

Read the text about keeping traditional culture alive. Complete the sentences (1-6) using a maximum of 4 words. Write your answers in the spaces provided on the answer sheet. The first one (0) has been done for you.



Preserving musical history

“WHOEVER wishes to collect from the mouth of the people should hurry; folk songs are disappearing one after another.” Thus wrote Ludolf Parisius, a German song collector, nearly two centuries ago. Others have since said the same, for just as spoken languages can die, so too can musical ones.

A century ago song-collection was an important part of the study of musical languages. There were archives of “field recordings” in Berlin, London and Washington, DC, which could express deep social truth: they were the heartbeat of humanity. They served other purposes, too. Like many of their contemporaries, Zoltan Kodaly and Bela Bartok, two Hungarians who visited Magyar villages in the early 1900s, used the folk music they hoovered up to enrich their own compositions.

Meanwhile, the nascent record companies were also getting in on the act. But the British Gramophone Company and its German and American rivals had little interest in musicology. The songs and dances they recorded in Central and South-East Asia were for sale back to the people of those regions, who would, it was hoped, buy the expensive equipment needed to play them. It is a sweet historical irony that their shellac discs are now musicological treasures: some antique Balinese pieces are known solely because in the early 1930s a Canadian composer bought some of those records in a shop in Bali. The warehouse manager, angry that his wares were not selling, smashed the rest in a rage. It was only in 1933, when John Lomax, an American folklorist, began making his marathon collection of recordings from the American South for the Library of Congress, that the significance of field recordings became generally realised. Among other luminaries, Lomax recorded Huddie “Leadbelly” Ledbetter, a well-known blues guitarist who was doing time in a Louisiana prison. Lomax’s son, Alan, carried on his work, with surveys of the folk music of Spain and Italy, including children’s songs in dirt-poor Extremadura and falsetto extravaganzas by dockers in Genoa. These now offer unique glimpses of the past, since most of that gritty, heartfelt music has been civilised out of existence.

By the mid-1900s the world was being scoured by musicologists seeking to document and preserve, with ethnographic labels giving them altruistic support: Folkways in America, Topic in Britain and Ocora, set up by the French government initially to record the music of the French

West African colonies as they moved towards independence. It was a measure of the prestige attached to field-recordings that, in 1977, one of the Nonesuch label's recordings of traditional Balinese gamelan music was sent into outer space as part of the Voyager Golden Record.

The world music boom of the 1990s was galvanised by a bestselling Cuban album, "Buena Vista Social Club". Who could not be fired by the spectacle of some very old men and women (and their label) striking gold with forgotten music of irresistible charm? Record companies rushed to join the bonanza, but it lasted only a few years. The growth of digital media and the decline in the market for specialist CDs (and record shops' increasing reluctance to stock them) turned boom into bust.

This slump hit the ethnographic companies hard. Some closed down, and others abandoned CDs in favour of digital distribution. The long-awaited release of Dust-to-Digital's box of Moroccan field recordings, made in the 1950s by Paul Bowles, author of "The Sheltering Sky", highlights another marketing ploy: with Bowles's notes handsomely presented in a leather-bound book, the box is an art-object in itself.

0	Traditional material was put to good use by ____.
1	Companies first recorded traditional music in order to get people to invest in ____.
2	A quantity of traditional Balinese music has been lost due to the reaction of ____.
3	In order to collect recordings, John Lomax even went to ____.
4	One record label was originally created in order to preserve the songs of ____.
5	The author obviously likes the Cuban musicians' material because he says it has ____.
6	Some traditional music recordings are now only available via ____.

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0	<i>Kodaly and Bartok</i>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

Von der
Lehrperson
auszufüllen

richtig falsch

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