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E PSICOLOGIA



## COMMUNITY OF PRACTICES ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE OF PEACE: REFLECTIONS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR AFRICA

### CONTRIBUTION OF THE UNESCO CHAIR OF THE FLORENCE UNIVERSITY TO COP: INCEPTION REPORT<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. Starting from Luanda

In March 2013 a Pan-African Forum has been organized by Unesco, Africa Union and Angola Government. The forum had the goal to harness Africa's sources of inspiration<sup>12</sup> such as cultural, natural and human resources. It also meant to produce concrete proposals for building and developing sustainable peace, considering peace as the cornerstone of endogenous development and Pan-Africanism. The Forum also aimed to contributing to the implementation of the African Union Commission Strategic Plan, focusing mainly on regional integration, peace and security and democracy. Inspired by the principles listed in the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance, UNESCO and the African Union support the idea that "*cultural diversity and African unity are a factor of balance, a force for African economic development, conflict resolution, and a way to reduce inequality and injustice in the service of national integration.*"<sup>3</sup>

The Forum was attended by representatives of thirty African countries, independent experts, representatives of organizations, professional associations and civil society stakeholders.

From the Forum a shared Action Plan has emerged in order to promote culture of peace in Africa. The latter is to be implemented at different levels (local, national, regional and international). It also fosters the different actors' commitment. It will be constantly monitored by the African Union and UNESCO.

The Action Plan is divided into four main axes:

1. *Cultural sources and resources for sustainable peace in Africa*
2. *The management of natural resources for the prevention of conflicts and sustainable development*
3. *Young people, actors of change for peace and development*
4. *Actions for creating a continental movement under the auspices of the African Union and UNESCO.*

Each of these axes is divided into objectives, general recommendations and proposals for action. Finally, the Forum has launched a Pan-African movement called "Make Peace Happen", which is

<sup>1</sup> Edit by Florence Unesco Chair (Chairholder P.Orefice) Team Research with the scientific coordination of Giovanna Del Gobbo.

<sup>2</sup> To paraphrase Joseph Ki-Zerbo in "About Culture"- Foundation for the History and Endogenous Development of Africa: "Culture is not only a resource but a source, that is to say, an energy self-generated. Our cultures are sources of creation, dignity, innovation."

<sup>3</sup> Charter for African Cultural Renaissance, African Union, January 24, 2006

the expression of commitments for culture of peace by governmental and intergovernmental partnerships.

One of the key conclusions of the Luanda Forum was the launch of a multi-stakeholders' partnership for the implementation of the Luanda Action Plan through a series of coordinated actions at national, sub-regional and regional level. In this context, participants decided to create a "Network of Foundations and Research Institutions Promoting a Culture of Peace in Africa".

In order to achieving the Action Plan objectives, the Africa Department is particularly interested in the mobilization of scientific research and innovation technology implemented by UNESCO Chairs of African Universities.

## 2. The Community of Practices

On September 20th and 21st, 2013 in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), UNESCO, the Félix Houphouët-Boigny Foundation for Peace Research and the African Union, decided to establish a network for promotion of culture of peace in Africa. Representatives of 26 foundations and research institutes, located in more than 20 African countries, met to coordinate their respective operations and to implement joint projects.

The Community of Practices was discussed, decided and launched during the meeting, on the basis of the proposal of prof. Paolo Orefice, Chairholder of UNESCO Chair at Florence University, as one of the research-tool of the Network. The proposal intends to develop and to implement the results of Luanda Forum. It also represents an operational tool to foster dialogue and exchange of experiences and reflections among all those who are giving origin to the Network. In this sense, the Community of Practices itself aims at representing a contribution for the 4<sup>th</sup> key point of Luanda. The Community of Practices actually is coordinated by Transdisciplinary UNESCO Chair on "Human Development and Culture of Peace" at the University of Florence<sup>4</sup>, along with the UNESCO Africa Department, under the Intersectoral and Interdisciplinary Programme of Action for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence. It proposes a participatory action research project on African humanism knowledge for peace and development in equilibrium with nature and in the context of eco-planetary humanism.

The Community of Practices, through a transdisciplinary approach, offers to start with two projects proposed by the UNESCO Chair in Culture of Peace of the University of Cocody (Abidjan, Ivory Coast):

1. *Research-action project on endogenous methods for conflicts prevention and resolution in Africa*
2. *Panafrican contest for conflicts prevention and resolution at school and university*

In the first period, from April to December 2014, only one was activated.

The Community of Practices implies the use of a dedicated web space with two different areas: one open access area for the public while the other as a private web space dedicated to the research community. The website aims at providing the Network of Foundations and Research Institutions with a concrete backup for discussion and sharing of ideas and experiences for the promotion of a culture of peace in Africa.

The Home Page presents some general information on the projects of the Community of Practice while one section is dedicated to news and events. The latter will disseminate Community activities

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<sup>4</sup> Actually the partnership is regulated by a specific agreement between Network of Foundations and Research Institutions for the promotion of a culture of peace in Africa and Department of Education and Psychology of University of Florence.

and informations about events of national and international relevance linked to the research community.

Moreover, from the Home Page it is possible to access a public section of multimedia library, with the Portfolio of research and some main selected documents.

Access to Web Research Community is restricted through login and it offers to researcher community a set of on line management tools: forum, workshops, etc.

The use of an online “Community of Practice” represents a tool for sharing and promoting best practices in research in different disciplinary sectors and their internationalization through multimedia tools and international events.

### **3. Contributions by Transdisciplinary UNESCO Chair on Human Development and Culture of Peace**

#### **3.1 Team Research**

1. Paolo Orefice, Chair Director, University of Florence (Italy)
2. Giovanna Del Gobbo, Coordinator, University of Florence (Italy)
3. Gilda Esposito, Fellow Researcher, University of Florence (Italy)
4. Glenda Galeotti, Fellow Researcher, University of Florence (Italy)
5. Caterina Benelli, Researcher, University of Messina (Italy)
6. Carlo Orefice, Fellow Researcher, University of Florence (Italy)
7. Chiara Balestri, junior research, University of Florence (Italy)
8. Anthony Ngaghan, Master student, University of Florence (Italy)
9. Alice Righini, Master student, University of Florence (Italy)
10. Laura Cristina Vieira Pizzi, Researcher, Federal University of Alagoas (Brazil)
11. Tamara Madariaga, Researcher, University of Santiago (Chile)

#### **3.2 Introduction, by Paolo Orefice**

In an Eco-humanist vision, at the same time global and local, earth citizenship represents the road and the goal in front of the challenges of material/immaterial development. It is nourished by earth's Civilization and should be representative of all cultures, nations, peoples and individuals.

Earth civilization does not develop in fear and violent wars and conflicts, be them large or small, bloody or bloodless. On the contrary it is fed with transdisciplinary, transnational and transcultural empathic intelligence.

Seeds of planetary culture, sprout from the traditional and new richness of material and immaterial heritage, within the countless cultures of the 204 States in the world.

Any human production represents a potential reservoir of knowledge to be exploited in the present. Studying such knowledge can lead to new and interesting research perspectives. For humankind the change takes effect internally in the way of being and thinking and express our humanity, and also externally when we transform and use the environment in which we live. Human and environmental changes are structurally intertwined. This interactive process of human settlement varies over time, allowing the unfolding of various forms of human populations. Such populations live their lives, generation after generation, in order to realize and fulfill their individual and collective destiny.

The change affects both the tangible dimensions of personal development (body and bodies) and the development of territories (technological material production of culture and society). That leads to a synthesis of individual and collective knowledge in the same territory.

Knowledge is constructed through material and immaterial production sedimented and selected during the time in same social and cultural reality. This symbolic system encodes, legitimizes, stores and transmits sensations, emotions, ideas, feelings and contributes to create shared meanings. In this process, signs and meanings constructed by human communities mingle with the signs and meanings of the natural environment (elements, flora and fauna).

All the above is especially true for wonderful Africa. Africa is the cradle of humanity and diversity. It can contribute with its thousands of cultures to building a renewed culture of peace that also take into consideration equilibrium of the Planet. African people, characterized by a privileged relationship with Nature, can offer a "metissage" of knowledge which carries a different vision of the past, the present and the future to come.

### **3.3 Presentation of contributions, by Giovanna Del Gobbo**

The proposed focus of research of colleagues of the Team have to be considered as starting point for beginning discussion on the practices of prevention and conflict management in the context of African culture and, in particular, as expression of African Humanism. The two projects proposed by the UNESCO Chair in Culture of Peace of the University of Cocody offer many reflections points.

The Research Team decided to start the reflection not stressing much the reconstruction of the practices, traced and collected in the documents, but interpreting, through their deconstruction and analysis, thinking also at a possible use in contexts different from those of origin. Only to know about the practices that are an expression of African humanism is not sufficient: we think that we must be able to transform knowledge into value for the use and guidance for responsible action towards the development of a culture of peace. This is a way to recognize African humanism a source of knowledge and reflection.

In particular, the research team has identified some principal focus:

- a. the possibility to interpret traditional practices as a form of non-formal education that contributes to the construction of communicative-relational skills, in line with international guidelines (WHO, EU, OECD) with respect to fundamental skills for life and well-being of individuals and community (Del Gobbo, Esposito, Balestri, Ngaghan);
- b. the possibility of transforming the practices not only in elements of knowledge to be spread, but also in educational practices to be transferred into the world of formal education (education, vocational education) both in Africa then in the rest of the world through proper deconstruction and transformation in learning objects and educational methodologies (Del Gobbo, Balestri, Pizzi, Madariaga);
- c. the possibility to recognize the value of African humanism in terms of cultural connotation of skills that have to be validated and used in the business world, even in cases of migration (Del Gobbo, Ngaghan);
- d. the possibility of transforming the local indigenous practices in practice applicable and effectively transferable to other contexts for the prevention and management of conflicts, with particular reference to emergency situations and critical encounters between cultures (Esposito, Benelli, C. Orefice);
- e. the possibility to launch comparative studies that highlight, as indeed expected from the developments of the Forum of Luanda, the value of local knowledge in a global perspective, providing an opportunity not only to learn but also to know how to

interpret and develop a know-how that is likely to remain at the margins that can be exploited without the educational potential for local sustainable development (Galeotti, C. Orefice, Pizzi, Madariaga);

- f. the possibility to identify innovative ways of using and disseminating the knowledge of African practices for prevention and management of conflicts through the clarification of the intangible component associated with practices of cultural artifacts, objects often found in museums or through other forms of dissemination (C. Orefice, Righini);
- g. the possibility to connect the practices observed in the development of processes of active citizenship and democratization in the context of African Humanism (transversal).

### 3.4 Abstracts

**GIOVANNA DEL GOBBO**

**KEY WORDS**

Competences, capabilities, best practices, transferability, validation of competences

**ABSTRACT**

The contribution is both theoretical and methodological. Is it possible enhance the know-how that Africa also expressed outside of Africa? The best practices for prevention and management of conflict can become positive skills (competence, capabilities) to use and implement in the life and in the work?

First it is important to clarify the concept of competence, seeing it as very close to the concept of capability (Sen, Nussbaum, Forster, Anand) when we interpret it as connected to freedom, well-being, attention to the social traditional knowledge that a community expresses. The concept of competence is related to the ability to consciously and effectively use the knowledge in relation to meaningful contexts, which is not only reproductive performance, but also the solution of problems . The scope is both a "appearance", performance, and a "look inside" the mental mastery of the processes carried out; therefore, a competence is defined both in terms of observable performance, and on that of the flow of cognitive operations that are done "in the head" of the subject. Competence involves both a knowledge (declarative knowledge) and a know-how (procedural knowledge), but is also more. As pointed out by an OECD definition of each competency involves cognitive dimensions, skills, attitudes, motivation, values, emotions together also a social and cultural factors contribute to the fact that jurisdiction can also be referred to as the ability to respond to individual and social needs (OECD, 2003). Competence is an "instrument of action" (eg. Resolution of conflicts) and in this sense requires both knowledge that metacognition: a real expertise is not limited to the mastery of execution, but includes some representation of its structure and its criteria, although this does not necessarily come with the ability to verbal description. Competence is therefore not only the ability to do, but to explain "how" and "why you do it".

It should also clarify the concept of *good practice* because it helps to understand the meaning of the transferability of know-how associated with African Humanism.

A good practice is not in fact the story of a successful, unique and unrepeatable, but it fits into a modeling process of the practice in various contexts: it is a building on the experience of thumb that considered effective for their achievements, for the characteristics of internal quality and for their contribution to the solution of particular problems. A good practice to be shared and shareable,

potentially achievable in other contexts. In the frame defining best practices are definitely traceable two important purposes: the possibility of a good practice to guide public decisions on the adoption of models or tools have been tried with success (the transferability of practices in formal education), and the ability to promote sharing and transfer of know-how. These two objectives are the basis of the reading of the documents of Cop. The cop can open an action of "positive contamination" between African realities. In this sense, it is significant to point out that there is a logical connection between the concept of consistency of practice and the model of educational practice. The so-called good educational practice has received several systematizations: a good practice, for example, should have both bottom-up character, as it is built on the basis of experiences and positive specimens that require transferable in broader contexts, is both a top-down, as it requires the foreshadowing of a systematized set of hypotheses to be tested empirically. In this sense, the Cop could contribute to transform the Network in a "Learning Network".

## **CATERINA BENELLI**

### **KEY WORDS**

Communities of practice; Stories of migration and hospitality; Exchanges of cultural and traditional knowledge for the prevention of conflicts.

### **ABSTRACT**

The proposal of research is related to Lampedusa (Sicily- Italy) and intends to explore the emergence and systematic patterns of exchange and intercultural integration of knowledge between immigrants and the local population as a *practice of conflict's prevention*.

Lampedusa appears as a privileged place at international level, for observing, studying for implementation of *peace education* interventions. Since the majority of immigrants have African origins, transmission of life histories and traditions of knowledge takes place through orality and exchange stories. The research will can verify the permanence and the positive contribution that traditional systems of migrant population may offer to prevent and manage conflicts in new contexts.

It is possible to investigate and to learn (in depth) the current exchange of knowledge and how it is handled the coexistence of different cultural realities through the collection of life histories of the local population of Lampedusa and stories of immigrants.

## **CHIARA BALESTRI**

### **KEY WORDS**

Skills, attitudes and competences for peace, traditional games,

### **ABSTRACT**

This research reflects on how the local tradition of the African continent must be recognized, preserved and transmitted starting from the community level, as a living laboratory to develop key skills for building a culture of peace in daily life and beyond.

The research has raised some interesting opinions from key witnesses (Dr. Jean-Bosco Butera, director of the University for Peace - Africa Programme (UPEACE, UPEACE), Addis Ababa,

Ethiopia, Dr. Kouassi Malanhoua Aimé collaborator of the UNESCO Chair in culture of Peace, the University Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), Mr E. Firmin Matoko - Director of the liaison Office of the UNESCO Addis Ababa) and specifically examined two African practices. In particular, we took into consideration: the "game" of verbal Sanankouya (West Africa) and the institution of Bashingantahe (Burundi).

The research reflects on effective communicative, interpersonal skills such as communication, self-awareness, listening, empathy, ability to cooperate, that are essential for management of conflicts. These skills, indeed so central in Western society, are also found within some African local practices, with specific characteristics whose comprehension must be deepened.

## **GILDA ESPOSITO**

### **KEY WORDS**

Migrations, conflicts, integration, mutual understanding

### **ABSTRACT**

Since early spring 2014, more than 130 asylum seekers, mainly from West Africa, have been sheltered in La Spezia, a small province north west of Italy. The city faces the challenges and the opportunity to accompany and support the integration of this small African community, to prevent conflicts and to raise local awareness about this phenomenon. The research intends to collect life stories and reconstructions paths of travel of West African asylum seekers who have arrived in La Spezia: the focus will be on the knowledge and skills of peace and conflict resolution, which they carry from their culture of origin. A cross cutting analysis will be carried out using the available documentation uploaded on the CoP platform. It is assumed that those skills can contribute to their integration and coexistence in a foreign country, as well as in the construction of a life plan based on a culture of peace that will enhance their skills in new contexts of insertion and education for work. The acquired knowledge should improve mutual understanding and prevention and management of conflicts within the African community in the city and possibly be scaled up and transferred in other parts of Italy". The results of the research, which face a phenomenon absolutely new to Italy, will be used primarily by social workers who work with asylum seekers, by decision makers in local governance, but will also be made available to an extensive network of researchers in Africa and Europe, beside of course the Community of Practice administered by the UNESCO Chair in Florence.

## **GLENDA GALEOTTI**

### **KEY WORDS**

Traditional Mayan Law, practices of conflict resolution, non-formal and informal learning, education for peace.

### **ABSTRACT**

Starting from UPEACE document, this proposal aims to extend the investigation on conflict resolution practices comparing it to the Mayan communities of Guatemala, Central America. It intends to develop a case study on the traditional systems adopted by Guatemalan populations to

prevent and resolve local conflicts, according to Mayan traditional law. Especially, the focus will be knowledge and skills that drive these practices and training devices that facilitate their learning. Mayan and African traditional conflict resolution schemes will converge to define proposals for peace education with an universal scope.

## CARLO OREFICE

### KEY WORDS

Communities of Practice; multimedia languages; cognitive models; approach to learning

### ABSTRACT

Considering that the research project altogether adopts the CoP as a method and as a process, this research focuses on how multimedia tools (web platforms, interactive forums, etc.), due to their highly interactive nature, can be regarded as educational instruments able to simultaneously involve several parties (partners) and technological environments, in the specific African scenario. It aims to monitor and show the different “cognitive motivations” used by partners in relation to the contents and forms of the technology used within the CoP.

The research questions are:

Are the web platform and the interactive forum (designed and created to be "engaging and user friendly") able to enhance human skills such as thinking, creativity, expressivity, the ability to relate to others? How are they “culturally oriented”?

How technological gaps and cognitive models influence the exploitation of tools used by CoP based upon the “procedural” logic (stress/content verification /return)?

How to deal with the fact that many of the CoP's african partners see their culture passed on in a primarily verbal form rather than a binary one which is far more common in the Western world?

### KEY WORDS

traditional medical knowledge; bio-medicine; peace definitions; implicit knowledge

### ABSTRACT

This research focuses on traditional medical knowledge in order to identify which precise “medical transformations” influence culture of peace, intended as “la paix est la quiétude, la tranquillité sociale et psychologique”. The research is based on the document "*Multi-Partenariat en faveur d'une culture de la paix en Afrique. Agissons pour la paix*" where 800 interviews have been carried out by university students from the Academic Year 2008/09. Students link the possibility of a “long lasting peace” in their country with “*transformations politiques, socio-économiques, sécuritaires, socio-psychologiques, juridiques, médicales, éducatives et dans d'autres secteurs*”. In the definition of such conditions, the medical/health environment appears to be one of the most important factors. The reason for this is the link between the idea of peace being inhibited by elements such as disease, illness and sickness. The research intends to analyse some of the responses given in the student's interviews, verify the availability of any documents relating to traditional medical knowledge in Congo that might have been used for this analysis, collect testimonials to create a comprehensive study (Atlante) of “traditional medical knowledge” (if such research will be possible).

## **ALICE RIGHINI**

### **KEY WORDS**

Non formal and informal Education, educational role of the museum; peace education;

### **ABSTRACT**

The research builds on recognition of the educational and social role of Museums in contemporary society. The researcher intends to present the document “Peace Education In Africa From A Cultural Perspective”, edited by Ethiopian Upeace Africa Programme, to the curator of African section of the *Etnografiska museet* of Stockholm and to students. The hypothesis is that endogenous practices, when understood and systematized, can contribute to prevent conflicts and maintain peace. It studies the transition from an informal cultural system to a structured educational system. The informants will be asked if according to their experience in everyday life they have recognized forms of endogenous practices useful to prevent conflicts and maintain peace, as related to the quoted document. The study inquires also about the opportunity to introduce specific educational curricula for peace in the school system in Africa.

## **ANTHONY YOUNESS NGAGHAN MAMBOUNDOU**

### **KEY WORDS**

informal education, peace education, traditional education, conflicts prevention .

### **ABSTRACT**

Pygmies, who are located in Central Africa people, are the autochtons people of Gabon. These people have a special relationship with music. It occupies a central place in the harmony between individuals which composed the group. For them, the song is not just entertainment, but has a big importance. Its importance justifies the fact that this art is taught to the components of the group from an early age. We'll try to find out specificities of there songs and the way of transmission. That argument should be usefull to show how informal competences can be the base for more complex competencies to use in formal education and jobs contexts.

## **LAURA CRISTINA VIERA PIZZI**

### **KEY WORDS**

school curriculum, values, cultural diversity and peace.

### **ABSTRACT**

As an educator and curriculum researcher, I have observed African descendants and their social movements in Brazil and their struggles aiming to have their culture recognized and valued at all level of Brazilian society, particularly in schools. The curriculum has been one of the arenas where those demands strategically come manifesting, by having a clear understanding of cultural and political role of curriculum and schools. As an example, 10 years ago a national law<sup>5</sup> passed, compelling to offer knowledge relating to the Afro-Brasilian History and Culture in the curricula of

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<sup>5</sup> Lei n. 10.639/2003.

all public and private schools of our country, as recognition of the importance of Africa in building Brazilian society for centuries.

In fact, the curriculum has long ceased to be understood as a table of contents of knowledge, often scientific, that an educational institution should offer to its students in its various levels, although this is still an important component of school curriculum. The curriculum today is mostly understood in the field of culture. It is through the curriculum that certain cultures and social values materialize within the school. And as culture, is also an arena of disputes and selections of knowledge, practices and values that form identities and subjectivities, in order to educate active and critical citizens to live in the contemporary world, with sense of rights, responsibilities and sense of cultural belonging as well.

Yet, as a field of culture, the curriculum is the expression of cultural diversity, ethnic, religious, gender relations, ethics, respect of nature, political participation and culture of peace and those issues are not only present in the knowledge to be transmitted, but also through the “hidden curriculum”<sup>6</sup>, ie, in the very social relations that are established within the institution that can serve as a standard to live in a more democratic and just society, beyond school walls. And here it seems that the contribution of this more complex understanding of curriculum may prove relevant, since the culture of peace may be a content to be taught, but also an experience that can be lived within school.

## **TAMARA MADARIAGA**

### **KEY WORDS**

Collaborative culture; integrated development, relation between academic know-how and local knowledge, best practices of conflicts resolution and university communities.

### **ABSTRACT:**

There are many problems facing the various groups or communities of Chilean society in terms of violence and peaceful resolution of conflicts required for sustainable human development. Some examples are: educational communities, indigenous peoples, stigmatized and socially excluded groups, among many others.

This question is closely linked to the social need for lifelong learning and fair as a way to counter the continuing obsolescence of much knowledge and the emergence of new, in a global culture that is diversified and is becoming more and more complex and therefore requires a systemic approach that considers at any time that the building is a complex personality, active and dynamic process that takes place in the culture, in collaboration with others.

Many organizations are involved in promoting a culture of peace they lack theoretical, ideological, methodological and didactic that guarantee not only the quality of the content but also the availability of people who play the role of "social workers" are characterized by being deeply motivated to promote the integral development of persons and children in training, and for this, they are able to feed the knowledge of citizens according to their needs, interests and motivations, which requires the use of creativity, knowledge and open innovation, which are connected between them and facilitate the solution of its problems peacefully most of the time. University is of course one of these organizations and it is necessary to deepen the reflection about what means prevention and resolution of conflict inside and for a better work related with outside: University has to work for improve reality and to prepare social workers. For this reason, and because the important role of

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<sup>6</sup> Concept defined by Michael Apple e Henry Giroux (EUA), in the 80s e 90s.

these individuals and organizations in our society, has a technical and professional recognition, it is proposed to carry out the systematic training of "social workers" through a training program conducted in collaboration with the Chair UNESCO UNIFI, sensitive to the needs to formalize and deepen the knowledge of these individuals and organizations and is aimed at strengthening the capacity of learning to learn both individual and social, considering the inclusion of this ability to ensure the continued development of each person .

It also provides for the collection of written and audiovisual materials on issues related to the intangible cultural heritage and the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the production of a series of documentaries in order to establish the relationship between academia and local knowledge, which should shape the practices of community in relation to the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and then share with the community and then spread to other companies.