

unesco sources



SILK ROADS : A DIALOGUE RENEWED



MONGOLIA'S NEWS AGENCY : A WINDOW ON THE WORLD
CAPE VERDE : LITERACY RHYMES WITH LIBERTY

IDEAS AND OPINIONS

Empty Rhetoric

*Ms Sputnik Kilambi
Journalist
Paris, France*

As a journalist who does a regular programme on Human rights, I began reading **SOURCES'** issue on the subject with interest, but found my interest rapidly turning to dismay. It's all very well to publish long articles on the importance of human rights and the conventions and declarations Unesco has spearheaded. But these instruments have never stopped the violation of these "inalienable" rights, and constantly, all over the world. What good are moralistic lectures on how we should love and respect one another? True enough, but when did sermons achieve anything?

SOURCES' issue on this important subject reads like a self-congratulatory restating and overstating of conferences and declarations without even an attempt to analyse why human rights are violated - the complicity of the West in supporting repressive governments all too ready to impose draconian IMF and World Bank dictated policies on their long suffering populations so long as they fatten their own pockets is a case in point. When will you replace empty rhetoric with a more critical analysis of current problems? Surely, that should be the *raison d'être* of a magazine that calls its **SOURCES**.

Action on two levels

*Ms Jo Carter, Chair
United Nations Association
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Banbury, UK*

The June issue (No 16) of **Sources** provided us with an opportunity for action on two levels. First of all, as a branch of the UNA and as individuals we have lobbied our MP for some months and were indeed disappointed that the UK failed to rejoin Unesco particularly in International Literacy Year.

After reading your article "*Straight from the Hip*" on reforms at Unesco, we have again rewritten our MP.

Secondly, as Governor of three Banbury schools, I have also sent the article "Special Needs in the Classroom" to the schools' special needs departments, as well as to the retired President of the UK Association for Special Needs teachers.

More space for Africa

*Ms Maimouna Ndiaye
Lycee Professor
Dakar, Senegal*

I applaud **SOURCES'** initiative in devoting the central theme of issue No. 15 to "*Africa : Autopsy of a Crisis*". Unfortunately, however, I find your analysis of the situation too hasty and impersonal to be significant. I think the reader would have preferred a few elements of response to the "whys" of the crisis. Your diagnosis lacks depth and a concrete appraisal of the African "experience". Moreover, a consideration of the future prospects for Africa is virtually absent.

The introductory article by Abebayo Adedji, illustrated with eloquent facts, is well argued, but, as a staunch supporter of Unesco, I would have appreciated more information on action the Organization is taking in favour of "sustainable development".

Easy to read, with an agreeable presentation and a diversity of themes, I enjoy **SOURCES** but regret that more space is not devoted to Africa. I realize, however, that this may be difficult for a magazine which must cover the entire world.

We entirely agree with your appeal and, in fact, make a special effort to devote at least one article each month to Africa. In this issue (on pages 18-19), for instance, you will find a report on the literacy campaign in Cape Verde. Previous issues have dealt with a wide range of African concerns, including various aspects of "sustainable development." - Ed

**Readers, this page is yours. Please don't hesitate to share your opinions,
your criticism, your comments on Unesco's activities.
To your pens !**

A voyage of mutual discovery

"Emperors and kings, dukes and marquises, counts, knights and townsfolk, and all people who wish to know the various regions of the world, take this book and have it read to you. Here you will find all the wonders and curiosities of Greater Armenia and Persia, of the Tartars and of India, and of many other territories."

It is with this invitation to the western world to discover the marvels and customs of the Orient that Messer Rustichello of Pisa opens his account of **"The Travels of Marco Polo"** - a vivid description of the Italian merchant's voyages that spanned more than 20 years at the end of the 13th century and took him from the Polar Sea to Java and from Zanzibar to Japan.

However, curiosity to discover the unknown was equally strong in the Orient. To the Polo brothers, Niccolo and Maffeo, these Latins that he was meeting for the first time, the Great Khan, Kubilai (Emperor of China) directed many questions: *"first about the Emperors and their dominions, and the maintenance of justice; then about kings, princes and other nobles. Next he asked about the Lord Pope, and all the practices of the Roman Church and the customs of the Latins. And Messer Niccolo and Messer Maffeo told him all the truth about each matter in due order, well and wisely, like the wise men they were, and with good understanding of the Tartar language."*

Thus the Silk Roads that criss-crossed Asia and the Middle East served not only as routes for the exchange of precious goods, but, and more importantly, as the meeting point of different cultures and a means of spreading knowledge, philosophy, art and religion. Roads of commerce, certainly, but also roads of dialogue between the West and the East.

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Cover Photo : An ancient trail through the Wakhan corridor, once part of the Silk Route linking Central Asia with the Indus Valley (Photo © Thomas Abercrombie, National Geographic Society).

Unesco Sources.

Editor-in-chief : René Lefort
Associate editors : Betty Werther, Sue Williams, Claudine Breuil
Assistant Managing Editor : Christine Mouillère

Lay-out : Gisèle Traiano, Fiona Ryan
Promotion and distribution : Peggy Chaillier

Secretary : Dorine Maarek.

Editorial and Distribution Services :
Unesco Sources, 7, Place de Fontenoy,
75700 Paris. Tel. (1) 45-68-10-00, Fax
45.67.30.72, Telex 200472 France.

Photoengraving and printing in Unesco Workshops. Distribution by Unesco's specialized services.

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ISSN 1014-6989

PEOPLE

Igor, Olga and the others

Holidays for Chernobyl children

Over 1,200 Soviet adolescents from the regions of Moguilév and Gomel in Byelorussia, the areas hardest hit by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, were hosted this summer in 15 Western European countries for a month-long holiday organised by the Soviet authorities and Unesco, in co-operation with the World Scout Bureau, and the Pro-Victims Foundation, Geneva. Sources looked in on 20 of the children in Catalonia, Spain.

UNESCO "VETERANS" HONOURED

It was in a relaxed and congenial atmosphere that Director General, Federico Mayor, met successively during the summer with staff members who had worked at Unesco for over 25 years. Expressing "the deep appreciation of the Organization for their contribution to cooperation and peace," to some 150 international civil servants, he said: "Unesco is not only an ideal. It is also a dream of sharing, of solidarity and of love."



"Veteran" Dominique Roger, our photographer, with Federico Mayor (Photo Unesco/Inez Forbes).

NEW ASSISTANT DIRECTOR GENERAL APPOINTED

Ms. Francine Fournier (Canada) has been appointed to the post of Assistant Director-General for the Social and Human Sciences.

A Doctor of Political Science, Ms. Fournier taught for several years at the University of Montreal before occupying a number of high positions in the Government of Quebec where she was, notably, President of the Commission for the Rights of the Individual.

Secretary-General of the Canadian National Commission for Unesco since 1988, she has participated in many of the Organisation's activities.

KUDOS FOR KHAN

Rafiq Khan (Guyana), Unesco's Regional Communications Adviser in the Caribbean, has been honoured by the Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU) for his "outstanding contribution to regional broadcasting."

The Award, presented recently in Kingston, Jamaica, at a luncheon commemorating CBU's 20th anniversary, singled out Mr. Khan for his leadership role in fostering the entry of privately owned Caribbean broadcasting organizations into the Union.

A wisp of unruly blond hair couldn't hide the excitement of Igor, 13, as he stared wide-eyed at the swimming pool behind the big house in Belianes, where, with 20 other adolescents, aged 13 to 15, he was spending a holiday in the heart of Catalonia, Spain. Igor, like Olga and the others, some orphaned or abandoned by parents who could no longer support them, were in the Chernobyl zone when disaster hit on April 26, 1986. Igor's family has been moved, for instance, and his life disrupted.

Convinced that what these children needed was a change of scene and a big dose of the carefree childhood which seemed to be passing them by,



A group of Chernobyl children at Unesco Headquarters (Photo Unesco/Dominique Roger).

the Soviet authorities contacted Unesco which, in turn, asked the World Scout Bureau for help. What followed, in countries throughout Western Europe, was a massive show of solidarity in true Scout and Guide tradition, with the result that what the youngsters got was more than just a vacation. It was real adventure.

About 100 of the children went to Spain where they split into three groups, going either to Catalonia, Basque Country or Madrid and vicinity.

The other Chernobyl children spent the holiday in France, Greece, Ireland, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland,

Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany, Great Britain or Switzerland.

In Catalonia, the Association of Scouts and Guides (Minyons Escoltes i Guies San Jordi de Catalunya) outdid themselves. The day the young Soviets arrived, for instance, they were each given a knapsack, a sleeping bag and sports cloths.

But Olga, 14, says one of her sharpest memories will be of the young Catalan Scouts singing a Russian song at the airport, under a banner welcoming the group in Russian and Catalan.

For three days, the young people visited Barcelona, where, among other sites, Gaudi's magnificent, unfinished

Sagrada Familia Cathedral drew universally understood «Ohs» and «Ahs». In the city, they were distributed in pairs among the families of the *Minyons* and *Guies* who did their best to overcome the language barrier with the help of a Russian-Catalan dictionary.

The fourth day, true to Scout and Guide tradition, the group

went to the beautiful Boi Valley, in the foothills of the Pyrenees, for two weeks of camping.

Then, via Barcelona again where they visited the Olympic Stadium, they headed for the spacious villa in Belianes where Igor divided his time between the swimming pool, excursions and a kite-making workshop.

When they left Catalonia and Spain, after a month of adventure and discovery, Igor said to his new friends, «Volveré» - «I'll be back!» - if possible, he hopes, to attend the Barcelona Olympics in 1992.

Vicenç Pagès

PEOPLE

Vadime Elisseeff : A taste for universality

A great biologist once said : «A scientist is a god first and a human being afterwards.» But for all his science, Vadime Elisseeff is basically a kind-hearted, jovial and considerate man whose inquiring mind knows no bounds.

Chairman of the International Consultative Committee for the Silk Roads Project, a historian, linguist, orientalist, professor, museum curator, diplomat, archaeologist and poet, he was born in Saint Petersburg in 1918. Of French



Vadime Elisseeff, chairman of the Silk Road Consultative Committee

parentage, he speaks English, Russian, Japanese and Chinese. His penchant for intellectual pursuits did not prevent him from breaking records in swimming and earning distinction as a horseman. A man of many cultures and branches of learning, he personifies the taste for universality and the interest in otherness that are at the core of the Silk Roads Project. A few words suffice to express his enthusiasm for the integral study of the Roads : «It's my whole career, my whole life.»

«History - that is, the philosophical explanation of the world - tends to be compartmentalized,» says Vadime Elisseeff. «But history is not linear. It is more of a branching process. For example, many aspects of the Silk Roads have already been studied, often very thoroughly. However, the connections between these aspects seem to have been somewhat neglected, such

as the historical link between the horse trade and the silk trade. The time has now come to take stock of a steadily increasing store of information. The *Integral Study of the Silk Roads* draws on all available sources of knowledge and all existing networks. But it is a very difficult undertaking : hitherto, international co-operation has often been viewed as a process of channeling international contributions into a national study, rather than as an international study in its own right. Unesco is in a unique position to rise above nationalist fervour.»

Vadime Elisseeff is well acquainted with Unesco : a founding member of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in 1946 and Vice-Chairman of the French National Commission's Cultural Committee, he was sent on assignments to Ulan Bator in 1966 and to Cambodia in 1970, where he was involved in the first wartime application of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property.

Above all, he was a key participant in 1956 in the Major Project on Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Values and drafted its joint declaration. The yellowing pages of the document reflect the continuity of purpose between the Major Project and the Silk Roads Project, both of them seeking to bring out «the universal character» of individual cultures and «the vitality of cultures» in general, and to «highlight not only similarities but also differences, which are equally deserving of respect» ... «But in the case of the East-West project,» he adds, «Unesco showed that it was possible to get to know one another better. Our ambition today with the Silk Roads Project is to go one step further and work together.»

Vadime Elisseeff did not take part in the first expedition in July. «It's something I had always dreamed of, but that's life,» he says regretfully, though smiling broadly. «Proper preparations for a voyage are made on shore. I felt that it was not the business of members of the Consultative Committee to go on the expedition. It served me right ! after all, I needn't have agreed to chair the Committee !»

Max Cerrans

EUROPEAN «PEPINIERES» FOR YOUNG ARTISTS

Fifteen Germans, eleven British, eight French, four Italians and one Luxemburger, in all 39 innovators, have been awarded grants through the «European Pepinieres for Young Artists - Eurocreation».

The laureats, whose names were announced at Unesco Headquarters on July 7, were selected from among 123 candidates chosen on the basis of 800 dossiers received. Aged 20 to 35, they will benefit from a scholarship enabling them to carry out research, creation and production in one of 10 cities in the «Pepinieres» network : Bethume and Grenoble for the plastic arts ; Glasgow and Naples - plastic arts and photoreportage ; Niort and Dortmund - art and the environment ; Frankfurt and Marseille - images and new technologies ; Marseille - sound and new technologies - Luxembourg and Lisbon - script writing.

The project, conceived and organized by Eurocreation, the French Office of Young Innovators in Europe, receives financial support from Unesco's International Fund for the Promotion of Culture.

EDUCATION FOR PEACE PRIZE

Ms Rigoberta Menchú Túm (Guatemala) and the organization World Order Models Project (WOMP) have been selected by an international jury as joint winners of the 1990 Unesco Prize for Peace Education.

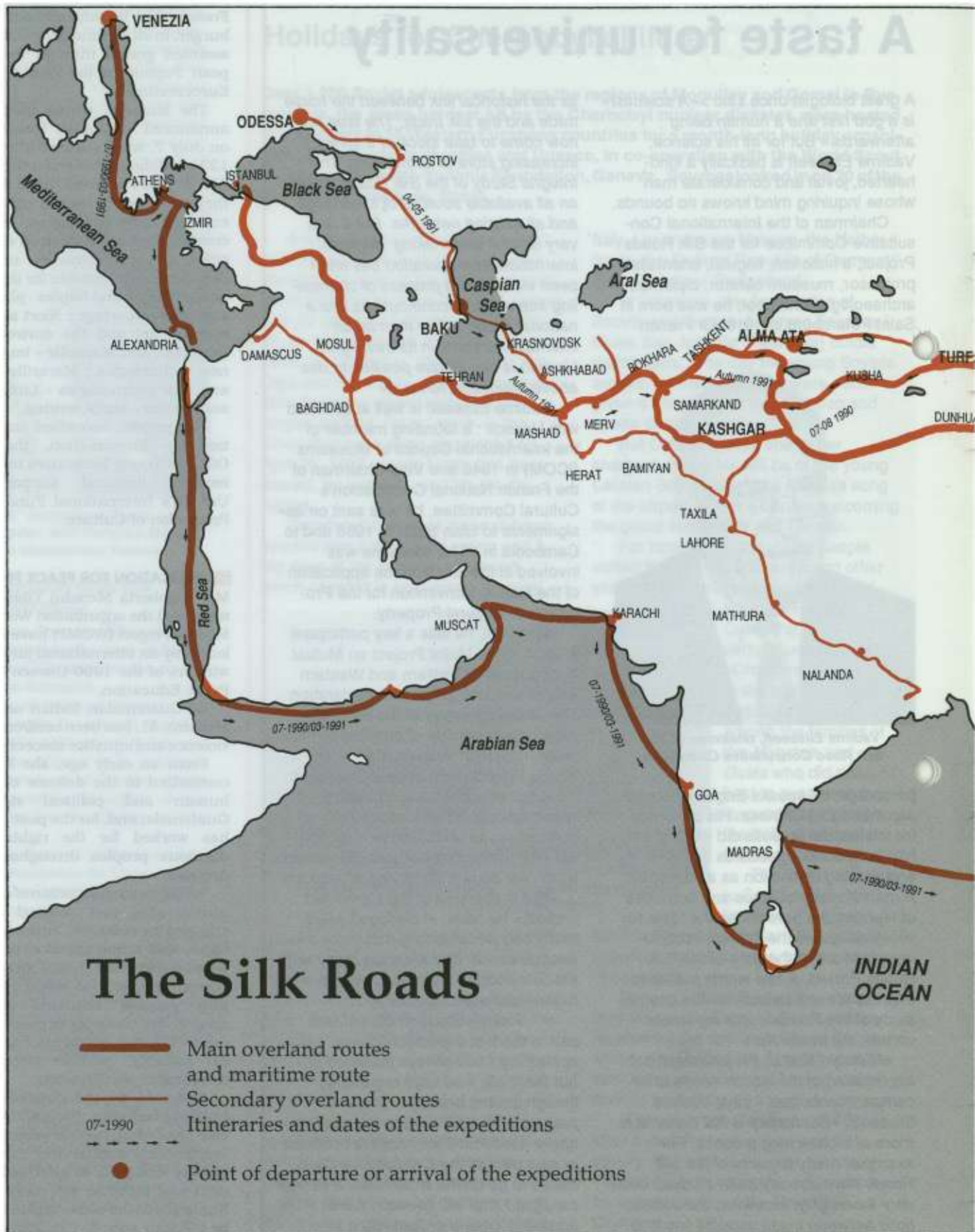
Of Guatemalan Indian origin, Ms Menchú, 31, has been confronted with violence and injustice since childhood.

From an early age, she has been committed to the defence of Indian, human and political rights in Guatemala, and, for the past 10 years, has worked for the rights of indigenous peoples throughout Latin America.

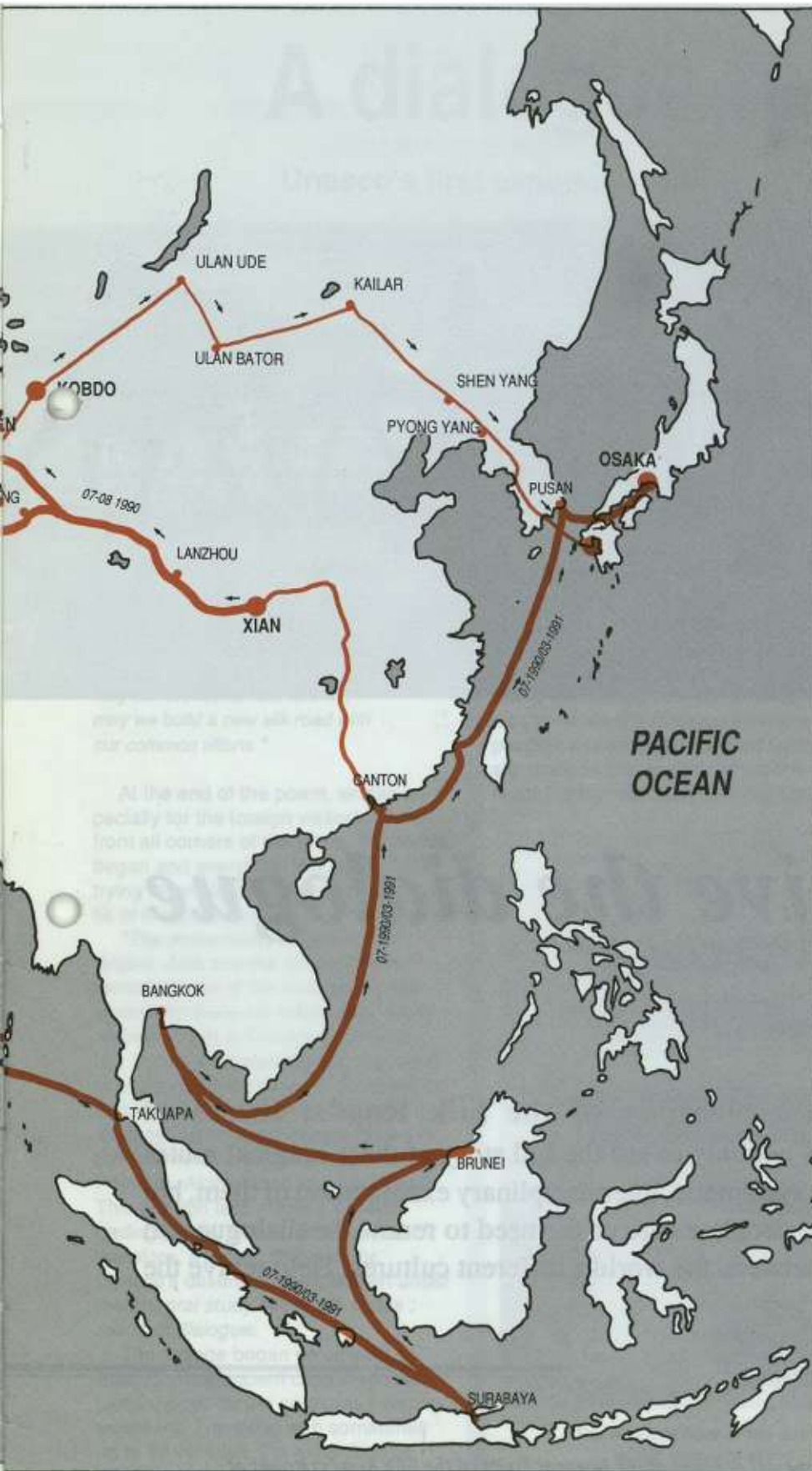
WOMP is an association of scholars, intellectuals, and political activists engaged in research, education, dialogue, and action aimed at promoting a just world order. Using an analytic/ethical approach to world problems, they propose solutions organized around the concepts of peace, economic well-being, social justice, ecological stability, positive identity and meaningful participation.

Endowed by the Japanese Shipbuilding Industry, the \$60,000 Prize was created in 1980 to recompense a "particularly outstanding example of activity designed to alert public opinion and mobilize the conscience of humanity in the cause of peace". It will be officially awarded at Unesco Headquarters on September 20.

FACTS IN FIGURES



FACTS IN FIGURES



A simplified version of the map drawn up by Prof. A.H. Dani (Pakistan) and Dr. B.K. Thapar (India), members of the Consultative Committee for the Silk Roads project. Only the most important overland and maritime routes have been included. On the other hand, the most northern route via Ulan-Bator (Mongolia) and Pyongyang (North Korea) has been added since it will be followed by an upcoming expedition.

For more than two thousand years the silk roads, linking the west to the orient, opened the way for an exchange of philosophies, religions, art and knowledge that has helped shape the world we live in today.



Help revive the dialogue

Unesco's Integral Study of the Silk Roads: Roads of Dialogue aims not only to tell the full story of these magical routes through the first systematic, interdisciplinary examination of them, but also to make the people aware of the need to renew the dialogue and understanding between the world's different cultures. Help revive the dialogue.

*Contributions may be sent to the special account of the Integral Study of the Silk Roads: Roads of Dialogue, Chase Manhattan Bank, 18 Boulevard Malesherbes, 75008 Paris, France.
Unesco Account No. 77 666 CHIPS UID 019719.*

The Silk Roads : A dialogue renewed

Unesco's first expedition crosses the Chinese desert

The Silk Roads - the name conjures up images of searing, waterless deserts, snowbound mountain passes and intrepid travellers of another age braving all odds to exchange precious cargoes of silk (p.13), spices and other treasures in exotic, far-flung-markets from Xian to Rome. This incredible network also served as a link between the world's great civilizations - Greek and Roman, Arab, Indian and Chinese (p.11) - and as a conduit of knowledge, art, religion and philosophy.



Unesco's Integral Study of the Silk Roads : Roads of Dialogue (1987-1997) aims, by examining these exchanges, to renew the dialogue and reveal how much these routes contributed to the shape of today's world. The project moved into the field in July and August with its first expedition - across the desert route in China (pp. 9-10), and several other voyages, along the maritime and steppe routes (p.14), as well as a host of associated projects (pp 15-16) are planned.

"Come, my friends, dance and sing to our hearts content, let our spirit once again enrich the land, may our friendship last forever, may we build a new silk road with our common efforts."

At the end of the poem, written especially for the foreign visitors, come from all corners of the globe, the music began and everybody lept to the floor, trying to emulate the sensual sway and tilt of the local dancers.

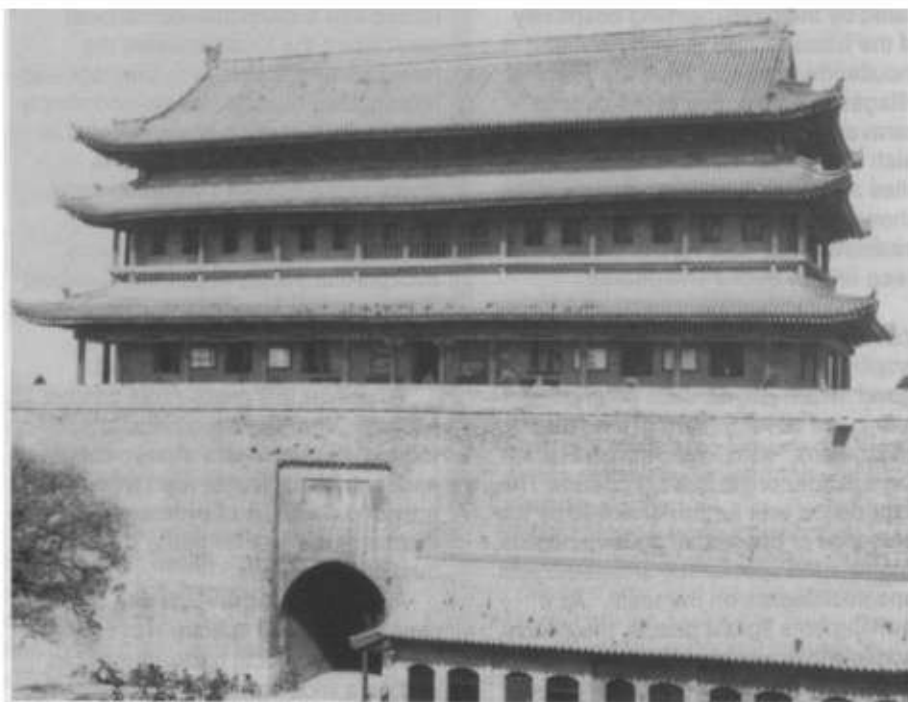
"The movements remind me of Arabia, Asia and the Soviet Union," remarked one of the foreigners. His comments were not misplaced. Hami, an oasis town in China's Gobi desert, is a true cultural melting pot, the result of its key position between the Eastern and Western worlds in what is now the *Xinjiang Uighur* autonomous region in the vast northwest, bordering India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the USSR. This position also made it a major trading centre on the silk road and, therefore, a logical stopover for Unesco's desert route expedition under the *Integral study of the silk roads : roads of dialogue*.

The voyage began on July 20, in Xian, China's ancient capital and departure point for the caravans heading westward. Travelling with sometimes up to 20 vehicles, the expedition of about 100 people, included 25 scholars

from all over the world, seven of China's leading scientists, local specialists who joined the voyage at various stages, an international media team, and a support staff. Their aim was to renew the dialogue between the peoples and nations traversed by the silk roads of old, and to retrace the record of human understanding and

communication which mutually enriched the civilizations along the route.

Sceptics said it couldn't be done, but once underway, the caravan took on a life of its own that broke down the barriers between the scientists, and mobilized the population in the provinces of Shaanxi, Gansu and remote Xinjiang.



The Western Gate of the ancient Chinese capital of Xian, departure point of the caravans of old - and Unesco's Desert Route Expedition (Photo Unesco/X. Kaixuan).

FOCUS

The route took the expedition along the northern silk road that crossed the Gobi and followed the rim of the treacherous Taklamakan desert, which in Uighur means "enter and never return", ending up in Kashgar, the heart of Islam in China, at the foot of the Pamir mountains.

"It's like a pilgrimage", said Jacques Gies, a specialist in Buddhist art and a curator at the Musée Guimet in Paris. "I have made this voyage several times by plane, but it's only by travelling overland with this expedition that I have understood the real dimensions of the silk roads and the incredible feat achieved by the ancient travellers".

Daytime temperatures in Xinjiang hovered around 50°C, and even with the comfort of air-conditioning in the vehicles, the journey proved physically taxing. The expedition covered almost 10,000 km by road, mostly along narrow strips of bitumen used more frequently by donkey carts than cars, let alone two big coaches, numerous mini-buses and other assorted vehicles. As the convoy moved into desert areas, the road often became a rough and dusty track, gouged by flash-flooding, blocked by landslides, or plunging away on one side into deep river gorges.

Overwhelming hospitality

The fatigue, the heat, and the dust were, however, more than compensated by the overwhelming hospitality of the hosts. From Xian to Kashgar, thousands of people lined the roads of villages to take a look at the curious caravan, to welcome the travellers and wish them well. At the innumerable sites and museums, the scholars were shown archaeological and artistic treasures they had, for the most part, seen only in books and photos.

"It is extraordinary to be able to put these objects together with the geography and history of this part of the world, which played such an important role in the development of several civilizations," said Prof. Ahmad Hasan Dani, leader of the scientific team. The experience was further enriched by the presence of historians, anthropologists, linguists, art specialists, archaeologists and sociologists on the team. As if working on a jigsaw puzzle, they each added a piece of knowledge to help explain, for instance, the presence of Graeco-Indian clothing, hair and facial features in many of the magnificent stucco statues and frescos in the

"Buddhist Art Gallery of the Desert" at the Mogao caves near Dunhuang in Gansu Province. The same was true of the "Karez" underground irrigation system that gives life to the city of Turfan in Xinjiang. This system, which uses gravity to bring groundwater to the surface, is believed to have originated in Persia.

Indeed, the faces of the people themselves reveal their rich and complex past. Xinjiang, for example, has a population of about 14 million, comprising some 47 different nationalities, including, to mention but a few, Uighur, Han, Kazakhs, Hui, Mongols, Kirghiz, Tadjik, Uzbek, Manchu, Tatar and Russian.

These people are fiercely proud of their heritage and took every opportunity to show it off to the expedition members. They were also intensely curious to observe the ways and manners of the foreigners. In Korla, for example, a programme of Mongolian song and dance turned into a distinctly international affair when the locals insisted the foreign professors take to the floor and display their own talents beyond simply a capacity for taking copious notes or engaging in endless discussions. Some of the scholars were too timid, but others complied. German art historian, Christa Paula, graciously accepted to yodel, while Prof. Ganbold Jamyangiin of Mongolia rendered songs from his homeland with which the delighted hosts clearly identified.

Wherever this grass-roots contact occurred, the "Dialogue" intensified. Indeed, dance, music, shared meals and long hours on the road together provided a means of overcoming language barriers far better than the best of interpreters.

At the scientific level, these contacts revealed a broad spectrum of intellectual and theoretical backgrounds, as well as a wide variety of approaches to different fields of study. "We also have different 'world views'," said American anthropologist, Dr. Richard Stamps.



Ceremony in Xian Inaugurating the Desert Route Expedition : Doudou Diene, Project Co-ordinator (left) and Ahmad Hasan Dani, leader of the scientific team (centre) with local performers and dignitaries (Photo © Sun Yifu/China Pictorial).

"For example, the Chinese, though national experts, have not really had the time to put their learning into a larger perspective."

Prof. Xu Pingfang of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and leader of the Chinese scientific team, agreed that "our views do not always coincide," but added, "This voyage has enabled Chinese scholars to make friends with their counterparts from other countries. They can now correspond and expand on this exchange of knowledge." He also suggested that some western scholars "who, in my opinion, tended to oversimplify the situation, may now see that the history and culture of China are more intricate than meets the eye."

Regardless of academic differences, the participants in this unique voyage had the impression of being in a magical time machine, travelling several thousand years into the past and bouncing back to modern China with all its contradictions and enigmas. Some were left frustrated, most were exhausted, but all were thirsty for more.

Sue Williams

FOCUS

THE PIONEERS OF DIALOGUE Merchants, Scholars and Missionaries

It was essentially the rise of great empires in the early centuries of the Christian era that led to the development of trade as well as to the exchange of ideas.

Facilitating these links, the Silk Roads first took form when the Han Emperors of China (206 B.C. - 220 A.D.) tried to force the commodity on their western tribes. The silk, of course, soon became fashionable and coveted as a luxury, but just as important were other textiles, jade, sculpture, art objects, and more ordinary goods carried in either direction to satisfy the demand of peoples living far apart in the empires of the Central Asian Kushanas, the Sassanians of Persia, and the Romans in the West. The Silk Roads formed the first bridge between East and West.

From the 1st to the 4th century A.D., the Kushana Emperors acted as intermediaries between the Roman West and the Chinese East, issuing gold coins on the model of Roman denarii, to facilitate trade.

But the Road also carried scholars, teachers, missionaries, and monks of different beliefs and practices, who met to exchange ideas. This melding of human thought found expression in cave paintings, stone reliefs, monasteries and educational institutions which were the first organized attempt to disseminate knowledge.

Jesuit missionaries, Manicheans, Zoroastrians and Buddhists all followed the Silk Roads, leaving indelible foot-prints of their passage. No wonder the Kushana Emperors represented the deities of all these cultures and beliefs on their coins. There were also Chinese pilgrims, like Xuanzang and Faxian. And Hebrew merchants, Roman artists... travelers of all kinds. Yet, no invader, however fierce, would have dared molest a single one.

Nonetheless it happened that empires fell, and the institutions normally ensuring peaceful contacts broke down, causing passage over the Silk Roads to be obstructed and inter-continental links cut. Such an interruption took place during the 5th century when Hun and Turkic tribes spread into the Central Asia Steppe.

It was only when the T'ang Dynasty began to rule China in 618 that a second chapter opened in the history of the Silk Roads. Starting in that period, the Route began in Chang'an (modern Xian), then divided to skirt the Taklamakan Desert along its northern or its southern fringe, before coming together again in Kashgar. From there, caravans proceeded over the Pamir and Tien-Shan mountains to Samarkand, Bukhara and Merv, across the Caspian Sea to Persia, Turkey and on to Venice.



The monk Xuanzang (602-664) travelled for 16 years around Central Asia and India, later translating sacred Buddhist texts from Sanskrit to Chinese (Photo © NHK Tokyo).

At the same time, the T'ang merchants developed several feeder routes, south across the Karakoram to Kashmir and India, north over the Tien-Shan to Alma Ata, and through Mongolia to Minusinsk.

When difficulties impeded overland travel, the T'ang Emperors opened a maritime route, beginning in Quanzhou

and Guangzhou (Canton) on the south-east Chinese coast. Here, the Arabs acted as intermediaries, encouraging contacts between the T'ang Emperors and the Abbasid Caliphs in Baghdad. Mosul (Al Mawsil in present day Iraq) became an important centre for silk as well as for Chinese porcelain, and other precious goods much in demand throughout the Islamic world.

For many traders, the sea replaced the overland route. New centres were established in what is present day Vietnam, Indonesia, and Thailand, and as far west as Pakistan and Iran.

Travelling by sea also became safer. For again, in the 13th century, many of the land routes were disrupted by the Mongols, until the descendants of Genghis Khan restored order, extending their empire to the West, and inaugurating a third period in the history of the Silk Roads.

It was then that Marco Polo journeyed to the court of Kublai Khan, returning by sea to Venice. In the 14th century, another voyager, Ibn Batuta of Morocco, crossed the Sahara, then the sea to India and on to China. Fabulous stories are told in the accounts of both.

Indeed, the rich currents of exchange during this period contributed to the flourishing of Ming art in China, Timurid art in Central Asia, and that of the great Mughals in India, as well as to the lyrical rhythms and softness of Safavid poetry, music, painting and architecture in Persia, and to a splendid blend of West and East in the art and architecture of the Ottomans.

With advances in the science of navigation during the 15th century, the Europeans gradually replaced the overland by the sea route. Formerly prominent cities and states dwindled in importance and became isolated.

The Silk Roads, once a symbol of human encounter and communion, lost their *raison d'être*, and fell into oblivion. Only today are we seeking to revive the spirit and rediscover the lost threads of exchange, enrichment, and progress so long incarnated by these great arteries.

Ahmad Hasan Dani / Islamabad

FOCUS



*Sheep traders at the bazaar in Khotan, the most important trading centre on the route along the southern rim of the Taklamakan desert
(Photo © NHK, Tokyo)*

FOCUS

THE MAGIC OF SILK

Who would have thought that a worm that thrives on mulberry leaves would have played a key role in the development of the great civilizations stretching from China to the Middle East and Europe? And yet, to the humble bug known as the *Bombyx mori* has been attributed the opening up of the great trade routes linking east and west which allowed not only the exchange of goods, but also of art, philosophy, religion and knowledge. Indeed, these ancient highways even owe their name to the remarkable thread produced by these humble creatures, more commonly known as silkworms. For, it was in quest of the magical and mysterious silk cloth that merchants and fortune hunters travelled the often perilous routes across the mountains and deserts of central Asia to China.

Emperors clothes and fishing lines

Archeological discoveries indicate that the Chinese had mastered silk production up to 2,750 years before Christian Era.

Initially, silk was kept exclusively for the use of the emperor, his close relatives and highest ranking dignitaries. With the rise of a multitude of rival principalities, all aspiring to gain power over the others, the demand for silk spiralled, and production dramatically increased to the point where the tissue began to lose its value. It then began to filter down through the different classes of Chinese society, to highly placed public servants, rich property owners, military officers and even merchants, who were considered then as being hardly above the level of servants. However, apart from clothing, silk thread was also used for the strings of musical instruments, fishing lines and archers bowstrings, while silk waste was used for padding and even paper manufacture.

The quality of the cloth depended much on the expertise of the producers, for the worm proved a particularly fussy beast. According to a 14th century Chinese text by Wang Zhen, the silkworms *"detest eating wet leaves or hot leaves ... (they) detest ... loud noises ... women who have given birth within the last month ... smoke and odours ... open windows exposed to the*

wind ... the light of the setting sun ... cold draughts ...excessive heat ... and dirty people".

The technique for raising the worms and retrieving the silken thread and making it into cloth remained one of the antique world's best kept secrets. It was forbidden under penalty of death to



The mythical emperor Fuxi and his sister or daughter, Nügua, who is credited as being the "inventor" of silk clothes (Photo © NHK Tokyo).

take the eggs or cocoons out of Chinese territory, and, despite the hunger of the western world for the marvelous fabric, it is only towards the fifth century C.E that evidence can be found linking silk production elsewhere. And it is only through legends that any clues can be found as to how the secret slipped out. In one story, a Chinese princess, demanded in marriage by the King of a neighbouring country, probably Khotan, smuggled out some worms and the seeds of mulberry trees

to ensure herself a supply of silk in her new home. In another story, reported by Byzantine historian, Procope, in the sixth century C.E, a group of monks in the employ of the Emperor Justinian smuggled a supply of silkworm eggs out to the west.

A threat to Roman morals

The Romans had been introduced to silk in the first century B.C. Having no knowledge of its origins or its manufacture they had to rely on supplies from Persian merchants, who jealously protected their market, and prevented any direct contact between the Romans and the Chinese. This, along with the growing demand the fabric, helped keep prices high. Purple silk for example, combining the rare fabric and the favorite colour of the Romans, was literally worth its weight in gold.

Not all Romans, however, approved of the gossamer cloth paid for at any price and that, according to the moralists, *"served to show-off their bodies rather than clothe them"*. *"Women, remove from my sight these clothes covered with gold and purple; far from my eyes the Tyrian purple, and the threads that the far-off Seres collect from their trees"* raged Seneca, inveighing against the corruption of morals, the invasion of luxury, and the loss of the stern and sober Roman way of life. The Senate, in the year 16 C.E even banned the use of silk by men, on the grounds it dishonoured them.

The efforts to contain the popularity of the cloth has had little effect in the long run. Silk has continued to be highly prized and much sought after down the centuries. Today, some 35 countries produce silk from an estimated 480,000 tons of cocoons each year. China remains the main producer, while Japan has become the biggest consumer. Modern technology has also been applied to silk, and the thread has been used, amongst other things to create artificial arteries, parachutes, and bike-tires for professional cyclists, while the technology developed for silk weaving helped in the development of the fabric for the nose of the Concorde jet. And all of this from a tiny caterpillar with a passion for fresh cut mulberry tree leaves.

S.W.

FOCUS

FOLLOWING THE SILKEN THREAD

The July-August expedition across North-Western China was the first of several voyages planned under the Silks Roads Study, which will further investigate the desert route

and its feeder roads, as well as the two other major East-West links along the maritime route from Venice to Osaka and across the steppes from Odessa to Alma-Ata.

The Maritime Expedition of the "Fulk Al-Salamah"

Ensnored amid the piles of documents and hundreds of history books which line the walls of his tiny dwelling in Djakarta, Adrian B. Lopian, aged 61, is already afloat on the "Fulk Al-Salamah" (Ship of Peace) which, from October 23 to March 9 next, will be carrying scientists and historians from 30 or so countries from Venice to Osaka in Japan, following in the wake of the merchant vessels which over the centuries plied the Silk Route.

"The expedition's prime objective will be dialogue", says Lopian, who is a professor of Maritime History at the

University of Indonesia (UI). "First of all with people in each of the ports where we drop anchor, for that is where the first contacts between East and West were developed. Our job will be to uncover fresh material there which cannot be found in any history book. Secondly, on board ship, where we will be discussing what we have seen and drawing the first conclusions from our observations".

Professor Lopian is convinced that "the dialogue between researchers and historians will be wide-ranging and productive" and that it will help to throw

light not only on the history of the Silk Route but also on the history of the countries along that route, particularly in South-East Asia. The expedition plans to call in at some 20 ports, chief amongst which are Izmir (Turkey), Alexandria

(Egypt), Muscat (Oman), Karachi (Pakistan), Goa (India), Colombo (Sri Lanka), Malacca (Malaysia), Surabaya (Indonesia), Manila (Philippines), Guangzhou (Canton-China) and Osaka (Japan).

The highlights of these visits, which will last on average four to five days each, will be seminars, visits to historical sites and the study of archives.

Professor Lopian, who is also a researcher at the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), intends to make the voyage only from Colombo (Sri Lanka) to Surabaya (Indonesia) on the ship, which has been placed at the scholars' disposal by the Sultan of Oman.

"The history of the Silk Route is important for our region," he explains, "since it is closely linked to the history of the spice route on which very little research has been done. It was the spices which brought the Persians, the Arabs, the Indians and then the Portuguese and the Dutch to this part of the world," he adds, pointing out that it is "difficult to untwine the two routes by which Buddhism and later Islam were imported into the region. This is part of our history and we have great expectations of this maritime expedition."

Luc de Battlemont



The "Fulk Al-Salamah" (Photo Unesco/M. Bin Kustafa)

Across the Steppes

The third of the project's major expeditions will travel across the vast steppes of the Soviet Union. The voyage will be carried out in two stages; the first covering April, May and June of 1991 and the second taking place over the same three months in 1992.

The Steppe Route is the least researched of the Silk Roads that connected the western world with the Orient. But, says Prof. Yury Zapneprovsky of the Central Asia and Caucasus Section of the Institute of Archaeology of the USSR, archaeological discoveries indicate "that a well established trade route existed ... in the early centuries after Christ and that caravans, carrying goods and ideas from the Roman

Empire managed to reach this area deep in Central Asia".

Among the most recent finds, made last year at Kampyr Tepe in the fertile Ferghana Valley butting up against the Sino-Soviet border, are a Latin inscription found on a cliff-face and a delicate ivory comb. Experts believe the design of this comb originates in India, however the paintings on it were probably the work of a local Bactrian craftsman. Buddhist temples, Chinese coins, gold ingots and Sanskrit inscriptions found along the steppe route provide further evidence of the exchange that occurred in this part of Central Asia. Most of these finds date from the Kushan Empire which reached its height between the first and third centuries of

the C.E. and provided a relatively safe and prosperous zone for traders moving between East and West.

The first of the Unesco expeditions exploring these historical connections, will travel from Odessa to Ashkhabad passing through Yalta, Rostov, Derbent and Baku. The second stage, in 1992, will depart from Urgench and travel to Alma-Ata via Bukhara, Samarkand, Dushanbe, Tashkent, and Osh. Although the list of participating scientists has not yet been finalized, it will include some 50 specialists in the fields of history and archaeology, ethnography, art, and ecology. As with the Desert Route expedition in China, the team will travel by motor caravan.

S.W.

ALL ABOARD

World community joins in with Associated Projects

Seminars, research, publications, exhibitions and performances, on virtually every subject from costumes and carpets to cartography, from geomorphology to games, in all 73 tightly selected projects "associated" with the Silk Roads study, are mobilizing the scientific and cultural community around the world. Three of these are presented below.

Seeing through the sand : Archaeology by Satellite

From an orbit 750 km above the earth, a new and powerful eye will scrutinize the ancient "Roads of Dialogue" when Ariane 4 launches the European Remote Sensing Satellite (ERS-1) from the Kourou Space Center in French Guyana next December.

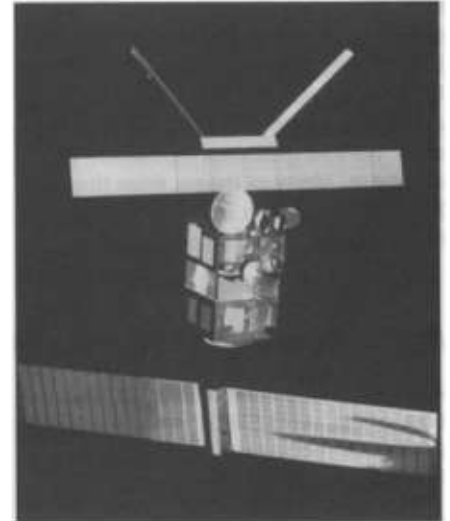
Opening vast possibilities for the Silk Roads Project, this latest example of high technology in the service of culture falls in line with an agreement between Unesco and the European Space Agency (ESA) to cooperate in a number of areas, including, notably, the environment.

Although, under the agreement, imaging by the earlier Spot and Landsat generation, will greatly refine identification of both the overland and maritime routes and their evolution, including ecological changes in Central Asia, ERS-1 will introduce a new dimension for earth observation. Since it uses advanced microwave or radar techniques, the new satellite can, for instance, see through clouds - and sand storms - which may blind the optical sensing equipment of the other models.

"With ERS-1 we will literally be able to see through the sand, in some places down as far as three meters," said Project Director Pierre Gentelle of France's National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), a third partner in the endeavor. A geographer, he has been collaborating since 1979 with the Chinese Academy of Sciences on environmental concerns and historic sites along the Silk Roads in the Taklamakan Desert.

For the new satellite, which will travel at a speed of 7 km per second and, in one observation, cover a strip of 100 km in width over 4,000 km, ESA is setting up a network of 25 ground stations. Seven of these - in Japan (3), China, Thailand, India and Pakistan - have already signed agreements, thus ensuring complete coverage of the Silk Roads.

"ERS-1 will permit teledetection of unknown remains and help elucidate mysteries surrounding the creation, layout and water systems of known sites like Dandan Oilik in the western Taklamakan, or the ancient parts of



The ESA satellite ERS/1
(Photo © ESA).

the great caravan city of Merv (6th to 4th centuries B.C.) buried under the sands in the Turkmen S.S.R. It will also shed new light on sunken ports, like Mantai in Sri Lanka, along the maritime route."

After analysis by an elite team of international scientists the satellite images will be displayed at an exhibition, for which the ESA is also preparing a number of publications and audio-visual materials, at the Paris-Ville de la Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie during the 1993 Silk Roads Festival in Paris.

Exploring the World's Most Fabulous Museum : Cousteau's Calypso on the Maritime Route

Some of the most extraordinary remnants of the Silk Roads saga lie under the sea along the Maritime Route : sunken ships still laden with their ancient artefacts; underwater sites

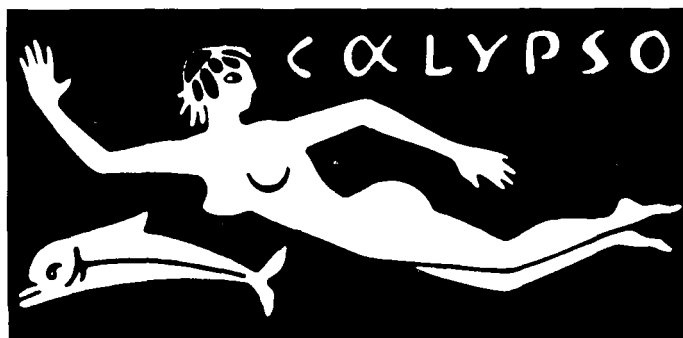
waiting to provide more clues to this great period of cultural and commercial exchange.

It was only natural, therefore, that, complementing remote sensing of the

Silk Roads from space, Unesco should seek a prestigious partner to probe the undersea. The obvious choice was Jacques-Yves Cousteau who, in fact, fathered the science of underwater archaeology

when in 1954, using the scuba tank (aqualung) he and engineer Emile Gagnan invented in 1943, he and his team excavated an ancient Roman shipwreck, sunk in the second century B.C. off the coast of Marseilles.

In line with a cooperative agreement between the two organizations, Unesco will link with the Cousteau Society's "Rediscovery of the World" series of expeditions, including marine archaeological investigations, now being carried out by the Society's legendary ship, the Calypso, in Western Pacific and Indian Ocean waters once plied by the vessels of many nations along the Silk Roads' Maritime Route.



FOCUS

"Holding countless unknown treasures and a wealth of scientific information, the sea is the most fabulous museum in the world," said Jacques Cousteau, Secretary General of the Cousteau Society, who recalled that, already in 1975-76, Captain Cousteau had led a Unesco-sponsored mission in the Aegean where, along with Greek archaeologists, he had unsealed thousands of amphora. Many of these, from the Minoan period, are now on display in the Museum of Heraklion (Crete).

As part of the cooperative venture, the Calypso will join up at some point with the Fulk Al Salamah (Ship of Peace), a 136-meter ocean going vessel placed at the disposition of Unesco by the Sultan of Oman for the "Voyage of Dialogue" (see p.14) between Venice and Osaka from October 1990 to March 1991. The site of the symbolic encounter along the Maritime Route will depend on the Calypso's busy schedule. Although Captain Cousteau prefers to look

towards the future, especially its environmental aspects, he is also aware that the past holds many lessons. "If we are still lucky enough to discover ancient treasures in the sea," he said, "we must realize that future archaeologists will also be seeking remnants of our own civilizations, and make sure we leave more of an underwater heritage than just endless containers of deadly nuclear and other toxic wastes."

A Prestigious Exhibition - Art from the sands of time

A prestigious exhibition, the central core of the 1993 Silk Roads Festival, will be staged at the Grand Palais - France's National Gallery - in Paris.

Curating the show, Jacques Gies, a specialist in Chinese and Central Asian art at the Musée Guimet, also in Paris, is preparing the event to reflect "in its dimensions, scholarship, quality of artefacts, the message it conveys, and the accompanying catalogue, the high ambitions of the Unesco Project itself."

The exhibition also promises to be a revelation to the general public since many of the objects to be displayed and especially the extraordinary adventure they relate, are little known outside a small circle of initiates.

Rather than aiming at an encyclopedic presentation of the "Roads of Dialogue", Gies has chosen a single theme as the most vivid illustration of the flux of ideas over the Silk Roads: the extraordinary sweep of Buddhism across Central Asia, the influences affecting its evolution, and the highly original art engendered by this blend.

The scene of the great adventure was a vast sandy ocean - the Taklamakan Desert covering some 324,000 sq. km. in what is now China's Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. Here the melting pot boiled for over 600 years, from about the 4th to 9th centuries, in oases which, like ports around the Desert rim, dotted the caravan routes. It was here that China made its first contact with the West and heard the message of Buddhism from missionaries and translators.

Then, with the success of Islam between the 8th and 11th centuries, monasteries, temples and stupas,

sanctuaries in caves and grottos, along with their exceptional statuary and paintings, fell into ruin or were buried under desert sands.



Head of Bodhisattva, 6th century
(Photo © Editions des musées nationaux, Paris).

It was only at the beginning of this century that a handful of archaeologists - sometimes labeled "treasure hunters" even "foreign devils" - among them Sven Hedin of Sweden, Aurel Stein of England, Albert von Le Coq and Albert Grünwedel from Germany and Paul Pelliot of France, braved the Taklamakan to unearth and subsequently ship home vast quantities of artefacts.

In the westernmost oasis, Toumchuk, for instance, Pelliot in 1906 found sculpture, like the 6th century Bodhisattva (on left), strongly

influenced by the Graeco-Buddhist "School of Gandhara", another artistic alliance sealed in what is now northwest Pakistan, when Indian Buddhist art blended with Hellenistic classicism brought by Alexandre the Great in 327 B.C.

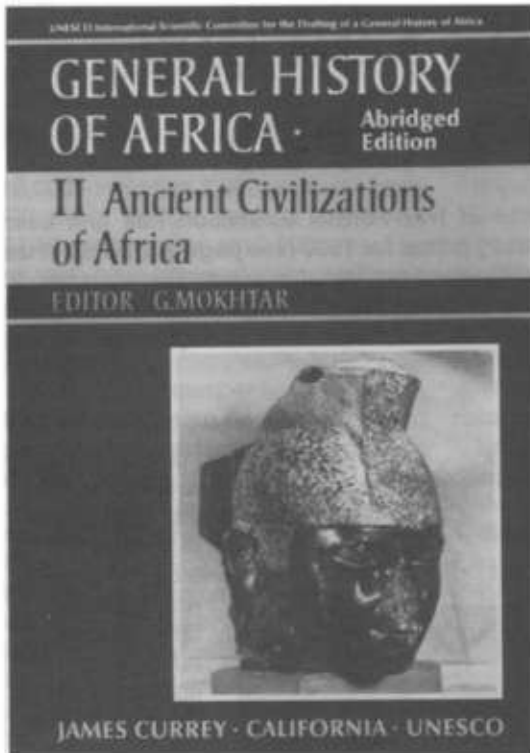
These treasures are now dispersed in some 30 institutions in 12 countries, notably the Hermitage in Leningrad, the British Museum, the Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst in Berlin, and the Musée Guimet. But many still lie in storage, partly due to nagging clouds of controversy linked to the conditions of their acquisition - clouds which the Paris show, along with mutual understanding and appreciation enhanced by the Silk Roads study, may well help to dissipate.

Since it will be France's contribution, through its national museums, to the Silk Roads Project, the exhibition will draw heavily on the Musée Guimet's rich "Pelliot Collection" from the Mogao caves near Dunhuang where the northern and southern Silk Roads met at the gateway to Imperial China. In themselves, the Collection's 228 banners and paintings on silk, hemp cloth or paper (8th to the 11th centuries) shed essential light on the evolution of Buddhism and its art.

"We want to explore the many forms of Buddhism, the different concepts of Paradise and Enlightenment, clarify still obscure areas including the 'esoteric' aspects of many representations," said Gies who hopes that the exhibition will not only be one of the highlights of the Silk Roads Project, but also a major contribution to the history of art.

Betty Werther

PAGE AND SCREEN



Cover photo : Head of King Taharqa (-690 to -664) of the 25th Dynasty (Egyptian Museum in Cairo).

BOOKS

General History of Africa Abridged Edition

Ancient Civilizations of Africa. Volume II of Unesco's **General History of Africa**, now being published in abridged edition, deals with a long period extending from the end of the Neolithic (late Stone Age), around the eighth millennium B.C. to the beginning of the seventh century of our era.

This period of some 9,000 years has been sub-divided into four major geographical zones, following the pattern of African historical research: the corridor of the Nile, Egypt and Nubia; the Ethiopian highlands; the part of Africa later called the Maghrib and its Saharan hinterland; the rest of Africa as well as some of the islands in the Indian Ocean. By far the largest proportion of Vol. II is devoted to the ancient civilization of Egypt because of its pre-eminent place in early history of Africa.

General History of Africa, Vol. II : Ancient Civilizations of Africa, abridged edition, G. Mokhtar, ed., James Currey/California/Unesco, 1990, illus., 420 pp., 50 FF.

The Business of Book Publishing

Based on a management training course conducted since 1985 by Unesco with great success in countries around the world, this manual retains the spirit of the original teaching material to deal, notably, with: publishing management, editorial organisation, financial accounts, understanding the publishing business, and recruitment.. Designed to help meet the book needs of developing countries by overcoming a major obstacle to the growth of national book industries - the lack of qualified personnel, it can be used to update the skills of senior management staff or adapted for basic training programmes. Further manuals in the series will cover such topics as book promotion, sales and distribution, and editing.

The Business of Book Publishing : a Management Training Course, by Mike Hauser, ed., Unesco/Book House Training Centre (London), 1990, 164 pp., 240 FF.

RECORDS

Corsica : Religious Music of Oral Tradition

This recording presents music of oral tradition from the village of Rusiu (or Rusio), perched on a flank of Mt. San Pietro in the region of Castagniccia. Accessible only by a dead-end road which not long ago replaced the old mule track, Rusiu is one of the few Corsican villages to have preserved a flourishing tradition of folk polyphony of great originality and interest. The religious services recorded here are an adaptation of melodic patterns often derived from plainsong to the secular technique of the *pagliariella*, a type of polyphony which reflects the oldest forms of medieval counterpoint. A Mass Dedicated to the Virgin Mary and a Requiem Mass are followed by three canticles of which the beautiful "Dio vi salvi Regina", is regarded by Corsicans as a veritable national hymn.

Corsica: Religious Music of Oral Tradition Musics & Musicians of the World, Auvidis/Unesco, Cassette 52 FF., Compact 109 FF.

PERIODICALS

Museum

Port Museums around the world. Ports are intimate and vulnerable spaces with their own ways of life, mores, mythologies, and memories. It is this sense of intimacy that this issue (166. No 2, 1990) of **Museum** endeavours to capture through its expression in the port museums of seafaring cities ranging from Amsterdam (the Netherlands) to Salvador-Bahia (Brazil), from Bergen (Norway) to Bath (Maine, U.S.A.), from Changdao (China) to Valparaiso (Chile), and including the river museum in Châteauneuf-sur-Loire and the Lake Léman museum at Nyon (Switzerland). The articles also address problems like conservation in humid saline environments, and the redesigning of entire ports as living museums. With its sharp tang of sea air, this issue of **Museum** will delight sailors of both the armchair and deckside varieties.

The Unesco Courier

The Media: Ways to Freedom. The freedom to inform has become a categorical imperative. Yet the fact that more and more information is reaching more and more people, creates inevitable dilemmas. Among the articles in this important and thought-provoking issue (September) are: "*The Conscience of the Journalist*" by Jean Lacouture, France, the "*Protection of Sources*," by Belgian lawyer Patricia Wilhelm, "*Private life and Public Eye*," by Jonathan Fenty of the Manchester Guardian - on the threat posed to freedom of information by unjustified intrusions by the sensationalist press, and "*Media Empires: A Necessary Evil?*" by Joseph Fitchett of the International Herald Tribune.

Art Nouveau - The Courier's splendid, richly illustrated August issue was devoted to this distinctive turn-of-the-century "style with a smile", its sources and spread to places as farflung as Russia and Argentina.

Publications and periodicals of the Organization are on sale at the Unesco Bookshop, or by order from Unesco Press, 7 place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris, and in Member States through national distributors.

THREE PRIZES FOR CANA

The Radio Division of the Caribbean News Agency (CANA) has received three 1990 Journalism Awards sponsored by the Caribbean Publishing and Broadcasting Association: for the Best Journalistic Contribution to Regional Integration; for the Best Journalist Radio (Ulric Hetsberger); and for the Best News Features Presenters-Radio (Richard Henderson and Wendy Thompson).

CANA has been supported since 1982 by Unesco through a Funds-in-Trust agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany which led, among other inputs, to the establishment of CANA Radio.

TWO BIOSPHERE RESERVES THREATENED

In France, a project for construction of a dam poses a threat to the Cévennes Biosphere Reserve, while in Spain, the Doñana National Park BR, 77,000 hectares of wetlands in the province of Huelva south of Seville, faces a double menace: the proliferation of tourist villages and hotels, and the development of agriculture. Both factors, notably through extensive water pumping, endanger Doñana's ecology, especially the about 150 species of migratory birds that winter in the Park.

In the latter case, Director-General, Federico Mayor, has called the attention of Foreign Minister, Francisco Fernandez Ordonez, to Spain's "moral obligation" to ensure the preservation of Doñana. As for France, Berndt Von Droste, Director of Unesco's Division of Ecological Sciences, has addressed a letter of deep concern to Prof. Jacques Lecomte, President of the French Committee for the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, responsible for supervision of the reserves on the national level.

The situation will be examined at the next session of the MAB Bureau in November.

"FINISTERRE : PEOPLES & CULTURES"

This project, supported by the International Decade for Cultural Development, and launched by the Portuguese National Commission for Unesco, was inspired by the simple idea, said Mme Hélène Vaz de Silva, Secretary General of the Commission, that "Portugal is situated at the end of the continent, at a point where the ocean begins."

The project thus aims at "studying and making better known the successive encounters and syntheses" brought about through Portuguese contacts with other civilizations.

Cape Verde : Literacy rhymes with liberty

Cape Verde's General Directorate of Non-Formal Education has just been awarded one of Unesco's five literacy prizes for 1990 (see page 22). Some of the most impressive results in the archipelago are taking place on Fogo Islands, 20 minutes by air from Praia, the capital, where adults among a population of about 30,000, have been participating in an ambitious Unesco-supported literacy campaign.

"Literacy is the way to freedom", "Let's all learn to read and write", "Long live the literacy workers of Fogo".

The slogans and general mobilization dispel any possible doubts about

with an initial learning phase and a second phase to make sure that what has been learned sticks. Emphasis is essentially on practical matters: agriculture, small livestock farming,

reafforestation, family planning, nutrition, co-operatives, the family code and civics.

Gilberto Fernandes Lobo, 37, a trained primary school teacher who has been educational co-ordinator for the past 10 years, is a naturally straight-forward person who takes a restrained pride in his work and is clearly delighted to show people around the headquarters of the literacy project.

Everything about the reading room, from its benches, tables and shelves laden with textbooks and other meticulously ordered teaching materials, to the aging projector and Roneo

machine beneath their dust covers, denotes discipline and conscientiousness. It is from this room that programmes and guidelines are dispatched to the 140 literacy teachers generally allocated to the work brigades whose members are attending literacy classes.



*Learning to read means living a better life
(Photo Unesco/D. Roger).*

the reality of the campaign. Classes last an hour and a half each day and are held in the "culture circles", of which there are 100 or so on the island. Each culture circle consists of about 10 people who come together to discuss all aspects of daily life. The normal literacy cycle is spread over two years,

PLANET

The average monthly pay of a literacy teacher is 3,000 escudos, or about \$ 43. With his primary teacher's diploma, Gilberto gets about three times that amount.

Of the island's 30,000 inhabitants, 10,000 - including 7,000 women - were illiterate in 1980. In the past 10 years 5,000 people, of whom 3,000 are women, have received thorough literacy instruction and Gilberto says that there is "no danger of their relapsing into illiteracy".

Among their number is 45-year-old Maria Teresa Santo Amado, who wears pink-rimmed spectacles and is single by choice because she reckons that "men are a thankless lot". She has a son of 14 whose father went off to live in the United States. Emigration is seen as the only salvation on Fogo, where one out of two people born on the island is now living elsewhere. Maria's five brothers and sisters have all left for Angola, Norway or the United States. All that keeps her at home on Fogo is the fact that her mother is too old to live alone.

Dressmaking

Maria came to the literacy classes "to be able to read the Bible and make a bigger contribution to the choir of the Church of Nazareth" to which she belongs. She decided to take up dressmaking as a career because her dressmaker sister used to refuse to sew her clothes. After two years of literacy instruction she agrees that she is a good deal more productive as a worker.

Inhuco is a little village 10 km from San Felipe, the largest city. Under the scorching sun and against a background of stones and dust, 30 or so adults are impressively hard at work building a 1,000 m³ tank to catch the elusive rainwater for which 280 families in the area will be willing to pay one and a half escudos a litre.

Gathered together in an attic around a makeshift table, three men and five women are attending a literacy class. They include Antonia Barboza, who is 35 and single, with seven children fathered by three different men. "I joined the literacy course to be able to make more sense of family planning instructions," she explains. The government's birth control policy goes largely unheeded because of the influence of the Church. Instances of repeated childbirth, often outside marriage as in Antonia's case, are frequent. Thanks to literacy classes

for women and educational radio broadcasts to rural areas the principle of family planning is steadily gaining ground.

But progress, though real, is still slight since only 10 per cent of the total population of the country is committed to family planning. Gilberto, the educational co-ordinator, adds that marked progress as regards immunization, good citizenship and agriculture is to be credited to literacy work. Between 1980 and 1985 the illiteracy rate fell, for the country as a whole, from 53 to 38 per cent. The campaign has been most successful on Fogo Island. The government makes a big effort to mobilize the population, but the literacy campaign nonetheless has outside backing. The Fogo project is supported by Unesco and also by the Federal Republic of Germany. UNICEF, too, provides support in the form of the monthly magazine "Alfa" with a circulation of 8,000 copies for the newly literate. The rural educational radio service, with considerable Unesco back-up, broadcasts weekly literacy instruction as a substantial supplement to the course proper.

However, the shortage of instructors, the lack of any real post-literacy policy, not to mention teaching materials, and the very high drop-out rate (45 per cent in 1988), are so many drawbacks, despite the evident enthusiasm of many of Fogo's new literates. With the added nudge of International Literacy Year, the national authorities are determined to put in an extra effort to keep literacy moving throughout the country.

**Diomansi Bomboté
BREDA/Dakar**

Cape Verde Islands (Cabo Verde in Portuguese)

Volcanic archipelago in the Atlantic to the west of Senegal, consisting of nine inhabited islands.

Land area : 4,050 square kilometres.

Population : 350,000, with the same number abroad (Portugal, United States, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Senegal, etc.).

Capital : Praia on Santiago Island
Former Portuguese colony, independent since 1975.

SOLAR ENERGY FOR REMOTE AREAS

Already economical for low power applications such as radio and TV, village lighting, water pumps, dispensaries, etc., photovoltaic generators, autonomous and based on an inexhaustible power source - the sun, provide a new solution for energy problems, particularly those of isolated populations. Unesco's Summer School in Photovoltaics for Rural and Remote Areas, held for the second time at Headquarters from July 2 to 20, is therefore becoming an veritable institution. Organized by Unesco in collaboration with the French National Agency for Energy Management, the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), and the Commission of the European Economic Communities, and conducted by a distinguished faculty, the course was attended by 32 scientists, technicians, energy planners and managers from 13 Francophone African countries.



*A photovoltaic generator supplies electricity for a refrigerator in Mali
(Photo Jean-Luc Mabit/Total).*

MADRID POLYTECHNIC OFFERS GRANTS

The Madrid University of Technology and Unesco have signed an agreement whereby students, particularly from developing Member States, will be awarded study grants for post-graduate work in the fields of electronics, computer sciences, telecommunications and solar energy. Signing the accord with Unesco Director-General, Federico Mayor, on July 10, Rafael Portaencasa, Rector of the University, recalled earlier cooperation between the two institutions in the domain of solar energy, notably through the installation of "solar villages" in Senegal and Bolivia. He also announced that the University would soon launch its own communications satellite.

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PARIS-ASTRAKHAN ADVENTURE LINKS SPORT AND CULTURE



Over 120 young sportsmen and women who left Unesco Headquarters by motorcycle, car or truck on July 16, arrived at Astrakhan (U.S.S.R.) on the Caspian Sea in early August, after covering over 5000 kilometers.



Paris-Astrakhan expedition leaves Unesco Headquarters (Photo Unesco/Inez Forbes).

Organized by the International Fund for the Development of Physical Education and Sport (FIDEPS) and the BMW Foundation, the expedition followed one of the historic Silk Roads, in this case the Steppe Route. Along the roads and tracks, the sporting feat was enriched by cultural activities. Notably in cities, special events alternated with warm encounters among young people who frequently joined together to play games and sports traditional to the regions crossed.

SOLIDARITY WITH IRAN

A London-based Iranian national who preferred to remain anonymous presented Director-General, Federico Mayor, on July 12, with a check for 100,000 FF to be deposited in the special "Unesco-Solidarity with Iran" account.

The contribution followed an appeal launched by Mr. Mayor in favour of victims of the recent earthquake in Iran. The money collected will go towards school construction and the purchase of school supplies and equipment in the most devastated zones.

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A Window on the World Mongolia's National News Agency : Montsame

In Mongolia, where sub-zero winds whip the mountains throughout the year, people huddle in their *gerts*. Forming a dome-like tent, this typical dwelling consists of sheep felt and canvas draped over poles. It has a door, and for air, a hole in the ceiling. Smoke from burning firewood escapes through a tube rising from the roof. To keep out the cold, there are no windows.

But there has been another kind of wind blowing over Mongolia. People see the necessity for change and an end to their country's isolation from the rest of the world. They should be opening windows.

While the world's attention was riveted on the upheavals in Eastern Europe, symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall, few people noticed the changes occurring in Mongolia.

Following some peaceful demonstrations late last year, the Central Committee declared during its plenum an open investments policy. In April 1990, the government approved a law opening Mongolia to foreign investments. These twin actions set into motion an economic restructuring of Mongolia, permitting a swift switch from a barter trade economy with friendly socialist nations to a free market system open to the East and the West.

New government

Then last March, a new government was formed that included several independent thinkers and reformists from within the ruling party. And so far, five political parties have surfaced that seek to elect into government the kind of leaders who will steer Mongolia deftly into a new era.

The changes call for a new role for the Mongolian National News Agency *Montsame*. Sanjiin Bayar, deputy Director General, says: "*Montsame is Mongolia's window to the world. It is also a window through which the world can look into Mongolia.*"

Supporting this new role, K. Zardyan, deputy Prime Minister responsible for science, technology, culture, communications and education, says: "*We do realize the need for a news agency that will help open our country*



Montsame staff member trains at the computer. (Photo Unesco/Carlos Arnaldo).

to the world market. We appreciate its contributions to the eventual social and economic development of Mongolia. It is among our top priorities."

Cooperating with *Montsame* to open these windows is Unesco. Their common aim is to modernize and computerize. To perform competently as an international news agency, *Montsame* has to update obsolete equipment and re-train personnel. A mission team that inspected the news agency in 1989 reported that editing, reference and archiving, and dispatch of news could be better done by computer instead of manually. Telex and satellites could replace cables and a new management structure should reflect these changes.

The first of the project's two phases, which began in June 1989, calls for training in journalism, photography,

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informatics and in desktop publishing. Training in informatics would streamline the agency's work in putting out regular bulletins in English, French, Russian, Mongolian, and Chinese. In the second phase, scheduled to start next January, with a planned budget of \$ 1 million from UNDP and Funds-in-Trust Co-Financing, Montsame will be computerized and linked to satellite transmission. During this phase, the staff will receive intensive training to operate the network and to sharpen marketing skills to ensure that the news products can compete in the world market.

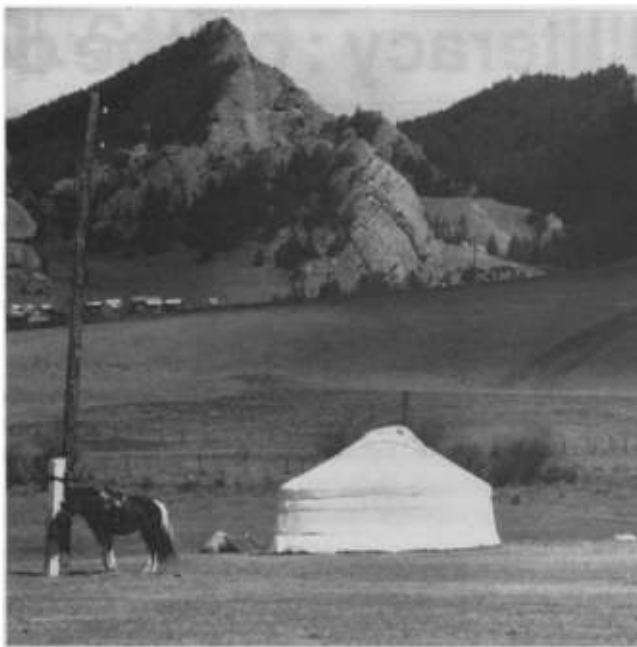
Anticipating the first informatics training mission, Montsame sped ahead and imported with their own funds an IBM-PC compatible and software from Inner Mongolia (China) for wordprocessing of their ancient script. They have, since then, adapted their equipment to work in English, French, Chinese, and Cyrillic.

Montsame is casting its vision not only outwards but inwards as well. It feeds news to radio and television stations and a number of newspapers around the country.

Ancient Script

In the spirit of "*Schinechleit*", meaning renewal in Mongolian, Montsame has also been helping in the production of a specialized private newspaper by allowing use of its computer. This newspaper prints in ancient Mongolian script texts about art, traditional science, history and culture. Printed in two A4s folded lengthwise, this form recalls the age-old practice of etching on bamboo slats. Selling briskly, it now prints 2,000 copies but editor S. Bojoh targets a circulation of 100,000. Citing Mongolia's intensely literary background, S. Bojoh says confidently : "*This is what the people want to read about.*"

Sharowyn Choimaa, lecturer in Mongolian language at the Mongolian Script Centre and a top calligraphic expert,



*No windows in the gert
(Photo Unesco/C. Arnaldo).*

explains that when Mongolia joined the Soviet Union, the indigenous method of writing was buried and the people began writing in Cyrillic. According to the Script Centre, thousands of manuscripts dating back several hundred years have been unearthed, as well as numerous calligraphic styles. Explaining the interest in ancient script, Choimaa says : "*The study of manuscripts is the only way to understand our history and our religion.*"

With the proliferation of journals, some of which are partisan, Montsame also feels it is necessary to publish its own newspaper. "*Now, more than ever, we must present straight news and objective views,*" says Jama D. Suhjargalmaa, chief of the foreign news desk.

The more progress Montsame makes, the better it will be prepared to fulfill the government's new policy of an independent media. According to Bayar, the news agency will eventually become a semi-autonomous entity with new statutes. Gradually, also, government subsidies will decrease until the Agency becomes fully self-financing.

Looking to the past, looking to the future. Looking inwards, looking outwards - that is Montsame. "*The Unesco project comes at a critical time in our history when Mongolia is opening up to the world,*" says Jama D. Suhjargalmaa. *And Montsame is the window.*"

**Gigi S. Oyog
Ulan Bator**

LITERATE WOMEN = LOWER INFANT MORTALITY

Literacy for women is the single most important factor in reducing infant mortality. Yet one out of three women cannot read and write and more than 60% of children out of school are women. Further details on this alarming situation are included in reports, studies, feature stories and just plain news - some of it good! in **The Challenge 1990**, Unesco's International Literacy Year (ILY) Newsletter.

This issue focuses on Women but also contains reports on the World Conference on Education for All, last March in Thailand, and others on innovative literacy activities in both developing and industrialized countries. Most of the materials in the 16-page magazine may be reproduced freely. In English, French, Spanish, Arabic upcoming.

>>>> ILY Secretariat



US GIVES \$10,000 TO WARSAW COMMUNICATION CENTRE

The United States has allocated \$10,000 in support of the Central and Eastern Europe Centre for Communications in Warsaw, being set up under the auspices of Unesco, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), and the Polish Journalists Association. The U.S. contribution was sent to the special account Unesco has established to accept funds for the Centre's start-up costs, estimated at \$230,000. Unesco has already pledged \$20,000 and the IFJ \$10,000 towards creation of the Centre which was first proposed during the East-West press meeting held at Unesco Headquarters last February. Scheduled to become operational in 1991, it will provide journalism training, library, computer and research services for media organizations in the region.

YOMIYURI SHIMBUN RAISES MONEY FOR LITERACY



The Yomiuri Shimbun, a Japanese daily with the world's largest circulation of almost 10 million, has raised some \$350,000 for literacy.

The money was donated by Japanese organizations and individuals following a campaign by the newspaper, for which all foreign correspondents and photographers in Asia and the Pacific were mobilized and articles on literacy in the region were published regularly.

"Yomiuri's efforts clearly demonstrate the powerful impact the media can have to promote literacy," said John Ryan (U.S.A.), co-ordinator for the International Literacy Year (ILY) Secretariat at Unesco.

The funds will help finance four Unesco - Co-Action Learning Centres in the in the Asia - Pacific region.

"OPEN HOUSE" IN LIBRARIES AROUND THE GLOBE

Among the special events marking this year's International Literacy Day on September 8, was an international "open house" in the world's libraries.

Responding to an appeal by Unesco and the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), libraries all around the globe opened their doors to the public and held special literacy events such as special displays for children, readings by authors and actors and talks by literacy specialists.

Unesco had asked 112 National Committees for International Literacy Year (ILY) to participate.

WHAT IN THE WORLD'S SO FUNNY ?

Guided by the principle that *"two things are capable of alleviating human tragedy : education and laughter"*, a galaxy of very serious personalities have decided to take stock of the situation.

The first step will be creation of a provisional Consultative Council on Humour which, in collaboration with the Canadian Festival *"Just a Laugh"*, will convoke a World Assembly of humour writers, artists, performers and other specialists, in July 1992.

On the occasion, the Assembly will address a report on "The State of Humour in the World" to Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary General of the United Nations.

This ambitious project has won very serious support from Unesco in the framework of the International Decade for Cultural Development.

Illiteracy : on the decline ?

The International Jury judging Unesco's five annual literacy prizes has nominated the People's Government of Xiping County (China), the Universidad Central del Este (Dominican Republic), the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, which includes a world network of 1,200 schools, the General Directorate of Non-Formal Education (Cape Verde) and the Science Popularization Movement (Kerala, India), as the winners of the 1990 awards. The successful candidates were selected from among 28 entries presented by 23 Member States and five non-governmental organizations.

The Prizes were awarded in Geneva on September 8, International Literacy Day, during the 42nd session of the International Conference on Education, which dealt with the theme "Education for all: renewed policies and strategies for the 1990s".

For the first time, the absolute number of illiterates in the world is tending to stabilize and even fall. According to the latest figures from Unesco's Office of Statistics, the absolute number of illiterates, which



(Photo Unesco/Paul Almasy).

climbed from 890 million in 1970 to more than 949 million in 1985, has today fallen to 948 million and will further drop to 935 million by the year 2000. This represents a reduction of 13 million in 10 years, a favourable, but complex and uneven trend.

In the developed countries, for example, some 96.7 percent of the population aged 15 and over is today literate. As well, the number of people who neither read nor write has dropped from 48 million in 1970 to 31 million today, and should further fall to 16 million in the next 10 years.

The situation in the developing nations, including the 42 least developed countries, which saw their illiterate populations rise from 842 million in 1970 to 917 million this year, should level out at about 920 million over the next 10 years. Thus, today, almost one adult in three and one out of every two women are illiterate.

While these figures represent absolute numbers, the rate of illiteracy, taking the demographic growth of these countries into account, reveals a continuing decrease from 54.7 percent in 1970 to 34.9 percent in 1990 and 28.1 percent in 2000. The fall of percentages in the least developed countries alone is equally clear: in 1970, 77.5 percent of their populations were illiterate, in 1990 only 60.4 percent and by 2000 the rate should be around 51 percent. On the other hand, absolute figures in this group of countries remain alarming, rising from 105 million in 1970 to 148 million in 1990 and 170 million predicted for 2000.

Geographically, two areas stand out as worst affected: Sub-Saharan Africa which includes two thirds of those countries in the world with illiteracy rates of more than 40 percent; and Asia, which is home to three quarters of the world's illiterates (700 million), more than half of whom live in two countries alone (India with 281 million and China with 224 million).

These figures, which differ slightly from those Unesco had previously put forward, have been finetuned thanks to new information made available in several countries, new demographic estimations and projections from the United Nations, and modifications to the model used by Unesco. ■

A SYMBOL SAVED

Restoration of Haiti's Citadel of Laferrière

Ten years after Unesco, in 1980, launched an international campaign for its safeguard, Haiti's imposing Citadel of Laferrière has recovered its original splendour.

"Our work is finished," said Gisele Hyvert, the Unesco expert who was chief technical advisor for the gigantic undertaking, "and we all feel great emotion at seeing this exceptional monument at last restored."



The Citadel of Laferrière in July 1990 after its restoration (Photo Unesco/G. Hyvert).

The Citadel was built under Henri Christophe, an army general, then King of Haiti after it gained independence in 1804, becoming the world's first black republic. Straddling a peak 979 m high, it looks towards the northern coast where, shortly after Christopher Columbus discovered the island in 1492, his flagship, the *Santa Maria*, was wrecked when it ran aground during a storm. It took 20,000 men nine years (1805-1814) to complete the mighty fortress, a feat of military engineering designed for a garrison of 2,000 men - 5,000 under siege.

But the fortress never served. In 1820, the King, half-paralysed and fearing insurrection, committed suicide, shooting himself with a silver bullet. After that, sacked by rebels, damaged by torrential rains and earthquakes, its walls fissured and its terraces reduced to ruins, the Citadel lay abandoned and decaying for over a century.

The government of Haiti tried to save the structure in 1930 and again in 1950, but overwhelmed by the task, called on

the international community for help. Accordingly, on March 20, 1980 Unesco launched an appeal and an international safeguard campaign, the first on behalf of a New World nation.

The cost of the operation was five million dollars, half of which was assumed by Haiti. The other half came from UNDP, Unesco, private and public funds, including \$60,000 from Senegal, and bi-lateral assistance.

The Haitian authorities hope that the vast numbers of tourists expected to visit the site will help them recover part of their investment. An additional attraction, in fact, is the Citadel's collection of exceptional cannons: 150 - of an original 365 - bronze artillery pieces mounted in firing position on six bastions.

"Since no plans, in fact not a single document was found," said Ms Hyvert, "we spent a full year studying the edifice to discover the secrets of its construction." She further explained that much of the carpentry, masonry, iron-work and tile roofing was done using traditional techniques.

Although the Citadel has been completed, work will continue, depending on available funds, on two other monuments included in the Unesco campaign: the baroque Palace of Sans Souci, the King's residence at the foot of the mountain; and fortifications called Les Ramiers dominating the Citadel. All three sites are today located within the National Historical Park of the Northern Department.

Moreover, enscribed on Unesco's World Heritage List since 1982, the monuments are not only protected as symbols in stone for Haiti and black peoples everywhere, but also as part of the common cultural heritage of all.

M.C.

WORLD POPULATION DAY

Some 250,000 babies are born every day. By the Year 2000, world population will have climbed to 6.3 billion - one billion more than today's figure and most of this growth will occur in the developing world.

This was the picture painted on World Population Day, celebrated for the first time on last July 11. To mark the event, Unesco mounted a wide-ranging exhibition, looking at the difficulties such rapid growth poses.

"The management of these problems requires the full co-operation of the whole population," stressed Director-General, Federico Mayor at the exhibition opening.

Unesco has 102 population projects operational in 57 countries.

COMBATING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

A Unesco campaign to counter violence against women in the slums of Lima (Peru) has proved so successful that authorities say they may use it as a model in other parts of the country.

The campaign followed a study by the Organization's Human Rights Division on the violence inflicted on young women by members of their families.

Some 500 girls aged 15-20 took part, and, while reluctant to admit the presence of aggressive attitudes in their families, clearly identified aggressive behaviour, be it verbal, physical or both at the same time. The study revealed a feeling of guilt and inferiority amongst the girls, one quarter of whom claimed to have been sexually harassed by family members.

The participants pinpointed a lack of education and the differentiation of roles within the family as being at the origin of such violence.



looking ahead



The drought in Niger (Photo Unesco/ M. d'Hoop).

WORLD CLIMATE CONFERENCE

The second World Climate Conference will be held in Geneva from October 29 to November 7. Sponsored by WMO, UNEP, Unesco and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), it will bring together some 350 experts from all regions, drawn not only from the atmospheric science community but also from other major scientific and socio-economic sectors affected by climate and climate change. Major themes to be addressed include oceanography, agriculture, water resource and energy research, urban planning, health, and natural resource management.

PARALLEL COMPUTING

The first International Conference on Parallel Computing will be held at Unesco Headquarters from October 8 to 12. The objective of the Conference is to create a forum for the evaluation and dissemination of information on the engineering applications of Parallel Computer Technology in terms of the impact that this technology will have on engineering and the curricula of Engineering Schools.

LITERACY & BASIC EDUCATION

«Literacy and Basic Education in Europe on the Eve of the Twenty-First Century» will be the theme of the Sixth European Conference of Directors of Educational Research Institutions, to be held in Bled (Yugoslavia) from October 7 to 12. At the Conference, about 80 Directors will discuss functional illiteracy, basic skills and competencies expected from literate people, and new learning needs at different stages of life.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

The 135th session of Unesco's Executive Board will be held at Headquarters from October 5 to 26.

OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION

The first session of the IOC-WMO Intergovernmental World Ocean Circulation Experiment (WOCE) Panel will be held at Headquarters from October 22 to 25. On the agenda: WOCE related climate research programmes and the status of WOCE observing and data management systems.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & SPORT

The Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport will meet in Ottawa (Canada) from October 22 to 26 to plan its programme for 1992-1993, including the reinforcement of cooperation between developing and industrialized countries; to revise the International Charter of Physical Education and Sport; and to consider a draft international instrument against doping.

PGI

The Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme (PGI) will meet at Headquarters from November 5 to 9, notably to review challenges and opportunities for PGI in the newly established Communication and Information Sector and prepare its programme for 1992-1993.

MAB

The International Co-ordinating Council for the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme will hold its 11th session at Headquarters from November 12 to 16. The Council will assess current and future activities, review and plan for MAB research networks contributing to sustainable resource use, and discuss long-term ecological research in biosphere reserves, modern communications techniques and environmental education activities.

OUR NEXT ISSUE

The main dossier in Unesco SOURCES No. 19 will FOCUS on the TROPICAL FOREST: how these regions can be developed while preserving their ecological balance. Tropical forests are of vital interest to the people, a third of world population, living in or around them. Thanks to an incomparable diversity of flora and fauna, they represent an immense and inexhaustible source of food, fibers, medicinal plants and energy.

This dossier, originally scheduled for the current issue (No. 18), was postponed in order to highlight the first expedition over the Silk Roads.