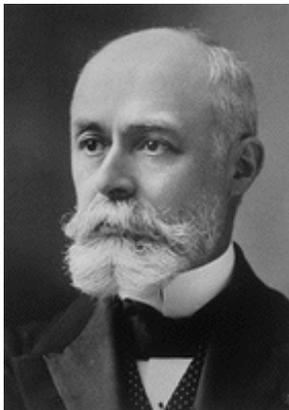
Within the framework of the celebration of the Ethiopian Millennium, Harar, a city in the eastern part of Ethiopia, founded between the seventh and eleventh centuries, will also celebrate the millennium of its birth. Harar, inscribed in 2006 on the World Heritage List is one of the most ancient cities in Africa and a symbol of the dialogue of different peoples, languages, cultures and religions in the continent during the Millennium. The Harari people represent the symbiosis produced amongst Amharic, Oromo and Arabic cultures, as well as an example of the capacity of Harar's citizens to preserve the cultural identity of this city. In the sixteenth century, Harar became the capital of an Islamic State and flourished as a commercial centre located between the hinterland and coastline. Due to the interaction of peoples and different cultures, this African city was also at the heart of intellectual and artistic life in the region, was visited by people from other

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continents and was where Moslems and Christians lived harmoniously for hundreds of years.

The UNESCO Cities for Peace Prize was awarded in 2002-2003 to this city (ex æquo with Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso).

France



2008: 100th anniversary of the death of Henri Becquerel, physicist (1852-1908)

Henri Becquerel received the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1903 in recognition of his extraordinary work on spontaneous radioactivity. Henri Becquerel was promoted to the rank of Officer of the Legion of Honour in 1900. He was a member of foreign academies, including the Reale Accademia dei Lincei, the Königlische Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften and the Royal Society of London.

2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of Olivier Messiaen, composer (1908-1992)

French composer, performer, teacher and ornithologist, Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992), developed an original and unique style which included innovations in harmony and melody in rhythm, colour and orchestration. Olivier Messiaen is often regarded as the second most important French composer of the twentieth century and one of the most influential composers of the century in any country. Messiaen's music is known for its devoted adherence to Catholic theological subjects and for its transcriptions of birdsong. He wrote music in every major genre, making special contributions to the organ repertoire and to the piano repertoire, due largely to the skills of his second wife Yvonne Loriod. His most famous works include *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*, a large-scale orchestral work *Turangalîlasymphonie* and an opera, for which he also wrote the libretto (*Saint François d'Assise*).



2009: 200th anniversary of the birth of Louis Braille, professor (1809-1852)

Louis Braille was the founder of the Braille system, the primary system of written communication for visually impaired persons around the world. The

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system offers numerous benefits, the most notable being the ability to both read and write using an alphabet that can be adapted to almost every major national language. Luis Braille contributed towards literacy, the Braille system being the only medium through which children with profound or total loss of sight can learn to read and write.

2008: 150th anniversary of the birth of Emile Durkheim, sociologist (1858-1917)

Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) was a French sociologist and anthropologist, considered to be one of the founders of modern sociology. Trained in the Positivist school of thought, he turned sociology into a science with its own subject and methods, asserting the specificity of social facts in relation to organic and psychological phenomena. He was a professor at the Sorbonne and author of many sociological studies.



Germany

2009: 250th anniversary of the birth of Friedrich Schiller, poet (1759-1805)

Johann Christoph Friedrich (later: von) Schiller (1759–1805) was a German poet, philosopher, historian and dramatist. Schiller was a foremost German dramatist and, along with Goethe, a major figure in German literature's *Sturm und Drang* (Storm and Stress) period. He also wrote poetry and essays, including "Ode to Joy", which was later used by Ludwig van Beethoven in his Ninth Symphony. Influenced by the philosophy of Kant, Schiller developed his aesthetic theories, stressing the sublime and the creative powers of humanity. He wrote several important treatises on aesthetics, foremost among them "On the Aesthetic Education of Man", as much if not more of a moral treatise as an aesthetic one.

2009: 150th anniversary of the death of Bettina von Arnim, writer (1785-1859)

Bettina von Arnim (1785-1859) was a Friend of Goethe, Beethoven and George Sand, and although she published little, is a key figure of the second phase of German Romanticism. A seductive, independent socialite, she is reputed to be a great epistolary writer, both sensitive and dangerously passionate. Her artistic influence remains nevertheless European.



2008: 150th anniversary of the birth of Max Planck, physicist (1858-1947)

Max Planck (1858-1947) is considered to be the founder of quantum theory, and therefore one of the most important physicists of the twentieth century. He was the Nobel Prize winner in Physics in 1918 (awarded 1919).

Islamic Republic of Iran

2008: 950th anniversary of the birth of Imam Mohammad Ghazali, philosopher (1058- 1111)

Al-Ghazali was a Muslim theologian, philosopher and mystic and he remains one of the most celebrated scholars in the history of Islamic thought. There is no doubt about the importance and general relevance of the anniversary, which fully deserves UNESCO's support in view of the major significance of al-Ghazali not just within classical Persian and Arabic culture but also in the philosophy and theology of the European Middle Ages and Renaissance.

2009: 400th anniversary of the death of Sheikh-e Bahae, calligrapher, mathematician, astronomer, doctor, architect and poet (1531-1609)

Sheikh-e Bahae's fame was due to his excellent command of mathematics, architecture and astronomy. He is considered to be one of the founders of Islamic architecture. The construction of the Meidan Emam in Esfahan, which is inscribed on the World Heritage List, was based on his plans. He also made a sun clock, which is located in the Western part of the Imam Mosque. He was mentioned in many scientific publications in the field of mathematics and geometry.

Israel



2008: 150th anniversary of the birth of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, linguist (1858-1922)

Eliezer Ben-Yehuda was a prime mover in the transformation of Hebrew from a dormant language of culture to a living, spoken language currently used in all spheres of

modern life by millions of Israelis and by Jews worldwide. A Committee of the Hebrew Language was then established (1889). Later it became the Academy of the Hebrew Language, an organization that still exists today. The results of his work and the Committee's were published in a dictionary ("The Complete Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Hebrew" (1908- 1959)).

Italy

2008: 400th anniversary of the birth of Evangelista Torricelli, scientist (1608-1647)

Evangelista Torricelli (1608-1647) was an Italian physicist and mathematician who invented the barometer and whose work in geometry aided in the eventual development of integral calculus.



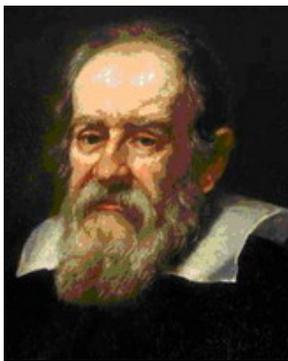
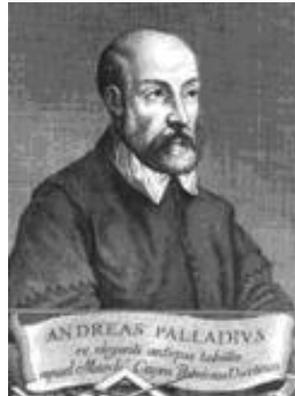


2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of Cesare Pavese, writer (1908-1950)

Italian poet, novelist, literary critic and translator, Cesare Pavese (1908-1950) is considered to be a major literary figure in post-war Italy. He brought American influence to Italian literature through his translations. His writings which dealt with social struggles revealed his sympathy for the oppressed. A recurrent theme in his novels is the search of urban man, who is caught in continually changing situations, for permanence and stability.

2008: 500th anniversary of the birth of Andrea Palladio, architect (1508-1580)

Andrea Palladio is widely considered the most influential architect in the History of the Western Architecture. The outstanding universal value of his work was also recognized with the inscription of the "City of Vicenza and the Palladian Villas of the Veneto" (Italy) on the World Heritage List.



2009: 400th anniversary of Galileo's Discoveries (1609)

The year 2009 will mark 400 years since the invention of the telescope and the revolutionary celestial observations that Galileo made thanks to it. In the autumn of 1609, strange objects known as *cannoni* (cannons) or *tubi ottici* (optical tubes) appeared in Venice. Distant objects appeared much closer to those who looked through the tube's ocular lens. Like many others, Galileo Galilei's attention was caught by this tool, generally considered a curious plaything. He then worked on perfecting it and soon built more effective lenses. In Galileo's hands the plaything became a real scientific instrument. During the last weeks of 1609, Galileo directed the cannon at the starry sky. This

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paved the way for the unexpected discovery of sensational celestial novelties that were to produce an epoch-making intellectual and anthropological revolution. Galileo's first use of the telescope was indeed an event that deeply changed the world, leading to the affirmation of modern science and of a new rational anthropology. These celebrations are an opportunity to gain a deeper insight into the role of astronomy in enriching all human cultures and will arouse strong interest and encourage specific cultural events and activities all over the world.

Kazakhstan



2008: 500th anniversary of the epos "Kyz Zhibek" (1508)

Kyz-Zhibek is a poetic folk legend of the sixteenth century. It tells about the period in Kazakh history when people suffered from bloody feuds. In those times each province of the Kazakh nation had its own leader and each tried to supersede the other. The love story of Tolegen, the brave warrior, and the beauty Zhibek ends tragically because of inter-family strife. Tolegen is foully murdered by Bekejan (the batyr, or nobleman, of the rival family), who earlier strove for the hand of Zhibek. Zhibek commits suicide after learning about the death of Tolegen. The epos "Kyz Zhibek" is doubtless a precious element of intangible cultural heritage.¹ Sixteen variants of the legend exist in different parts of Kazakhstan.

Kuwait

2008: 50th anniversary of *Al Arabi Magazine* (1958)

Al Arabi was an initiative of the Kuwaiti Government to provide a high-quality pan-Arab magazine that would rise above political and intellectual disagreements and provide a forum for Arab cultural dialogue, exchange and dissemination. The magazine united great intellectual and cultural figures from the Arab World, who regularly contributed articles and photographs to the magazine. *Al Arabi* quickly became a household name and was read by people of all ages across the Arab World, who found in its pages a unique blend of high quality social, economic and scientific reports as well as poetry, short stories, art reviews and illustrated articles on the Arab region. *Al Arabi* still enjoys widespread popularity and currently has a monthly circulation of 250,000 copies.

Nigeria

2009: 100th anniversary of the foundation of King's College, Lagos (1909)

King's College was founded in 1909 as the first federal government secondary school with the aim of providing qualitative education, initially addressed to boys and later on to girls in Africa, particularly from Nigeria, Cameroon and Ghana. A first generation of civil servants, academics, jurists and other liberal professions has been trained by this regional educational institution, which also provided a sports and cultural education. King's College enabled the creation of a shared vision on the future of the continent. Its experience could inspire African educational institutions to make education and culture a tool to promote regional integration.

Peru



2009: 400th anniversary of the publication of the Royal Commentaries of the Incas by Garcilaso de la Vega (1609)

The book *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*, published in Lisbon in 1609, covers the history of the Incas in the first part and the conquest of Peru in the second part. It is a unique testimony to the history of the Incas written by the first great mixed-race Peruvian writer, Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, son of a noble Spanish captain and an Inca princess. This book reflects the meeting of the world of the Incas and the Christian world, the oral and written traditions and the future and the past.

Philippines

2008: 100th anniversary of the creation of the University of the Philippines (1908)

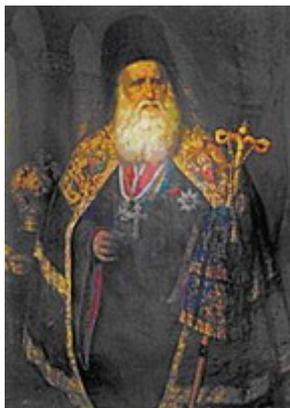
The University of the Philippines covers various faculties and disciplines which dovetail with UNESCO's mandate for the promotion of education as well as its other areas of competence, such as culture, science and communication, and contributes to the building of knowledge societies which safeguards UNESCO's objectives. Various educational activities have been planned to reinforce UNESCO's goal of providing quality education within the region and internationally.

Poland

2009: 50th anniversary of the beginning of Jerzy Grotowski's artistic work by the creation of the Laboratory Theatre (1959)

Jerzy Grotowski (1933–1999), Polish theatre director, theoretician and writer, was one of the greatest reformers of twentieth-century theatre, especially in the field of acting. In 1959 he created the theatre laboratory led in cooperation with Flaszen. J. Grotowski's research undertaken in the Laboratory Theatre had a definitive impact on contemporary theatre at an international level, more particularly through the investigation of the nature of acting, its phenomenon as well as its meaning. Jerzy Grotowski created the concept and the artistic form of "Poor Theatre" in which the mental, the physical and emotional processes are intensively put forward.

Romania



2008: 200th anniversary of the birth of the Orthodox Archbishop Andrei Șaguna (1808- 1873)

A man of the church, a politician and a man of culture, Andrei Șaguna is undoubtedly one of the personalities who has made an impact on the ecclesiastical, political and cultural life of nineteenth century Romania, at the beginning of its modernity.

He undertook the task of consolidating Metropolitan Transylvania and reorganizing the Institute of Theology of Sibiu, at which priests and schoolteachers were trained and founded a printing press and the newspaper that is one of Romania's

oldest newspapers today. Finally, Andrei Șaguna contributed to the development of teaching by organizing almost 800 primary schools as Bishop of Sibiu, by facilitating and aiding the publication of school textbooks and by sending a significant number of young people to pursue their studies abroad.

Through these forms of action, which he created and developed better than anyone of his time, Andrei Șaguna fully demonstrated his commitment to contributing to the building of a modern society. His ideas and actions and the values which he defended throughout his life have made an impact that has reached far beyond the borders of Romania.

This commemoration falls fully within the fields of competence of the Organization. Many activities relating to the commemoration will be organized in 2008, which will be proclaimed "Andrei Șaguna Year" in Romania.



2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of Eugène Ionesco, dramatist and writer (1908- 1994)

Supported by France

Dramatist, essayist, novelist, lecturer, a French citizen of Romanian origin and one of the two pioneers of the theatre of the absurd, Eugène Ionesco (1908-1994) is one of the very few authors to be recognized during his lifetime as a “classical author”. He had tremendous international recognition, first in Great Britain and then in France, where his plays enjoyed unwavering popular success. This public success was ultimately confirmed by institutional recognition, namely election to the French Academy, and many other prizes such as the T.S. Elliot-Ingersoll Prize in Chicago.

2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of Șerban Țițeica, physicist and educationalist (1908-1986)

Serban Titeica (1908-1986), physicist and educationalist, was the most eminent Romanian professor of theoretical physics. His scientific work is highly varied and very profound: the absorption of heavy particles in matter, the theory of positrons, multipolar electromagnetic radiation, the propagation of heat, thermodynamics, static physics, and so on.



2008: 300th anniversary of the death of Nicolae Spătaru Milescu, diplomat, philologist, philosopher, geographer, ethnographer, theologian and writer (1636-1708)

Supported by the Republic of Moldova

Nicolae Spataru Milescu (1636-1708) was one of the best known and famous scholars of the Romanian Middle Ages, a representative of humanism, philologist, polyglot, theologian and writer. Diplomat at the Court of the Princes of Moldavia and subsequently in Moscow, under the Czar Alexei Mihailovitch, he was the first Romanian to visit China. Drawn from his stay there, his books on "The

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Empire at the centre of the world" had a major impact on his era and afterwards, by contributing to a better knowledge of China both in Romania and in Europe. His life remains a remarkable and exemplary adventure that benefited human knowledge. A personality of European and universal stature, travelling on roads and rivers then unknown to Europeans, he was an educated and courageous explorer, opening up new windows on the world and on the dialogue between nations and civilizations. Nicolae Spataru Milescu translated and adapted in Romanian many historical, religious and philosophical works; he was also the author of the first philosophy book written in Romanian.

Russian Federation

2009: 1150th anniversary of the foundation of the City of Veliky Novgorod

Vovgorod is the oldest Russian city, it being mentioned in chronicles since 859 A.D. The city itself was built gradually from the end of the ninth century, subsequently taking the name Novgorod (The New City). During the middle of the tenth century, Novgorod became a prosperous medieval city, situated on the trade route between the Baltic and the Byzantine empire. Its historical monuments were inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1992.

Russian Federation and Ukraine

2009: 200th anniversary of the birth of N.V. Gogol, writer (1809-1852)

Nikolai Gogol (1809-1852), dramatist, satirist, founder of the so-called critical realism in Russian literature, best-known for his novel *Dead Souls*, is the most famous Russian writer of Ukrainian origin. He tried to survive economically by working as a bureaucrat, a teacher and very briefly as a lecturer of history at Saint Petersburg University. In 1836 he left Russia and he lived abroad, mostly in Rome, until 1849, when he returned to Russia.

2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of Lev D. Landau, physicist (1908-1968)

Lev Landau was one of greatest physicists of the twentieth century. His pioneering results advanced various major fields of theoretical physics. Several generations of theoretical physicists learned their trade through the 10 volumes of his famous *Course of Theoretical Physics*.

Serbia

2009: 100th anniversary of the birth of Ljubica Marić, composer (1909-2003)

Ljubica Marić is considered to be one of the most original Serbian composers of the twentieth century. She was known for being inspired by the Byzantine Orthodox church music.

Slovakia



2009: 100th anniversary of the birth of Margita Figuli, writer (1909-1995)

Margita Figuli is considered to be the best female contemporary Slovak novelist and was voted “national artist” in 1974. After a collection of psychological short stories *Pokušenie* (Temptation, 1937), she excelled at lyrical prose, as demonstrated in her legendary novel *Tri gaštanové kone* (Three Chestnut Horses, 1940), the monumental history of *Babylon* in four volumes (1946), and *Mladosť* (Youth, 1956), based on her childhood memories. She has also published a children’s book dedicated to the Slovak Robin Hood *Balada o Jurovi*

Jánošíkovi (The Ballad of Jánošík, 1980).

2008: 100th anniversary of the birth of Eugen Suchoň, music composer (1908-1993)

Eugen Suchon (1908-1993) was one of the greatest Slovak composers and music teachers of the twentieth century. He established modern Slovak opera and drew international attention through the success of his opera work *Krútnava* (The Whirlpool, 1949) and contributed greatly to developing music education in its practical and theoretical aspects. Of particular significance was his second opera *Kral’ Svätopluk* (King Svätopluk), completed in 1959. This historic opera represents the monumental dramatic fresco from the period of the Great Moravian Empire.



Slovenia

2008: 500th anniversary of the birth of Primož Trubar, ecclesiastic and writer (1508- 1586)

Primož Trubar (1508-1586) was a Slovenian Protestant reformer, the founder and the first superintendent of the Protestant Church of Slovenia, a consolidator of the Slovenian language and the author of the first printed book in Slovenian. His work introduced reading and literacy as well as secular education, thus connecting the Slovenian nation with the Europe of his time. Primož Trubar was a significant regional figure in the European Reformation and Renaissance and continues to be widely quoted in discussion of the period.

Tajikistan

2008: 1150th anniversary of the birth of Abu Abdullah Rudaki, poet (858-941)

Supported by Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Kazakhstan

Abuabdullo Rudaki, also written as Abdullah Jafar Ibn Mohammed, Rudaki Rudagi or Rudhagi (859-c.941) was a poet, founder of Persian classical literature and the first great literary genius of modern Persian language. He composed poems in the "New Persian" Perso-Arabic alphabet script. He was born in Rudak, a village in Transoxiana, what is now Panjakent in Tajikistan.

Thailand

2008: 200th anniversary of His Royal Highness Krom Luang Wongsa Dhiraj Snid, scholar and poet (1808-1871)



His Royal Highness Krom Luang Wongsa Dhiraj Snid (1808–1871) was a remarkable personality, who promoted the culture of peace through dialogue among civilizations, reflecting UNESCO's objectives to promote closer relations among peoples through tolerance, mutual understanding and respect for cultural diversity. His commitment to "negotiation and dialogue among civilizations"

made him prominent in the international community, particularly in Asia, Europe and the United States of America. He initiated and introduced policies emphasizing peace and harmony with European countries by signing several treaties. At the same time, he was a prolific writer who published various works in the fields of literature, history, politics and particularly in traditional herbal medicine. In recognition of his merits as an intellectual, poet, peace activist,

scientist and diplomat, many academic organizations and foundations honoured him by inviting him to be an active member.

Turkey

2008: 1000th anniversary of the birth of Kasgarli Mahmud, linguist (1008-1101)

Kasgarli Mahmud was a renowned Turkish linguist, philologist and ethnographer and the first Turkish cartographer of Turkic dialects, who lived in the eleventh century. His most famous work is the book entitled "Divân-i Lügati't-Türk". The only handwritten copy of the book was found in 1910 in the Fatih Millet Library. In his book, Mahmud tried to prove the richness of Turkish language and its value besides Arabic and Persian. Accordingly, he wrote the grammar book entitled "Kitâbu Cevâhirü'n-Nahvi Lügâti't-Türk" to teach Turkish to Arabs. The celebration of this anniversary will encourage further research on Kasgarli Mahmud's significance and major contribution to Turkish culture and language.

2009: 400th anniversary of the birth of Katip Çelebi, scholar (1609-1657)

Katip Çelebi was a Turkish scholar. Among his chief works is the "*Kashf al-zunun'an asami al-kutub wa al-funun*" which documents some 15,000 books. The best known of his encyclopaedic contributions is the "*Kashf al-zunnun*", a bibliographical dictionary in the Arab language, with over 14,500 entries in alphabetical order. This work served as a basis for the "Bibliothèque Orientale" by Barthélemy d'Herbelot de Molainville. He was also the author of many works in the fields of geography, history and economics.

Ukraine

2009: 100th anniversary of the birth of Maria Primachenko, painter (1909-1997)

Maria Primachenko (1908-1997), a peasant woman from the Kievan village of Bolotnia, proved a natural talent for the arts. She is a legendary artist, whose creations link ancient Ukrainian folk art traditions with the present. Her pictorial flair for bringing to life ideas, feelings and impressions gradually ripened into true mastery. Exhibitions of her works have proved tremendously popular in the Russian Federation, Poland, Bulgaria, France and Canada.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

2009: 250th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, poet (1759-1796)

Robert Burns (1759-1796) was a poet and a lyricist. He is widely regarded as the national poet of Scotland and is celebrated worldwide. He is the best known of the poets who have written in the Scots language, although much of his writing is also in English and a “light” Scots dialect which would have been accessible to a wider audience than simply Scottish people.

2009: 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, naturalist (1809-1882)

Charles Robert Darwin (1809-1882) was an eminent English naturalist who achieved lasting fame by convincing the scientific community that species develop over time from a common origin. His theories explaining this phenomenon through natural and sexual selection are central to the modern understanding of evolution as the unifying theory of the life sciences, essential in biology and important in other disciplines such as anthropology, psychology and philosophy. Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution is one of the most fundamentally important concepts in science, philosophy and human culture.

2008: 400th anniversary of the birth of John Milton, poet (1608-1674)

John Milton (1608-1674) was an English poet, prose polemicist, and civil servant for the English Commonwealth. Most famed for his epic poem *Paradise Lost*, Milton is celebrated as well for his eloquent treatise condemning censorship, *Areopagitica*. Long considered the supreme English poet, Milton experienced a dip in popularity in the mid-twentieth century; but Milton’s reputation remains strong in the twenty-first century.

Uzbekistan

2008: 2200th anniversary of the foundation of the city of Tashkent

Tashkent is one of the famous cultural and scientific centres of Central Asia. Historically, being situated on the Great Silk Road, Tashkent was the place where East and West met in brotherhood for intercultural and interreligious dialogue. Tashkent, the capital of the Republic of Uzbekistan, is one of the ancient cities of Central Asia. Tashkent was well known 2,200 years ago as Choch. The celebration of the 2,200th anniversary of the foundation of the city of Tashkent will certainly promote a new focus on the old city and on four world heritage sites at Shakisabyz, Samarkand, Bhkkhra and Khiva.