

**TRADING TRADITION:  
TRANSMITTING MASKED RITUALS THROUGH GENERATIONS**

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**SUMMARY**

In recent years emphasis on the transmission of cultural practices through time has been placed more on rupture, innovation and 'invention' rather than on continuity. The ethnography of the modalities for the transmission of masking practices with reference to the Ladin Carnival of the Val di Fassa (Dolomites, Northern Italy) Bulgaria and Northern Croatia (but no doubt also elsewhere in Europe) suggests that the weakening of the historic function of masquerading as a rite de passage has on the one hand 'privatized' the masks, but has on the other hand fostered the search for 'authenticity' and 'philological continuity' of contemporary masking practices.

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Born in 1953, Cesare Poppi studied Philosophy and Social Anthropology at the Universities of Bologna and Cambridge. He has conducted research on masks and related issues amongst the Ladins of the Dolomites (N Italy) and the Gur-Grushi of Northwestern Ghana (West Africa). Having taught at the Universities of East Anglia, Norwich (UK) and Bologna (I), he now teaches at the Universities of Lugano (CH) and Trento (I). He is the scientific advisor to the EU-sponsored project 'Carnival King of Europe' ([www.carnivalkingofeurope.it](http://www.carnivalkingofeurope.it)). Details of his publications and other activities can be found online.

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