

UNESCO

# The Courier

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**SMALL COUNTRIES**  
a wealth of cultures

**UNESCO: 40 YEARS OF ACTION**

# Unesco: 40 years of action

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*by Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow*

**F**ORTY years ago, just a few weeks after the end of the Second World War, the Conference of the Allied Ministers of Education, which was to adopt the Constitution of Unesco, met in London.

To the terrible toll of six years of desolation and death that the world had just experienced was now added the threat foreshadowed by the explosion of the two atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Over the ruins of the annihilated cities, in the grief present everywhere, and confronted by the prospect of new forms of mass destruction, the international community became aware of the collective responsibilities which it would have to shoulder in order to preserve the future of the species.

Within the framework of the United Nations system that had just been set up, Unesco was given the task of advancing international peace and the common welfare of mankind through "the educational and scientific and cultural relations of the peoples of the world"—in other words, international intellectual co-operation.

In order to help to bring about "a condition in which the incentives to war are neutralized by social, spiritual and economic advances...", Unesco engaged in vigorous action in many different fields—the development of great standard-setting concepts; the circulation of knowledge, ideas and information; and operational activities to help the poorest countries. This activity aimed among other things to foster mutual knowledge and understanding among nations; to facilitate by means of appropriate methods of co-operation the access of all peoples to what each of them had already produced and to what each was producing in all fields of thought, artistic creativity and scientific and technical discovery and experiment; to bring about conditions under which everyone should have equal opportunities of access to education; and to allow the free exchange of ideas and information.

Over the years, Unesco has constantly broadened the basis of its representativity. Its action in this area has been constantly gaining in scope and complexity—especially with the admission of nearly 100 countries which, during the late 1950s and the 1960s, acceded to national sovereignty.

These countries brought their historical and cultural experience into the Organization; they expressed their particular sensitivities; they evoked their own concerns. The developing countries, in particular, raised questions related to the difficult, sometimes even alarming, circumstances that they were facing, to the manifold challenges confronting them and to the various paths that they were exploring in order to ensure a development that was authentic.

Unesco thus began to think about the reality of an increasingly interdependent world in which societies are in contact with each other to a greater or lesser degree and are part of a world system of reciprocal exchanges and relations.

On account of this development, Unesco, which had at first focused its activities on certain parts of the world, was gradually led to extend them worldwide.

During the past forty years, Unesco has thus made possible the development of a host of communication, exchange, co-operation and action networks, reaching into the most diverse fields, leading to immense progress in knowledge and know-how, and leading the peoples and the cultures of the whole world to draw closer together.

Throughout these decades, Unesco has striven to draw on three sources of energy—the political reality of the governments of Member States; the creative urge of spiritual, intellectual and artistic communities; and the competence and devotion of an international Secretariat that is called on to encourage and co-ordinate the ideas, initiatives and projects of all.

This is why Unesco is duty-bound to increase still further the integration of the intellectual communities of the world in the living tissue of its activities, so that constantly renewed blood can flow through this tissue and so that the factors of amalgamation and catalytic forces that give full strength to the alchemy of intellectual co-operation can be brought into every one of its great debates.

I cannot conclude without adding that the world is today encountering a number of grave difficulties that are reflected in the functioning of the United Nations system and, consequently, in Unesco.

These difficulties no doubt provide a fresh opportunity for re-examining some of the workings of the system with a view to their democratization; they have, however, made some people question the aims and purposes of the system and even the very reason for its existence.

This is not the first time that the United Nations has faced such challenges. It is therefore important that the heads of the agencies of the system should shoulder their responsibilities in full measure.

It is no longer for them a case of merely expediting current matters as best they can. Guided by their conscience, in observance of the principles of the United Nations Charter and of the Constitutions of their respective organizations, it is also—and perhaps especially—for them to rise above the contingent and the incidental in order to keep all chances for the future intact.

In this year which marks the fortieth anniversary of Unesco, it is with this conviction that once more I call on intellectuals throughout the world to strengthen, through our Organization, the ties of solidarity based on the forces of freedom, creativity and progress—themselves the very forces of the spirit that Unesco exists to bring together. ■



**Editorial**

**T**HE end of the Second World War sounded the knell for colonial empires and opened the way to decolonization, a new chapter in the history of international relations. In the next forty years, around a hundred countries were to attain national sovereignty.

The 1970s marked a turning point in this march towards liberty. It was a decade which saw the appearance on the world scene of nations which, "small" though they may be in terms of area and population, nevertheless possess the same sovereign rights as the largest nations. But how can they fully exercise such rights and, by adding their voices to the concert of nations, win a real hearing for themselves? This is not always an easy task, and Unesco, like other international organizations, has realized the need to help the small nations which constitute a growing number of its members to become more fully integrated into the international order.

This issue of the *Unesco Courier* is devoted to the situation of these countries, to their problems and their aspirations. Because of space limitations we have been obliged to restrict our coverage to nations which have joined Unesco since 1980, but we feel that the picture that emerges is valid for all the rest.

While most of them are islands, some are land-locked; they are thus all subjected, by definition, to a degree of isolation. Yet they have an intense cultural life which makes an invaluable contribution to the heritage of mankind. It is thus quite natural that their presence in Unesco, whose fields of activity are education, science, culture and communication, is increasingly important.

In 1986 Unesco is celebrating its first forty years of existence, and on the occasion of this anniversary, the Organization's Director-General, Mr. Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, recalls the spirit and the ideals which prevailed when it was founded, as well as its constantly widening field of action and some of its achievements. Surely one of the most convincing signs of the continuing validity of Unesco's action can be seen precisely in the active involvement of the countries presented here in the work of international co-operation and understanding which the Organization is mandated to carry out.

**Cover:** the Maldives, aerial view of a group of islands

Photo Griffiths © Magnum, Paris

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39th year



Photo © Cornelle Jest, Paris

The dzong (monastery-fortress) of Tongsa, in Bhutan.

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# Small countries

*and the international community*



**I**MAGINE, for a moment, the captain of a ship on a voyage of discovery. He sweeps the horizon with his spyglass—but he is holding it the wrong way round. He does not see small islands at all, and even larger ones seem puny. Now suppose that an inhabitant of one of those islands comes aboard the vessel and takes a turn at looking through the spyglass, but from the end which is turned towards him. The representative of the outside world and all his trappings will look very imposing. The islander realizes that it will certainly be worth his while to come to an understanding with this impressive personage.

And this, indeed, is how small States and large States perceive each other. Seen from the vantage-point of a large State, a “micro-State” seems even smaller than it really is, and too often it is written off as negligible. After all, did not the League of Nations decide, round about 1920, that States which

it dubbed “Lilliputian” could not join it as full members? From the opposite point of view, small States see large ones as looming, not to say threatening, presences, but laden with wealth from which they must find a way of benefiting.

Nowadays, the international community sees small States more and more clearly. In the 1960s, a State was regarded as small when it had fewer than five million, or even ten or fifteen million, inhabitants. However, towards the end of the decade, the less populated States were poised on the threshold of independence. The United Nations turned its attention to the status that they should be given. Specialists busied themselves with finding ways in which these new States might be associated with the international agencies without disrupting their modes of operation. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) worked to devise criteria for

defining small States, and its prime choice was the criterion of population. With the disclaimer that this was arbitrary and not a hard and fast rule, it set the limit at one million inhabitants.

During the 1970s, several States whose population was well below the one million mark joined either the United Nations—founded on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members—or its Specialized Agencies. Unfortunately, it is not enough to be a member: it is also necessary to be present and to make one's views known, particularly at major international conferences; and this calls for human and financial resources.

Other international organizations have since grasped the importance of facilitating small States' participation in the concert of nations. In 1983, the Heads of State and Government of the Commonwealth raised the question of the vulnerability of small

by *Edouard Dommen*  
and *Philippe Hein*



Photo Richard Harrington © Camera Press, London



Photo © Cornelle Jest, Paris

**Faces from five countries**

1) Samoan girl; 2) a monk from Bhutan; 3) a Maldivian woman with the traditional hairstyle of her country; 4) a young couple from Guadeloupe; 5) Zimbabwean pan-pipe player accompanying himself with a rattle.



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Photo Picou © AAA, Paris

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Photo © Bernard Koechlin, Paris

*Left, aerial view of one of the hundred-odd islands of the San Blas archipelago which lie off the Caribbean coast of Panama. They are peopled by Cuna Indians, who live in spacious thatched dwellings.*

States, which were numerous among them, and asked for a study to be made of their specific needs. This task was entrusted to an advisory group which submitted its report in 1985. The criterion selected by this group was the same as that of UNITAR, namely, a population of fewer than one million inhabitants.

Also in 1983, a group of experts from the non-aligned countries chose as the criterion for small developing countries a population in most cases lower than 400,000 inhabitants and seldom higher than one million, combined with a territory of less than 700 km<sup>2</sup> and not usually more than 4,000 km<sup>2</sup>.

The United Nations Demographic Yearbook (1980 and 1981 editions) lists forty-nine territories of varying political status whose population is lower than 200,000 inhabitants, and sixty-four territories whose area is less than 5,000 km<sup>2</sup>. In this last

category, all except nine are island States. No mainland developing country meets both the criteria of the non-aligned; on the one hand, five developed mainland countries do satisfy this requirement: Andorra, the Holy See, Liechtenstein, Monaco and San Marino (the Holy See, with an area of forty-four hectares and 1,000 inhabitants, is the smallest State in the world). The smallest developing countries with inland frontiers are, in population, Belize (158,000 inhabitants, 22,965 km<sup>2</sup>) and, in size, Brunei (5,765 km<sup>2</sup> and 220,000 inhabitants). Ultimately, if the twofold criterion of population and area is used, the smallest developing countries are all islands.

Small States are fully aware of the fact that the interest taken in them by large States is only spasmodic. The latter could, if they wished, ignore them altogether. But is this really what they want? The workings of island societies are the outcome of perma-



Photo Brian Seed © Rapho, Paris

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► nent tension between the assertion of their own individuality and the need to fit into a network of foreign relations. This is equally apparent in the cultural, political and economic spheres.

Islands may be remote, but they show a surprising receptiveness to the rest of the world. The economic production of small island States is usually highly specialized and essentially geared to exporting. Whereas local products are exported, local consumption is mainly supplied by imports. The exports themselves incorporate imports at every stage of production: plant, intermediate products and bank credit. In many cases, machinery must even be sent abroad for repair.

It is no exaggeration that, for many small States, the external sector represents the entire economy. There is, indeed, an internal sector, but it is confined to a quarter-master's role: it provides the consumer goods and services necessary to the population or useful to export activities. It could not continue to exist if it were not supported by the income from exports or the revenue of workers in the external sector. Such exports may be agricultural produce (the coconut palms which look so pretty on tourist brochures also yield oil and copra), manufactured products (Mauritius, a sugar-producing island, has become one of the major world centres of the knitwear industry) or services (banks in the Bahamas or insurance in Bermuda). Some countries even export postage stamps: in Tuvalu, their sale is sufficient to offset public expenditure.

Several island countries also export labour. It is quite usual to hear people say, on small islands, that more of the islanders are abroad than at home. For example, at the time of the 1981 census in Niue, it emerged that 5,091 islanders were living in New Zealand, as compared with 3,278 in Niue itself. Goods sent home by emigrants can also play an important role in the economy. These invisible imports, in Cape Verde, for example, represent more than ten times the value of exports.

Small island countries are particularly vulnerable to fluctuations in the world economy—fluctuations over which they have no control but to which they are compelled to adjust. For instance, a very small change in agricultural policy, or a protectionist drive in a particular sector of a developed country, or an international agreement negotiated between large States, can bring the economy of a small island State to its knees. Such a State will then have no choice but to seek favour with the large States, and above all to become “visible”.

For example, in 1980, the Republic of Maldives, a small country with 176,000 inhabitants, classed in the category of the least-developed countries, succeeded, not without difficulty, in acquiring a small factory for knitting woollen garments. In 1982, ►

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

*Postage stamps from Tuvalu mark the International Year of the Child (1979). Next to copra, the sale of postage stamps for collectors is the country's main source of revenue.*



●●●●●●●●●● Countries and territories with less than one million inhabitants

Countries and territories	Population (in thousands) 1984	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Unesco date of entry
<b>Africa</b>			
Cape Verde	320	4,033	1978
Comoros	431	2,171	1977
Djibouti	352	22,000	
Equatorial Guinea	363	28,051	1979
Gambia	630	11,295	1973
Guinea-Bissau	873	36,125	1974
Reunion	527	2,510	
St. Helena	5	314	
São Tomé and Príncipe	95	964	1980
Seychelles	73	280	1976
Swaziland	630	17,363	1978
Western Sahara	151	266,000	
<b>America, North</b>			
Anguilla	7	91	
Antigua and Barbuda	79	440	1982
Bahamas	226	13,935	1981
Barbados	253	431	1968
Belize	158	22,965	1982
Bermuda	78	53	
British Virgin Islands	12	153	1983 <sup>(1)</sup>
Cayman Islands	19	259	
Dominica	75	751	1979
Greenland	54	2,175,600	
Grenada	111	344	1975
Guadeloupe	334	1,779	
Martinique	329	1,102	
Montserrat	12	98	
Netherlands Antilles	260	961	1983 <sup>(1)</sup>
St. Christopher and Nevis	46	262	1983
St. Lucia	128	616	1980



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Map: *The World Bank Atlas*, 1985.

Countries and territories	Population (in thousands) 1984	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Unesco date of entry
St. Pierre and Miquelon	6	242	
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	103	388	1983
Turks and Caicos Islands	7	430	
U.S. Virgin Islands	104	342	
<b>America, South</b>			
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	2	12,173	
French Guiana	79	91,000	
Guyana	936	214,969	1967
Suriname	372	163,265	1976
<b>Asia</b>			
Bahrain	411	622	1972
Brunei Darussalam	220	5,765	
Cyprus	660	9,251	1961
East Timor	636	14,874	
Macau	378	16	
Maldives	176	298	1980
Qatar	291	11,000	1972
<b>Europe</b>			
Andorra	39	453	
Faeroe Islands	42	1,399	
Gibraltar	31	6	
Holy See	1	0.44	(2)
Iceland	240	103,000	1964
Liechtenstein	28	157	
Luxembourg	363	2,586	1947
Malta	379	316	1965
Monaco	27	1	1949
San Marino	22	61	1974

Countries and territories	Population (in thousands) 1984	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Unesco date of entry
<b>Oceania</b>			
American Samoa	35	197	
Cook Islands	20	236	
Fiji	679	18,274	1983
French Polynesia	160	4,000	
Guam	112	549	
Kiribati	63	728	
Nauru	8	21	
New Caledonia	151	19,058	
Niue	3	259	
Norfolk Islands	2	36	
Pacific Islands	150	1,779	
Solomon Islands	259	28,446	
Tokelau	2	10	
Tonga	105	699	1980
Tuvalu	8	24	
Vanuatu	137	14,763	
Western Samoa	161	2,842	1981

(1) Associate Member  
(2) Observer

Source: *Unesco Statistical Yearbook*, 1986.

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this table and the map above do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Unesco Secretariat concerning the legal status of any country or territory, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitations of the frontiers of any country or territory.

▶ it exported 40,000 dozen knitted garments to a large country. The following year, the latter imposed a quota of 25,000 dozen, although the factory had already received orders for three or four times that number. The Republic of Maldives accordingly turned to GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), which it had recently joined to suit the circumstances. The costs of participating in negotiations in Geneva and in Washington were likely to exceed the expected profits, but by what other means could this tiny country make itself heard by the international community?

The UN and its Specialized Agencies are of vital importance to the small States. It is only right to emphasize this at a time when they are the butt of criticism. Such forums, where the small can engage in dialogue on an equal footing with the great, afford advantages to both sides. The founding role of Malta and the active part taken by Fiji in the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea are a good illustration of the contribution that small countries can make to the international community.

One should be wary of the over-optimistic belief that international organizations can provide small countries with absolute safeguards. The only stretch of land to have been literally pulverized by a nuclear

weapon is an islet of the Bikini atoll, which belongs to a Pacific Trust Territory of the United Nations. It was blasted out of existence in 1950 by a nuclear test carried out by the trustee authority. Moreover, the maintenance since 1964 of a United Nations force in Cyprus did not prevent the partition of the island in 1975.

In fact, the problem of the effective participation of small States in international institutions still remains to be solved. The financial cost involved is high. Goodwill can help to lighten the burden: since 1983 Australia has subventioned an office which is shared between the missions to the UN of the Maldives, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Western Samoa. The permanent missions of Dominica and Saint Lucia also share their offices. However, human constraints are equally important. A country with a small population, which by definition has a very small number of officials, finds it difficult to send them to represent it abroad when they are required to give priority to managing affairs of state at home. For a time, the small island countries were represented, when necessary, by the diplomats of countries which were friendly towards them. But nowadays they seem less inclined to have recourse to this solution.

The States joining Unesco are also be-

coming smaller and smaller. The average population of the first 16 Member States in 1946 was in those days 59 million inhabitants (11.5 million if one discounts China and India). The average population of the 16 most recent Member States and Associate Members—which are the subject of this issue—is 769,000 inhabitants. This is a welcome trend. Joint action and multilateral negotiations are particularly rewarding for small States in their efforts to gain a foothold in the international order. Similarly, international organizations are a useful means whereby large States can hear what the small and vulnerable have to say, so that they may all work together to build a more reliable, stable and just international order. ■

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## The quest for identity

by Raymond Chasle

**T**HE emergence of the countries of the Third World on the international scene has enabled islands to assert themselves as economically, socially and geo-climatically distinct. The legitimacy of their claims is now acknowledged, but they have by no means won full practical recognition. Furthermore, the specific cultural characteristics of islands have not yet been given sufficient consideration.

Most islands have been affected by changing fortunes and the upheavals of history. They have been the targets of historical rivalry and of maritime greed on the part of nations which have sought to exploit their strategic value or have attempted to impose trade monopolies.

As regards the people who live on islands, we are talking in some cases about human settlements so ancient that they can be traced back to pre-history or to the earliest historical times. Alternatively, we can say that settlements are relatively recent in the case of islands which had no indigenous population. Between these two extremes, there has been an unending flow of emigrants through the ages. The broad miscegenation of island peoples, both biological and cultural, may be traced to chance encounters at ports of call or to the deliberate settlement of groups brought in as slaves.

As stopping-places for expeditions which were often hostile and bent on plunder, and as ports of destination for ships whose holds and steerage had been converted into "Negro pens", islands took in the slaves who had survived disease and ill-

treatment, and with them their skills, knowledge, beliefs and dreams.

After the abolition of the maritime slave trade and the consequent emancipation of slaves, the need to find substitute labour in the form of hired workers soon brought about a return to slavery. Thereafter, conflicts began to break out, sparked by religious, ethnic, linguistic and legal contentions in the various societies.

The replacement of traditional systems by new systems of values introduced by missionaries in the name of Christian morality caused cultural confrontations and turmoil. So-called "racist colonial" forms of prejudice laid the foundations of laws, decrees and new institutions which showed scant respect for local beliefs and value systems. Initially, all this brought about a cultural breakdown. Then, by degrees, islands achieved a vigorous and original synthesis of their own cultural resources and those imported from outside.

Traces of original cultures have survived not only in the sphere of tangible assets which are, moreover, threatened by changes, not to say in danger of vanishing altogether (architecture is a typical example), but also in the domain of intangible values, which neither imported new religions nor imported models of rational thought have ever been able to obliterate.

The institutions transplanted by the colonizers have been remodelled and restructured. The languages of ruling powers have become imbued with Creole imagery. After whole decades of attempts to write imitative poetry with crude emotional appeal, the island poets, whose work has brought the dream of the islands to fruition, have risen to the top of their calling and now rank with the greatest: Aimé Césaire, Nicolás Guillén, Jean-Joseph Rabearivelo, Malcolm de Chazal, Saint-John Perse (Nobel Prize for Literature, 1960), Edward Kamau Braith-

waite, Derek Walcott. Many island poets have also done much to generate and nurture the growth of social awareness in the context of the struggle for liberation.

Modern communications and newly-acquired independence have enabled the Creole-speakers of the islands of the Indian Ocean and the Caribbean to discover and recognize linguistic and cultural affinities, to restore the dignity of the Creole language, long neglected and dismissed as inferior, and to emphasize the similarities in the Creole spoken by populations far distant from one another and the discrepancies between the Creole spoken on neighbouring islands.

Encouraging signs indicate that the populations of islands are becoming more and more strongly attached to the basic features on which they pride themselves and which distinguish them from others; they have already paid too heavy a tribute to history to put their identity at risk; they are not merely preservers but truly creative crucibles of culture; and they must overcome the opposition between those willing to be totally engulfed by the new and those who cling rigidly to the old—for a third way is possible. It is possible to cultivate a critical and lucid receptiveness to external influences. They are coming to realize that the dynamic forces of society must stem from their own cultures and develop out of their own intrinsic values, so that they can guide their destiny towards a future that is not shaped by external pressures. Pluralism, ultimately, is the best antidote and the most effective weapon against the soul-destroying forces of standardization. ■

**RAYMOND CHASLE**, Mauritian writer and diplomat, represents his country in the European Economic Community and at United Nations institutions in Vienna and Geneva. In 1984 he was the principal negotiator for cultural and social co-operation at the third Lomé Convention.





# Worlds apart

by François Doumenge

*Tropical islands, in spite of their beautiful scenery and idyllic climate, are a prey to serious economic and biological constraints and natural disasters. Above, a small island near Suva, Fiji.*

**I**SLANDS are “worlds apart”, so distinctive are their physical and biological characteristics, as well as their economic and demographic situation. Surrounded by the sea, they are by definition relatively isolated, a condition which has effects on their plant and animal populations as well as on their social and economic equilibrium.

Degrees of insularity are difficult to measure. Islands with more than a certain surface area are continental islands. Small island countries usually have a surface area of less than 20,000 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of less than a million persons.

Excluding islands in Arctic and extreme southern latitudes and in the Mediterranean, most small island countries are found in the intertropical zone. In terms of

climate they enjoy definite assets, and consequently they conjure up images of lush vegetation, agreeable weather conditions and varied landscapes that are idyllic to many a mainlander. Oceanic influences ensure that there is a high degree of continuity in the life cycle of plants, a high level of insolation encourages natural productivity, and the trade winds exert a beneficial influence on the environment. Nevertheless, there are constraints: a central belt of heavy rainfall corresponding to the intertropical front is bordered by two dry belts, with the result that within a single archipelago groups of very humid islands are sometimes found next to quite arid ones. Moreover, the alternation of wet and dry seasons is marked by violent disturbances such as cyclones, typhoons and serious droughts. ▶



Photo F. Airisa/Unesco

Among the native fauna of the Galápagos archipelago in the Pacific Ocean, 1,300 km from the coast of Ecuador, are the giant tortoises which take their name from the archipelago, iguanas, sea-lions (left), birds and many small animals which owe their survival to their isolation. The Galápagos islands feature on Unesco's World Heritage List, and belong to the international biosphere reserve network which has been created as part of Unesco's major programme on Man and the Biosphere (MAB). The network, which today extends to 226 sites in 62 countries, consists of protected, representative areas for conserving biological diversity within each major ecological zone of the world. In 1985 MAB launched a project aimed at including in the biosphere network a number of sites in the Lesser Antilles Region.



Photo © Jacana, Paris

The kea (*Nestor notabilis*), a large parrot and one of the most robust of its species, is found only in the south of New Zealand.

The bread-fruit tree (*Artocarpus altilis*), a species originating in the South Pacific and introduced successfully into the Caribbean, produces large fruit (left) which when cooked tastes like bread. Its seeds, the size of chestnuts, are also edible.



Photo König © Jacana, Paris

► Finally, as a result of their geological formation and geographical situation, these islands are subject to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

More serious than the susceptibility of islands to natural disasters are the biological constraints of endemism.<sup>(1)</sup> These are particularly onerous since fewer plant and animal species are found on islands, because of their physical isolation, than on continents. These natural populations are fragile, since their regenerative capacity and their power of resistance are weak when faced with overexploitation or harsh competition from outside species introduced accidentally or for economic reasons. The proliferation of such species and their retinue of parasites and pathogenic organisms may cause real ecological catastrophes. On the other hand, by virtue of their isolation, islands may constitute veritable biological sanctuaries for the preservation of species which might have been eliminated in evolutionary competition among continental communities.

1. Defined by the *Dictionnaire encyclopédique Quillet* as "the quality of being endemic or having a limited and clearly demarcated distribution", the French term "endémisme" possesses not only biological or ecological but also cultural connotations.

The application of plant health measures and the judicious introduction of species which could occupy an ecological niche left empty because of an island's isolation may yield excellent results, as is shown by the successful transplantation of citrus trees from Mediterranean countries to certain South Pacific and Caribbean islands, or the transplantation of the bread-fruit tree (*Artocarpus altilis*) from the South Pacific to the Mascarene Islands and the Antilles.

Demographically speaking, there is no minimum viability threshold as such for island communities. In practice, most islands were originally occupied by small groups of individuals. As a general rule, when there are less than 20 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, land development is difficult, and densities of more than 300 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> result in overpopulation.

Small island societies are particularly vulnerable to outside interference, which may reach spectacular proportions. In human biological terms, islands act as a sound box, amplifying effects which quickly die out on continents. Island populations are vulnerable because of their isolation, and may be decimated by contagious diseases introduced by immigrants or visitors. In the nineteenth and the early twentieth centur-

ies this happened on a number of Pacific islands ravaged by epidemics of influenza, measles, smallpox or cholera, which took a heavy death-toll.

At present, regardless of natural or economic conditions, the demographic balance of islands is still positive. Demographic growth leads to emigration, which acts as a safety valve when population pressure becomes incompatible with the maintenance of the living standards made possible by the local economic situation. On some islands in Polynesia and the Caribbean, the number of emigrants now exceeds the number of resident islanders. Beyond what level of emigration, it may be asked, will it be impossible to maintain demographic equilibrium?

In education, population levels impose a limit on the range of fields of training. While a satisfactory level of general education may be achieved with a population generating only a few thousand pupils, technical education calls for larger numbers of pupils in order to make adequate use of costly facilities. To warrant the provision of higher education, it seems that recruitment must be made from a population "pool" of not less than 600,000, provided that the existing secondary education structure

reaches at least one quarter of the school-age population.

Below these thresholds, it is difficult for small islands to offer independently the full range of educational possibilities and to provide the necessary supervisory capacity, particularly in very specialized fields. Students must therefore turn to overseas universities. This vital contact with the outside world can be made through membership of a wider cultural sphere of influence, or by the creation of regional higher education institutions such as the University of the West Indies in Jamaica and in Trinidad and Tobago, which serves the whole of the Caribbean, and the University of the South Pacific at Suva (Fiji), which is financed by the islands of the South Pacific.

The economies of small islands cannot make an impact on international markets. Their output is too limited to influence prices. Their greatest weakness is that they are subject to market fluctuations, except where a former protective power or a neighbouring economic centre will guarantee prices and a preferential market for their products. This explains why small island plantations declined in importance after the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Their agricultural commodities—sugar, copra, bananas or, to a lesser extent, coffee and cocoa—can scarcely compete internationally. Without a superabundant supply of natural resources, which is extremely rare, it is hard for them to go beyond the stage of precarious subsistence. Nor do their limited internal markets, their lack of specialized manpower and capital, favour the development of processing industries, which are very few in number.

Ultimately, it is the range of possible uses of the sites and situations afforded by islands for the establishment of service activi-

**Islands, especially those of the Caribbean, are regularly ravaged by cyclones, atmospheric disturbances characterized by violent wind and torrential rain, accompanied by tidal waves and even minor earth tremors. Although they only last for a few hours, they can destroy an entire harvest and ruin a country's economy. Photo below shows the damage caused in 1979 in Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic, by Hurricane David, one of the most violent this century. The hurricane, which had previously devastated Dominica, left hundreds of dead and homeless in its wake.**



Photo M. Friedel © Rapho, Paris

ties which makes it possible to offset the weakness of production and processing industries.

Islands may, for example, be used for technical bases within international transport and communication networks. Although the bunkering stations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the fuelling bases of the inter-war years are outmoded, submarine cables and telecommunications stations now face competition from satellites, and today's long-haul airliners do not need intermediate landing fields, new needs have emerged. Port dispersal facilities have been developed with the expansion of containerization and the need to divide up the cargoes of large carriers. Other possibilities may arise such as the use of certain islands as strategic bases, or as observation stations for satellite launching and tracking. The main advantage of the integration of small islands into a vast worldwide network is in making available to them infrastructures which would never have been justified for local use.

But for small islands tourism is the main key to entry into worldwide economic circuits. Since the Second World War, particularly with the expansion of air travel, tourism has come to play a dominant role in the economy of these countries. The number of visitors to even very remote islands has sometimes equalled, or even exceeded, that of the indigenous population. This has brought an injection of economic resources through investments, jobs and business. Yet the excessive concentration of activities into a single sector is dangerous since, as well as any pernicious social effects it may have, it creates a danger of destabilization, the effects of which cannot be controlled in the event of a political or economic crisis in the system of national or international relations.

Financial services are another field in which the special nature of islands may

**Above, the port of Castries, St. Lucia. Providing port facilities is one economic activity whereby small island countries can take advantage of their geographical situation.**

prove useful. Under the colonial powers, islands enjoyed tax and tariff advantages which offset some of the disadvantages of isolation. With the expansion of international trade and banking links, islands became desirable locations because their isolation guaranteed security and because their tax laws were extremely liberal. However, this branch of economic activity is also dangerously dependent on the international economic situation.

The economic vulnerability of small island countries is not always an obstacle to their development. Their viability depends on their ability to predict the evolution of the world economy and to adapt to it by moving from one specialization to another, rather than by seeking a diversification which would be risky for their small-scale economies. This means that they need a novel economic structure and management system, not necessarily that which suits continental States. ■

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Photo Hires/Skiskind © Liaison/Gamma, Paris



**S**INCE the adoption of the Law of the Sea Convention in 1982, small island States have been in charge of marine space which is rich in potential resources and represents several thousand times their land area. The Convention, in addition to endorsing the sovereignty of "archipelagic States" over archipelagic waters, an endorsement which can only strengthen the cohesion of these States, establishes the jurisdiction of island States over a vast Exclusive Economic Zone. Thus, the 33 coral islands of Kiribati, with a total land area of approximately 728 km<sup>2</sup> scattered over some 5 million km<sup>2</sup> in the central Pacific, have an Exclusive Economic Zone of tens of millions of km<sup>2</sup> over which to exercise their rights.

For small States lacking financial and technical resources, exploiting these new riches and ensuring that their rights are respected over such expanses is no easy matter. In addition, it now seems unlikely that the much-discussed exploitation of the mineral resources of the oceans, such as manganese nodules, will be profitable before the next century. As far as fishing resources are concerned, it is difficult for small States to prevent the incursions of foreign fishing fleets far better equipped than their own; nor can they compete commercially with big fishing concerns which are already firmly entrenched in international markets.

They can, of course, grant fishing and prospecting concessions to foreign companies, and this may bring in substantial revenues. Nevertheless, there is a risk that they will negotiate from a position of weakness, notably through a lack of technical and scientific resources, and that they will not always have the means to guarantee the exclusivity of the concessions they will be offering.

But one of the great merits of the Convention is that it creates favourable conditions for the exploitation of marine resources, which may help to reduce the dependence of small countries in the fields of energy and food. Mariculture, for instance, opens up interesting possibilities for cultivating profitable species such as pearl oysters and abalone, edible fish, and algae for the manufacture of fertilizer, fuel and food for human and animal consumption.

But it is above all through regional co-operation (as in the creation of joint fishing concerns) and through international co-operation, which may help them to partially overcome their scientific and technological handicaps, that small island States will have the best opportunities to profit from their Exclusive Economic Zones in the near future.

Unesco's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission is among the leading international organizations with responsibilities in this field. Its programme on marine sciences and on non-living marine resources seeks, notably, to lay the scientific foundations for the rational prospection and management of mineral resources in coastal zones. The Commission is also making efforts to strengthen the capacities of its Member States in the fields of marine science and technology. ■

# Maldives

## A land of

**T**HE Republic of Maldives (formerly the Maldivian Islands) is an archipelago in the Indian Ocean. The islands are grouped into twenty-six natural clusters or atolls (the English word *atoll* is derived from the Maldivian *atolhu*), but are divided for administrative purposes into nineteen atolls with the capital, Male', forming a twentieth division. Stretching 750 km from north to south, the islands are the coral crowns of a vast submerged mountain range. Out of some 1,200 islands, only 200 are inhabited. The northernmost atoll is some 550 km from the Indian sub-continent.

The ring-shaped atolls of coral reef are pierced by openings which are in some cases deep enough for shipping. All the islands are low-lying, usually not more than 1-2 metres above sea level. They have white sandy beaches and crystal clear lagoons with tall coconut palms.

Most of the population inhabit tiny villages on remote islands, and live from fishing, which forms the basis of the economy, and from collecting coconuts. Male' is the collection centre for the entire export trade and the distribution centre for the entire import economy.

Arable land is minimal and, while small amounts of coconuts, millet, sorghum, maize and yams are grown, virtually all the main food staples have to be imported. Apart from fishing, the other most important sources of income are tourism and shipping. Maldivians speak a common language, *Dhivehi* (referring to themselves as *Dhivehin*—"islanders" and to their country as *Dhivehi Raaje*—"the island realm") and practise a common religion, Islam. In Male' itself there are no less than thirty-one mosques.

The early history of the Maldives is shrouded in mystery, although according to one authority the islands may have been originally colonized, probably by people from Sri Lanka or India, several centuries before the Christian era. Until the twelfth century AD, Buddhism seems to have been the prevalent religion, and a number of ruins of Buddhist temples and other sacred places have been excavated in modern times. Then, through gradual contact with Arab traders, for whom the Maldives lay on the direct route to Malacca and China, the country was gradually prepared to receive Islam, which was officially accepted by Sul-

Photo © Bernard Koechlin, Paris



tan Mohammed ibn Abdullah, who in 1153 proclaimed this religion throughout his realm.

Two important features stand out in the history of the Maldives. First, the orderly fashion in which this small but scattered kingdom was ruled; second, the valour with which the Maldivians have defended their country's independence against all odds and superior powers.

Orderly rule sprang from the administrative machinery. The Sultan was acknowledged as the source of all power and law so long as he ruled for the benefit of the people, which could, by custom and usage, dethrone him or correct him if he went astray.

As for the second feature, the Maldives can be said to have remained independent virtually throughout their history. The only periods marred by foreign domination were the fifteen years of Portuguese rule in the mid-sixteenth century and two months of rule by the Moplas of south India in the mid-eighteenth.

The Portuguese, based at Goa in India, began their period of colonial rule in 1558.

# atolls

Right, head of a Buddha found in 1975 in a shrine on the island of Todhdhu, Ari Atoll. It is now displayed at the National Museum of the Republic of Maldives, Male'. Buddhism was practised in the Maldives until the 12th century AD, when the whole country accepted the Islamic faith.



Photo © Bernard Koechlin, Paris

Left, portrait dating from 1880 of a woman from the family of a Maldivian Sultan who was a keen photographer. Although the Maldives is an Islamic country, women were never required to wear the veil, and when they went out simply covered with a small cap the knot of hair traditionally worn over the ear (see photo page 5). The top of the dress has a scalloped decoration, here of cotton, but woven of gold and silver thread in ceremonial wear.

Workers in a small fish canning factory which handles mainly tuna and bonito, on Felivaru island, to the north of Male' Atoll.



Photo © Department of Information and Broadcasting, Male'

## THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

Approximately 1,200 coral islets of which about 200 are inhabited

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### Date of independence

26 July 1965

### Unesco date of entry

18 July 1980

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### Capital

Male'

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### Area

298 km<sup>2</sup>

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### Population

176,000 (1984)

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### Gross national product (per capita)

(US\$ 1983)

393

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### Economic activities

Agriculture: *coconut palms; vegetables*

Industry: *knitwear; fish canning*

Fishing

Tourism: 74,000 arrivals (1982)

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### Language

Dhivehi

They were beset by problems in controlling the widely scattered islands with their hostile population, and were driven out in 1573 after a guerilla war led by Mohammed Thakurufaanu the Great. After liberation this Sultan, whose exploits are still remembered in folklore and epic, introduced reforms in every field; he is credited with having introduced a new monetary system, a new script, reform of the administrative machinery, and the setting up of a standing militia to maintain internal peace and defend the country against foreign invaders.

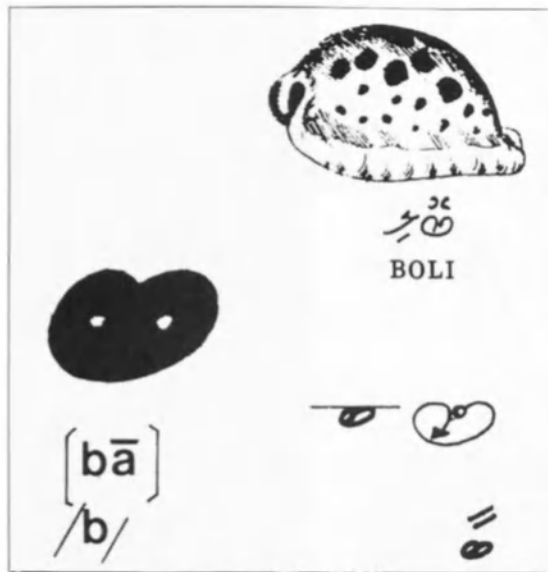
In 1752, Moplas from the Malabar coast of India took Male', destroyed the Sultan's palace, and took the Sultan into captivity. Their occupation lasted only two months; Ghazee Hassan Izzuddeen led the Maldivians in a rebellion which expelled the Moplas. This national hero was the founder of a dynasty of sultans which reigned until the twentieth century. ▶

Population, surface area, GNP and tourism figures for this and other country profiles in this issue have been taken from United Nations, Unesco and UNCTAD sources.

► The period of British “protection” which began with the forcible signing of an “agreement” on 16 December 1887 by Sultan Mohammed Mueenuhdeen XI was not a particularly significant episode. Britain did not interfere with the internal affairs of the Maldives to any marked degree. There was no British governor or representative stationed in the Maldives to advance their country’s interests. This was, in fact, an agreement whereby the Maldivian Sultan managed to keep a super-power which was all-powerful in the Indian Ocean outside his domain. For the Maldivians, foreign affairs and defence were not so important so long as they had unobstructed relations with Sri Lanka, where they sold the dried smoked fish for which they were renowned, and obtained all the provisions they required. The ingenuity of the Maldivians had again managed to find a way to keep their own world to themselves. The Protectorate came to an end in 1965, and later that year the Maldives joined the United Nations. In March 1968, following a referendum, the country became a republic. ■

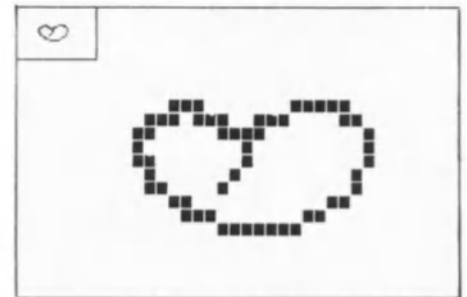
**HASSAN AHMED MANIK**, a leading historian and archaeologist of the Republic of Maldives, is the author of several pamphlets published by the Department of Information and Broadcasting, Male’, of which he was Director until 1983, notably *History of the Maldives (1982)*, from which the present article has been adapted. He is currently working on a *History of Dhivehi Civilization in the Maldives*.

## Maldivian script



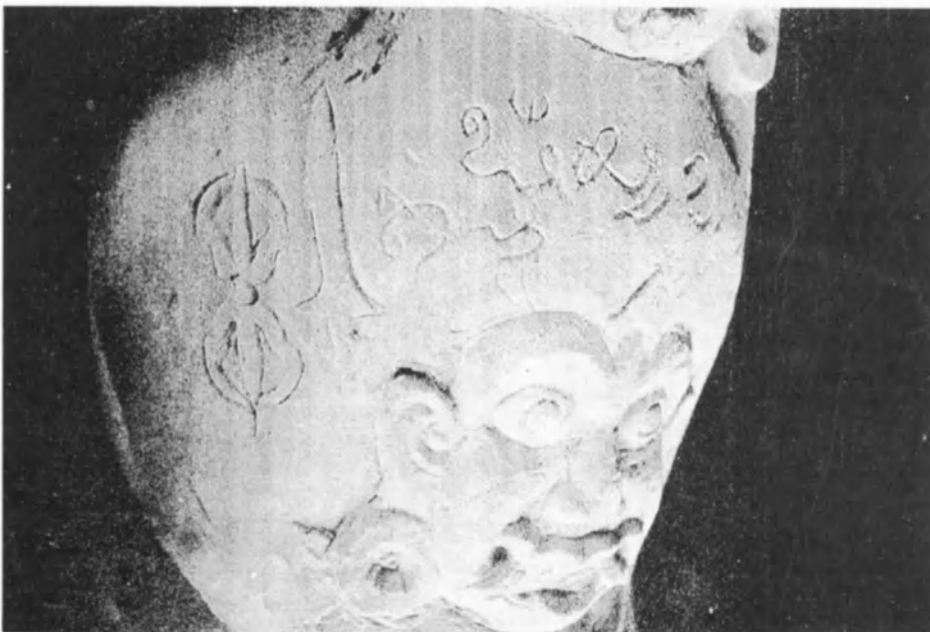
Drawing © Bernard Koechlin, Paris

*In frame above, drawing top right depicts a cowry shell, which is commonly found in the Maldives and was used as currency from China to Africa until the 18th century. Beneath it is the name of the shell in the Dhivehi language, written both in taana (a contemporary script which is read from right to left) and in Latin letters. Left, an enlargement of the letter “b” above the phonetic transcription of the syllable “baa” (the name of the letter in Dhivehi) and its phonological symbol. Right, the position of the letter on the line and a drawing showing the gesture made by Maldivians when they write it. Bottom right, the name of the letter in taana script.*



*The same letter produced by a computer. Unesco is supporting a Maldivian government project to adapt the Dhivehi alphabet to a variety of computers and data processing systems. The numerous applications will include printing of school books, newspapers, telex and other forms of data transmission.*

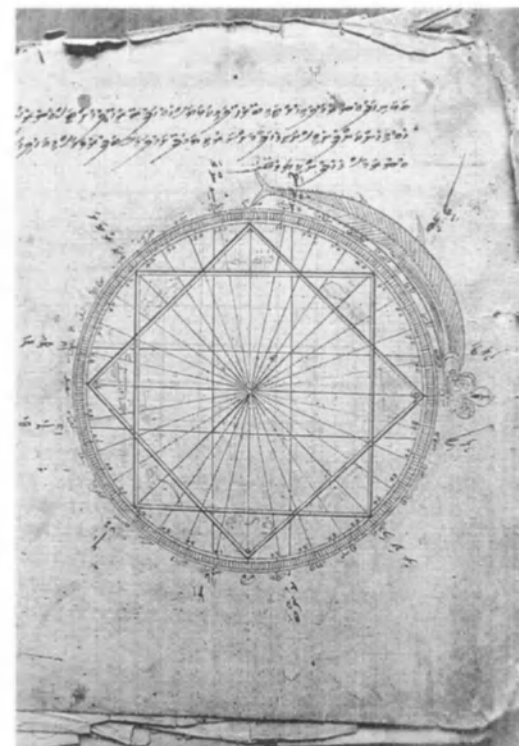
Photo © Bernard Koechlin, Paris



Photos © Bernard Koechlin, Paris

*Above, sculpture in coralline rock dating from the beginning of the Christian era, unearthed around 1970 during pipe-laying work in Male’. It represents a divinity, probably pre-Buddhistic, which some specialists have likened to sculptures found in southern India. The inscription has not yet been deciphered.*

*Right, page from a geomancer’s manuscript, over a century old. The writing is in a script known as gabuli taana. By turning the drawing in a certain direction determined by the position of the stars, it was possible to establish which geographical sector was “unlucky”. This sector was defined by lines originating from centre of figure and passing through the mouth of the fish and the mid-point of its body.*





# The cradle of Polynesian culture

by 'Ana Maui Taufe'ulungaki

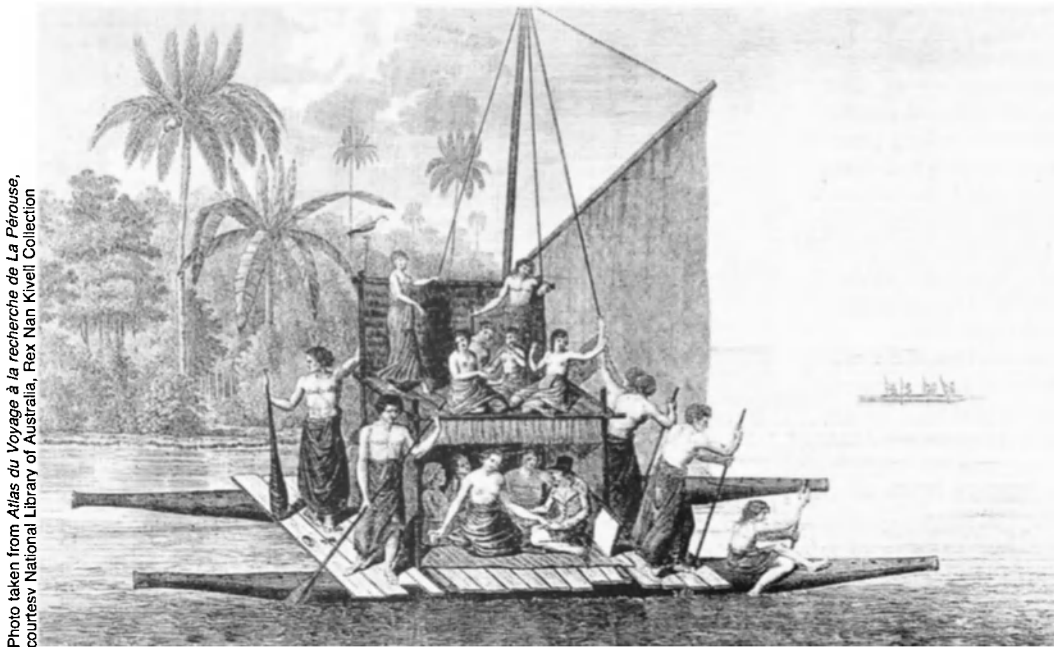


Photo taken from *Atlas du Voyage à la recherche de La Pérouse*, courtesy National Library of Australia, Rex Nan Kivell Collection

**Late 18th-century engraving of a Tongan double-hulled vessel made of two dugout canoes, surmounted by a central platform. In such robust craft, capable of carrying a considerable number of passengers and provisions and of covering very great distances, the early inhabitants of Oceania set out to conquer the Pacific, a tremendous adventure which began around 3,000 years ago. These vessels were still in use in Polynesia when Europeans undertook their own exploration of the Pacific Ocean in the 16th and 17th centuries.**

**T**HE indigenous cultures of Fiji, Samoa and Tonga were homogeneous and shared a common origin. The Fijians are usually classified, using racial, linguistic and cultural criteria, as Melanesians, a term which literally means “the black islands”. There is, however, a considerable Polynesian influence on the physical characteristics of Fijians and on their language and culture; this came about through historical and geographical associations. Archaeological evidence from carbon dating of Lapita pottery and linguistic reconstruction of the proto-Polynesian language point to Fiji as the original home of the Polynesians where they arrived 3,000 years ago. Shortly after this period they settled Tonga and then, at the beginning of our era, Samoa.

The triangle thus formed by Fiji, Samoa and Tonga is the cradle from which the Polynesian language and culture sprang. The contacts between the three groups were maintained throughout the pre-European period and thus although they differ in the finer details, their cultures are essentially Polynesian. Fiji, however, received later waves of migrations from Melanesia, which did have some influence on Tonga and to a lesser extent on Samoa.

All these societies demonstrated to varying degrees an elegant and advanced political and social organization based on a pyramidal kinship system, which defined rank, political and social roles in terms of blood ties. Genealogical ranking is its distinctive feature. The head of the secular system also claimed divine origin and a complementary religious system acted as a validating and support system to the political structure. The “kava” ceremony, practised in all three groups, with its elaborate rituals expressive of rank, and the chiefly language of Tonga and Samoa, illustrate the Polynesians’ preoccupation with rank and chieftainship.

They were essentially a seafaring people. Their great ocean-going canoes, skilfully fashioned using only crude stone axes, shells and bones, were capable of carrying up to 250 men and testified to their skills as craftsmen and navigators. But they also practised agriculture, and cultivated the same crops of yams, taro, bread-fruit, bananas and coconuts with similar techniques, as well as keeping pigs and chickens. They cooked their food in earth ovens and indulged in gargantuan feasts. Their women wove fine mats and baskets and made tapa-cloths decorated with intricate designs. ▶



► Their houses, thatched and walled with woven coconut or sugar-cane leaves, were characterized by rounded ends and parallel rafters and were supported by king posts. They were fond of group singing and dancing in which hundreds could participate. Their musical instruments included nose flutes, wooden slit gongs and pan-pipes, and their exhibition games included fighting with clubs, wrestling and boxing. They dressed in mats, leaves and tapa-cloths.

These were the societies that the Europeans found. The group of Europeans responsible for bringing the greatest changes to the cultures of these peoples were the missionaries. Their aim was not only to bring Christianity but Western civilization. The religious practices of these societies were not the only cultural features considered heathenish by the missionaries: everything that did not conform with their notion of Western civilized habits was condemned—from political and social systems to arts and dances, from games and recreations to eating habits, ways of dressing, sexual mores and languages. Conversion to Christianity required the new recruit to renounce not only his gods but much of his

Photo John Taylor © World Council of Churches, Geneva



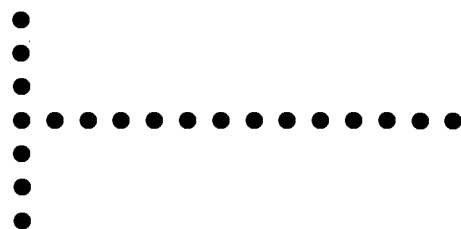
Photo Arnaldo/Unesco

*Antenna, above, constructed at the University of the South Pacific, Suva (Fiji), captures educational programmes transmitted by satellite.*

## *Radio for the islands*

**R**ADIO broadcasting performs an essential role in communication between the far-flung islands and atolls that sequin the Pacific Ocean. Because resources are limited the job is demanding and versatility is at a premium: in some island States a large broadcasting service may have 10 or 15 producers, while in others two or three people may handle all radio broadcasts and a small newsletter. In response to the continuing need to train broadcasters in the region, Unesco in co-operation with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) of the Federal Republic of Germany, the South Pacific Commission and the broadcasters of the Pacific, has organized a project called Pacific Broadcasting Training and Development (PACBROAD). The project was officially launched in 1985. It is currently serving broadcasters on 11 island States stretching some 15,000 km from Papua New Guinea to the tiny islands and atolls of Tonga. Some 50 courses were scheduled for the first year and a half, some in-country, some at regional training facilities in Papua New Guinea, Western Samoa and Fiji. PACBROAD is now working even more closely with island broadcasters and seeking to develop additional projects to foster broadcasting facilities in Tuvalu (former Ellis Islands), Niue, Tonga and the Cook Islands.

Left, performance of an ancient Tongan dance. Like all Polynesians, Tongans are renowned for their love of music and it is assumed that everyone in the community can sing and dance.



**FIJI**  
361 islands of which 97 are inhabited  
Principal islands: Viti Levu, Vanua Levu, Taveuni, Kandavu, Ovalau, Ngau, Koro

**Date of independence**  
10 October 1970  
**Unesco date of entry**  
14 July 1983

**Capital**  
Suva (Viti Levu)

**Area**  
18,274 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population**  
679,000 (1984)

**Gross national product (per capita)**  
(US\$ 1983)  
1,790

**Economic activities**  
Agriculture: *sugar cane; rice; manioc; coconuts; bananas; ginger*  
Industry: *sugar; coconut oil; copra; soap; cement; beer; cigarettes; wood; matches; fish canning*  
Mines: *gold, silver*  
Tourism: 215,000 arrivals (1982)

**Languages**  
Fijian; Hindi; English

**THE KINGDOM OF TONGA**  
172 islands of which 36 are inhabited  
Principal groups: Vava'u, Ha'apai, Tongatapu

**Date of independence**  
4 July 1970  
**Unesco date of entry**  
29 September 1980

**Capital**  
Nuku'alofa (Tongatapu)

**Area**  
699 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population**  
105,000 (1984)

**Gross national product (per capita)**  
(US\$ 1983)  
780

**Economic activities**  
Agriculture: *coconuts; bananas; vanilla*  
Industry: *copra; coconut oil*  
Fishing  
Tourism: 12,000 arrivals (1982)

**Languages**  
Tongan; English

Photo © José Garanger, Paris



The potter's traditional craft provides the main chronological and cultural evidence of Oceanic prehistory. These fragments of ancient pottery unearthed on Watom Island, New Britain, in 1909, belong to a type of ware known as "Lapita" from the site in New Caledonia where it was first found. Similar fragments from a nearby site on Watom Island have recently been scientifically dated to around 550 BC.

Below, modern buildings at Apia, Western Samoa, preserve the form of the traditional Samoan village dwelling. There are no walls, and matting is unrolled to keep out the rain.



Photo M. MacIntyre © ANA, Paris

culture as well and instead acquire Western values and manners.

In less than a hundred years these countries had adopted Christianity and Western-style educational, political and economic systems, and with these many manifestations of the superior technology of the West, from satellite telecommunication links to breweries and canning factories, and from institutions of higher education to disco dance halls.

Samoa and Tonga have become literate bilingual societies, with English sharing with Samoan and Tongan the role of official languages. Samoa was a German colony from 1900, a New Zealand colony from 1914 and a United Nations trustee administered by New Zealand until full independence in 1962. Tonga was a British Protectorate from 1900 to 1970.

Fiji, already with a legacy of multilingualism, became even more multilingual as well as multiracial and multicultural as a result of her colonial experience. She was ceded to Britain in 1874, and in 1879 the British introduced the indentured labour system under which labourers from India

were brought over to work in the coconut and sugar plantations. When the scheme ended in 1916, 40,000 of the Indians elected to remain in Fiji and by 1956 had outnumbered the indigenous Fijians. Fiji also has a substantial population of Europeans, Chinese and Polynesians. English is the official language. The Bau dialect is the most widely used of the Fijian dialects and Hindustani is spoken by the majority of the Indians.

But despite the changes, each cultural group has evolved a distinct culture unique to its members. The process of cultural amalgamation has been a shared experience common to all members of the group, and throughout the changes the basic unit of the social structure—that of the "matai" (headman) system in Samoa, the "mataqali" (land-holding unit) in Fiji, and the "kainga" (extended kinship unit) in Tonga remained intact. Most of the populations remained in villages, fully sharing the obligations and rewards of community life led by a chief. They have retained their languages, given them written form, use them as media of instruction at the primary level and teach

**THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF WESTERN SAMOA**

Principal islands: Savaii, Upolu

**Date of independence**  
1 January 1962  
**Unesco date of entry**  
3 April 1981

**Capital**  
Apia (Upolu)

**Area**  
2,842 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population**  
161,000 (1984)

**Gross national product (per capita)**  
(US\$ 1982)  
425

**Economic activities**  
Agriculture: *coconuts; taro; bananas; cocoa; wood*  
Industry: *soap; beer; matches; cigarettes*  
Tourism: 23,000 arrivals (1982)

**Languages**  
Samoan; English





Photo Charles Lenars © Explorer, Paris

*The ritual preparation of kava, a drink made from the green root of the pepper plant, is one of many traditional ceremonies which give meaning to the lives of Tongans, Samoans and Fijians. The root is pounded to a powder which is then mixed with water in a large hand-carved wooden bowl. When the kava reaches the right consistency, it is drunk from half a coconut shell by the officiants, who are decked out in garlands of leaves and flowers.*

► them as subjects at the higher levels. And despite the missionaries and advanced technology most aspects of their Polynesian heritages have survived and are flourishing.

But greatly improved transport and communication links with metropolitan centres are bringing unprecedented numbers of tourists to these countries and not even the remotest areas have escaped penetration. The improved education systems and increasingly complex economic systems have created their own demands and expectations which in turn are affecting the very fabric of the social structures at the most basic levels. The repercussions on rural life have led to mass exodus to the urban areas and to metropolitan countries in search of educational and economic opportunities.

The question that arises today is how long the vernacular languages and social structures can survive the tremendous social and economic changes taking place within these societies. The Fijian situation is perhaps the most difficult. With its now multiracial, multilingual and multicultural heritages, it has to decide on whether or not to pursue an integrated cultural policy aiming ultimately at creating an amalgamation of the disparate cultural elements within its society or to continue to pursue an informal policy of segregated cultural development with all its implications.

The problem for Tonga and Samoa relates more to the development and main-

tenance of their vernacular languages as the vehicles of cultural preservation. Both countries are very much aware of the danger and are now implementing through their education systems language and cultural programmes at all levels aimed at both development and maintenance.

Tourism, although it is often severely censured for introducing undesirable cultural traits, has in fact helped to revive interest in many cultural features, particularly in the creative and expressive arts, that were in danger of being lost. Similarly, overseas migration has made the islanders more conscious of their national identities and their communities have become strongly nationalistic and highly aware of their cultural heritages.

In recent years, efforts at cultural maintenance have become formalized and incorporated into national development plans, which is perhaps an indication of the importance these countries attach to the role of their cultural heritage in creating positive national identities for all their members. Such moves augur well for the continuing survival of these cultures. ■

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## Colour pages

**Opposite page.** Above, fishermen's houses on the waterfront at Castries, the chief town of the Caribbean island of St. Lucia. Below, oil refinery mechanics on Antigua, where attempts to diversify the economy to avoid over-reliance on winter tourist receipts have led to the encouragement of manufacturing industry and fishing, as well as oil refining.

Photo R. Baumgartner © Explorer, Paris  
Photo T. Spiegel © Rapho, Paris

## Page 20

**Above, fishermen mend nets on St. Christopher (often abbreviated to St. Kitts) which with its neighbouring Caribbean island of Nevis forms the Federation of St. Christopher and Nevis.**

Photo P. Tetrel © Explorer, Paris

**Below, a spectacularly beautiful undersea world of coral and colourful tropical fish surrounds the Maldive Islands in the Indian Ocean. The Government of the Republic of Maldives has taken measures to protect the unique variety of coral species that flourish in these waters.**

Photo © P. Lachaux, Paris

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**Above left, a young woman on the island of St. Vincent prepares copra, dried sections of coconut kernel from which oil will later be extracted.**

Photo H. Günther © Rapho, Paris

**Above right, an Aristolochia, one of many plants comprising the luxuriant tropical vegetation of the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean. Praslin island is the site of the Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve, which is the home of extremely rare plant and animal species such as the famous coco-demer or double coconut, and a black parrot (Coracopsis nigra barklyi), which is found only on this island. The Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve has been included on Unesco's World Heritage List of cultural and natural properties of outstanding universal value.**

Photo M. Friedel © Rapho, Paris

**Below, waterborne herdsmen supervise their cattle in Botswana. Cattle-raising is the country's chief agricultural activity.**

Photo Thomas Nebbia © Cosmos, Paris















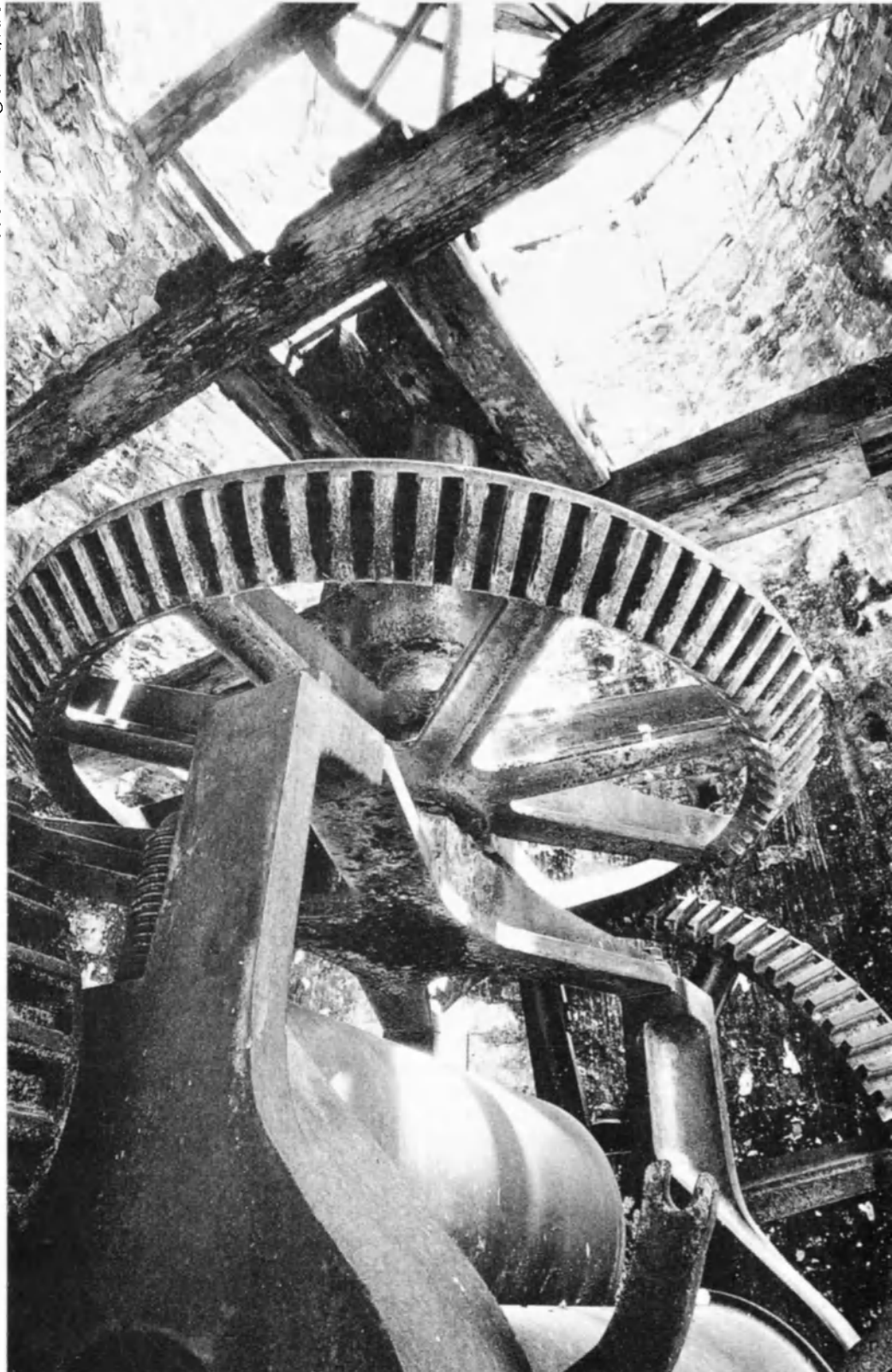


# The Caribbean community

by Colin Nicholls

*The sugar mill was the focal point of the plantation, the basis of Caribbean colonial society. Right, sugar mill machinery in Antigua dating from 1862.*

Photo Charles Harbutt © Cosmos, Paris



Colour page opposite

*Above, a pair of dhoni, the traditional fishing boats of the Maldives, in full sail. Fishing is the mainstay of the Maldivian economy, employing more than 40% of the workforce. In recent years the dhoni have increasingly given way to mechanized vessels.*

Photo M. Friedel © Rapho, Paris

*Below, a gold mine in Zimbabwe, a country which has considerable mineral wealth and where the mining industry makes an important contribution to the national economy.*

Photo Leroy Woodson © Cosmos, Paris





Photo © Imapress, Paris

Until relatively recently timber was the main export product of Belize. Above, stacking yard of a sawmill at Mongo Creek, with pine lumber ready for transport to the docks for shipment.

THE quest for economic integration in the English-speaking Caribbean started in the 1960s after the collapse of the ill-fated Federation of the British West Indies in 1962. After a vain attempt to revive the federalist idea of political unity, leaders turned increasingly to the concept of economic integration as a means of preserving ties between the islands and the mainland territories of British Honduras (Belize) and British Guiana (Guyana). The federalist venture, which was singularly encouraged by the colonial power, foundered on the rock of personality clashes, conflicting notions of weak federalism versus strong central federalism, freedom of movement between territories and insular notions of nationalism.

According to Dr. Eric Williams, noted historian and late Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, writing in 1970, "the Federal experience as well as the post-independence situation in the Commonwealth Caribbean showed that the quest for identity and solidarity among the ex-British possessions in the Caribbean had to be pursued by other means—namely, the method of regional economic collaboration and the working out of complementary rather than competitive strategies of economic development."<sup>(1)</sup>

It was self-evident in the early 1960s that Caribbean countries were linked economically more closely to the metropolitan countries (in particular the former colonial power) than to each other. This factor in itself produced and perpetuated vertical, bi-lateral trading relations between each country on the one hand and countries outside the region on the other hand. As a result, intra-regional, horizontal economic relations, the development of multilateral commerce and the rationalization of fiscal and excise policies were non-existent, thereby contributing to the continued economic isolation of individual countries.

In 1965, then, the leaders of Antigua, Barbados and British Guiana concluded an agreement to establish a Free Trade Area. By 1967, other territories had accepted the principle of such an association and at the Heads of Government Conference in Barbados in October 1967 adopted a number of resolutions aimed at establishing a Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA); creating a Caribbean regional development bank; and furthering the integration process. The CARIFTA Agreement, ratified by the three founding members at St. John's, Antigua, entered into force on 1 May 1968. At the same time, other territories signed a Protocol of Interest and pledged to become members.

It may be useful at this point to place this initial integration effort in perspective. One cannot underestimate the economic legacy of three centuries of colonialism which

1. Eric Williams, *From Columbus to Castro, the History of the Caribbean, 1492-1969*, London, André Deutsch, 1970.

assigned to the Caribbean territories the role of producers of primary commodities and suppliers of cheap labour for metropolitan consumption. The pattern of single-crop industries led to the neglect of diversification and accentuated dependence on favoured treatment by the colonial power. Agricultural production for the domestic market and the gradual expansion of the industrial base received scant attention, resulting in the increased vulnerability of national economies of the Caribbean.

Nor can one underestimate the considerable prestige and influence of Sir Arthur Lewis on West Indian economic thinking in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1950s the future Nobel Prize-winner in Economics, a citizen of Saint Lucia, produced two seminal works which left their impact on economic policy in the region for some time. In an article published in 1950, Sir Arthur argued that: "A poor people spends a very high proportion of its income on food and shelter, and only a small proportion on manufactures. At their present low standard of living, the number of persons for whom West Indians can provide employment in manufacturing by their own purchases is extremely small."<sup>(2)</sup>

The apparent anti-industrialization slant

was later to be echoed in a classic article in which Lewis shows that in a dualistic economy the sector offering higher wages will attract labour without necessarily depressing those of the rival sector when the labour supply is precisely "unlimited".<sup>(3)</sup> Lewis' theory therefore seemed to lay the justification for attracting foreign capital and technology which would avail themselves of inexpensive labour on the local market.

The relatively cheap and abundant labour supply in Caribbean countries prompted political leaders to open their economies to the North American multinationals which installed light manufacturing plants and benefited from highly attractive fiscal incentives. However, their presence resulted in investment in capital intensive activities which hardly addressed the root cause of high unemployment: the absence of a wide spectrum of agricultural and industrial activity supplying both the domestic and export markets. Secondly, a significant percentage of multinational pro-▶

2. Arthur Lewis, "The Industrialization of the British West Indies", *Caribbean Economic Review*, Vol. II, No. I, 1950.

3. Arthur Lewis, "Economic Development with Unlimited Supplies of Labour", *Manchester School of Economic and Social Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2, May 1954.

*Calypso time at the Goombay Festival in the Bahamas. The popularity of this summer carnival, originally invented by hoteliers to enliven the off-season, is growing rapidly.*



Photo M. Friedel © Rapho, Paris

## Lost islands

There are so many islands lost in the Caribbean.  
I do not lose count of their seeds.  
I recognize them in the tattoos that infamy  
has left on their weary American backs.  
They have all lived centuries on the cross.

These isles disposed in the shape of a bow  
have fine arrows  
for the pleasure of tourists:  
spicy dishes, ever golden rum,  
pineapples, oranges, mangoes, guava,  
meringué, laghia, calypso, bel-air,  
flamboyant trees and bougainvillea  
cock-fighting, carnival,  
voodoo and folklore at every turn  
and women who are the sailing ships  
of the last gardens of delight.

Our isles have no Yoruba or Bantu names  
they are paths without identity papers:  
isle where the racial volcano erupts  
isle where the alphabet never goes ashore  
isle which shaves with a shard of broken bottle  
isle which exports both its blood and its secrets  
isle with its head astray on the shoulder of others.

Once, many years  
before the death of my body  
I was dead in my spirit  
I was prostrate, stone dead  
in my drifting dreams  
one of these isles suddenly  
restored to me my state of poetry.

René Depestre  
from *Iles de terre, îles de mer*

## ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

*Antigua, Barbuda, Redonda (uninhabited islet)*

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### Date of independence

1 November 1981

### Unesco date of entry

15 July 1982

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### Capital

Saint John's (Antigua)

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### Area

440 km<sup>2</sup>

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### Population

79,000 (1984)

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### Gross national product (per capita)

(US\$ 1983)

1,710

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### Economic activities

Agriculture: *sugar cane; vegetables*

Fishing

Stockraising

Industry: *rum; clothing; household equipment; car manufacture*

Tourism: 87,000 arrivals (1982)

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### Languages

English; Creole

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## THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS

*700 islands of which 30 are inhabited*

*Principal islands: New Providence, Grand Bahama, Andros, Eleuthera, Exuma*

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### Date of independence

10 July 1973

### Unesco date of entry

23 April 1981

---

### Capital

Nassau (New Providence)

---

### Area

13,935 km<sup>2</sup>

---

### Population

226,000 (1984)

---

### Gross national product (per capita)

(US\$ 1983)

4,060

---

### Economic activities

Agriculture: *sugar cane; market gardening*

Industry: *petroleum products; pharmaceuticals; rum; cement*


Banking and financial services

Tourism: 1,121,000 arrivals (1982)

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### Language

English



*Street scene in Willemstad, chief town of the island of Curaçao and capital of the Netherlands Antilles. The island is a remarkable example of cultural symbiosis, with its Dutch-style architecture, its mestizo population and its language, Papiamentu, a Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch Creole.*

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## BELIZE

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### Date of independence

20 September 1981

### Unesco date of entry

10 May 1982

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### Capital

Belmopan

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### Area

22,965 km<sup>2</sup>

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### Population

158,000 (1984)

---

### Gross national product (per capita)

(US\$ 1983)

1,140

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### Economic activities

Agriculture: *citrus fruits; bananas; sugar cane; wood*

Industry: *textiles; sugar refining*

Fishing

Tourism: 62,000 arrivals (1981)

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### Languages

English; Creole; Spanish

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## SAINT CHRISTOPHER AND NEVIS

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### Date of independence

19 September 1983

### Unesco date of entry

26 October 1983

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### Capital

Basseterre (Saint Christopher)

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### Area

262 km<sup>2</sup>

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### Population

46,000 (1984)

---

### Gross national product (per capita)

(US\$ 1983)

860

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### Economic activities

Agriculture: *sugar cane; cotton; coconuts; vegetables*

Industry: *sugar; clothing; electronic components assembly*

Tourism: 35,000 arrivals (1982)

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### Language

English



## SAINT LUCIA

### Date of independence

22 February 1979

### Unesco date of entry

6 March 1980

### Capital

Castries

### Area

616 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population

128,000 (1984)

### Gross national product (per capita)

(US\$ 1983)

1,060

### Economic activities

Agriculture: *bananas; coconuts; cocoa; tropical fruits and vegetables*

Small-scale agro-industries

Financial services, insurance

Tourism: 72,000 arrivals (1982)

### Languages

English; French Creole

## NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

*Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Saint-Eustache, Saint-Martin (shared with France)*

### Unesco date of entry

26 October 1983 (Associate Member)

### Capital

Willemstad (Curaçao)

### Area

961 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population

260,000 (1984)

### Gross national product (per capita)

(US\$ 1982)

5,221

### Economic activities

Oil refining (98% of exports)

Tourism

Services sector

### Languages

Dutch; English; Papiamentu; Spanish

## BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

*Principal islands: Tortola, Anegada, Virgin Gorda, Jost Van Dyke*

### Unesco date of entry

24 November 1983 (Associate Member)

### Capital

Road Town (Tortola)

### Area

153 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population

12,000 (1984)

### Gross national product (per capita)

(US\$ 1982)

2,310

### Economic activities

Agriculture: *sugar cane; tropical vegetables and fruits*

Stockraising

Fishing

Industry: *rum; building materials*

Tourism

### Language

English

## SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

*Grenadines: Bequia, Mustique, Canouan, Mayreau, Union*

### Date of independence

27 October 1979

### Unesco date of entry

15 February 1983

### Capital

Kingstown (Saint Vincent)

### Area

388 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population

103,000 (1984)

### Gross national product (per capita)

(US\$ 1983)

860

### Economic activities

Agriculture: *bananas; sugar cane; arrow-root (major world producer); plantains; spices; exotic fruits; tobacco*

Industry: *cement; flour; furniture*

Tourism: 46,000 arrivals (1982)

### Language

English

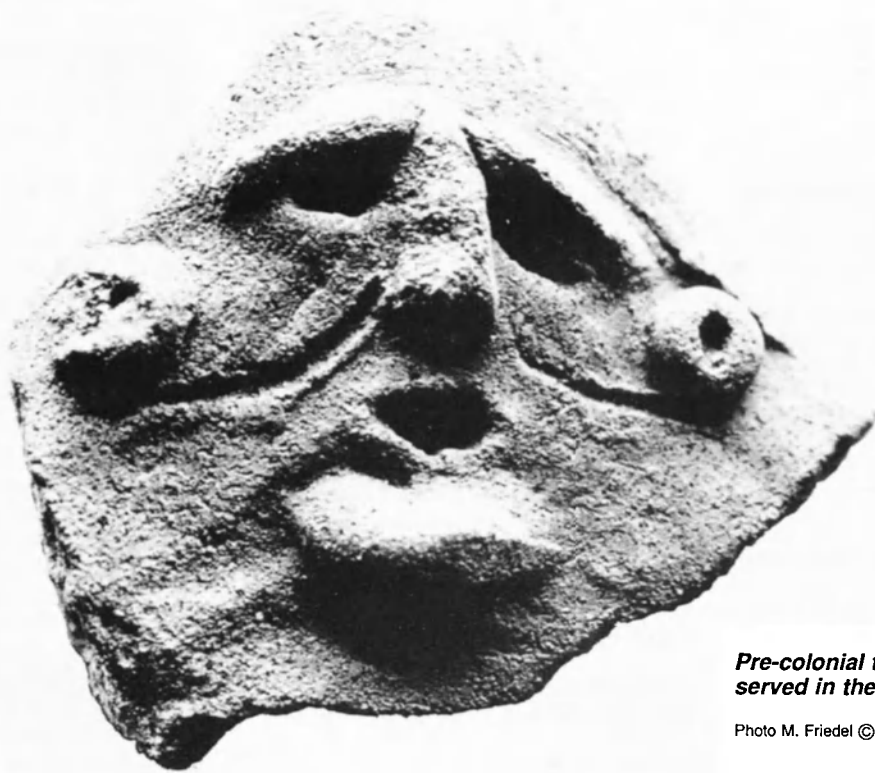
► fits was repatriated to the North and could not be re-invested locally so as to contribute to the growth of national investment. Thirdly, the increasingly high cost of the required technology proved frequently beyond the means of such small countries. It must also be noted that the severely limited tax base did not generate the funds necessary for major public capital investment in infrastructure.

The foregoing elements demonstrate that as these territories moved towards independence in the 1960s and 1970s, they were characterized by very small, mono-crop, technically and financially weak economies producing for limited markets. The problem, then, was how best to unite more than a dozen territories into a credible economic zone in the face of ever rising international competition and inflationary pressures, compounded by falling prices of non-petroleum primary commodities. The absence of economies of scale and a critical level of economic activity underscored the need for an institution affording stronger integration links than those offered by a Free Trade Association. Thus in July 1973 was signed the Treaty of Chaguaramas, instituting the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) providing for increased co-operation under three headings: Common Market, Functional Co-operation and the Co-ordination of Foreign Policy.

The Treaty of Chaguaramas provides for two classifications of Member States. Firstly, the More Developed Countries (MDCs), comprising Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. Secondly, there are the Less Developed Countries (LDCs), including Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Christopher and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The latter were able, during negotiations leading up to the Treaty, to persuade the MDCs that given their more fragile economies they were entitled to special consideration. The integration movement had to take into account the reality of the highly uneven economic development of Member States and devise mechanisms tending to protect the economies of the LDCs. One may note, for example, that with a population of 260,000, Barbados has a Gross Domestic Product double that of all the LDCs combined, which have a population of approximately 600,000.

However intense and sincere might have been the underlying intentions and efforts, the integration movement clearly could not exist in a Caribbean vacuum. Caribbean solidarity inevitably had to cope with realities external to the region and adapt to the shifting tempo of the international economic and financial context which dramatically changed in 1973; the year of the Chaguaramas Treaty, with the first oil shock. Whereas Trinidad and Tobago, with its oil resources, was able to profit from the price spiral, the other countries, in particular the LDCs, were hard pressed by a constantly rising energy bill which compromised investment capabilities.

The subsequent conservative political reaction, with its inevitable monetarist economic policies and austerity measures, ►



*Pre-colonial terra-cotta figurine, now preserved in the Museum of St. Vincent.*

Photo M. Friedel © Rapho, Paris

► further undermined the thrust towards economic integration. The world recessions of 1974-1975 and 1981-1983 were to leave their mark on struggling Caribbean economies. Jamaica and Guyana, both heavily dependent on their bauxite industry, were the hardest hit in the 1970s by the downturn of the world economy. In turn, intra-regional trade suffered from the slowdown of these two important markets, along with that of Barbados, which witnessed the tapering off of the tourist trade. In 1984 alone, intra-regional trade fell by approximately 13 per cent. The drop in trade was largely responsible for the difficulties of the CARICOM Multilateral Clearing Facility (CMCF), which was established in 1977 to create an efficient payments system and provide short-term credits while ameliorating the foreign exchange situation. The CMCF encountered difficulties and lapsed into virtual neglect as early as 1982, when Guyana defaulted on its payment.

Any decline in intra-regional trade necessarily has adverse consequences for all regional economies and in particular those of the LDCs with a weaker base. Certain protectionist measures adopted by the MDCs could almost be interpreted as punitive actions against the free flow of exports from the LDCs, for there is little doubt that the wider CARICOM market has assumed major significance for LDC countries. Between 1973 and 1981, exports from LDCs to CARICOM increased by over 600 per cent, more especially in the area of light manufactures. However, the problem of market size arises whenever a MDC decides to apply import restrictions, as decided by Trinidad and Tobago, where imports from CARICOM fell by 30 per cent in 1985.

A further development tending to reinforce the capability of the smaller Eastern

Caribbean States was the establishment in July 1981 of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) regrouping Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Christopher and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. In addition to co-operation at the political, judicial and cultural levels, the OECS Treaty provides for the promotion of economic integration. The creation of an Economic Affairs Committee and the East Caribbean Common Market attests to the importance attached by Member States to the problem of economic development.

Yet it must be recognized that the economic situation of the early 1980s has acted as a severe constraint on these efforts. Despite the overall rise in protectionist attitudes, the general thrust towards economic integration seems to be firmly established in the political consciousness of the region. New perspectives will need to be explored and fully exploited. Among these one may cite the possibilities offered under the Lomé III Agreement. In the final analysis, it is perhaps useful to reflect on whether integration does not constitute a function of economic growth and therefore suffers when growth decreases. If the corollary holds true, i.e., that integration promotes growth, then Caribbean countries have established the necessary institutional fabric to propel such growth inspired by integration. But only time will determine which of these two possibilities bears the greater historical validity. ■

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# New nations of Africa

by Basil Davidson



**F**OR the handsome equatorial island of São Tomé, with its smaller neighbour Príncipe, independence, in 1975, signalled a fortunate end to a sad and violent history. Sparsely settled by Portuguese in the second half of the fifteenth century, these tropical islands some 300 kilometres west of Gabon and Equatorial Guinea became, almost at once, a centre of the Atlantic slave trade and the scene of a slave economy based on crops for export, of which cocoa was to be the most valuable. Populated initially as a fief of the Portuguese Crown, and later by traders and planters from Portugal, the islands gave birth to a people of mixed origins—*filhos da terra*, “sons of the country”—whose formal loyalty was to Portugal but whose inner identity remained local to the islands.

As in the larger Cape Verde archipelago to the north, where history took much the same course, the “sons of the country” were rapidly outnumbered by African captives brought in as slave labour from the neighbouring mainland, but chiefly from the lands which became Angola. When slavery fell gradually away in the nineteenth century, the same continuous import of mainland Africans and Cape Verdeans was ensured to the cocoa plantations by new if concealed forms of enslavement or, as it was called, “contract labour”. This import went on for decades.

One consequence of this strange history was that the people of São Tomé and Príncipe became, and have since remained, an authentically African people, even though the mythologies of Portuguese imperialism have preferred to present them as actually or potentially “Portuguese”. Another consequence was that they shared in the aspirations and the struggle for independence, ▶

*Cocoa galore. The principal cash crop of São Tomé and Príncipe, cocoa provides 80%-90% of the country's export earnings. The cocoa and coffee plantations introduced in the late 19th century by the Portuguese colonists are today being rehabilitated by the government. Agricultural co-operatives are also being created and crops diversified in an attempt to reduce dependence on the fluctuating world cocoa market and on imported foodstuffs.*

Photo © CIRIC, Paris



► from Portugal and its empire, of all the African peoples subjected by the soldiers and administrators of Lisbon. In 1975 the Portuguese administration withdrew without warfare, and most of the white population left the islands, leaving fewer than 100 whites in that notable year of anti-colonial change. The newly-formed Republic at once joined the loosely-organized grouping of "ex-Portuguese" African countries.

The instrument of independence was a nationalist movement, *Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé e Príncipe*, whose leading members had spent the final years of Portuguese rule in exile, chiefly in Gabon. Some 10,000 Angolan "contract workers" went home to their own country and its new freedoms, while most of the Cape Verdean workers made the same choice. Left without any form of modern development, the economy of the islands has thus required urgent reconstruction, while, at the same time, the nationalists have had to cope with the problems of nation-building in circumstances of often acute difficulty. After a number of troubles and disputes, the early 1980s brought stability under a government which has ensured good relations with Angola, within the framework of the Organization of African Unity, and an effort to use foreign aid from diverse sources, whether in East or West.



#### THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

**Date of independence**  
12 July 1975

**Unesco date of entry**  
22 January 1980

**Capital**  
São Tomé

**Area**  
964 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population**  
95,000 (1984)

**Gross national product (per capita)**  
(US\$ 1983)  
306

**Economic activities**  
Agriculture: *cocoa; bananas; coconut palm; oil-palm*  
Fishing  
Industry: *beer; bread; cooking oils*

**Language**  
Portuguese

**B**OTSWANA is the ancient country of the BaTswana or Tswana people, a modern State and member of the community of nations which has developed for a long but markedly successful struggle for mastery of a most difficult environment. Far back in time, at least fifteen centuries ago, early ancestors of the majority of the BaTswana came into this arid plateau from plains and highlands to the east, explored its potential for raising cattle, and began to settle here. They were not the first people to live in this wide Kalahari region, for Stone Age hunters of Khoi origins ("Bushmen" in white parlance) had long preceded them. But they were the first people, supported by their iron-making and food-producing skills, to form long-term settlements and villages.

Their achievement was to discover and develop a mode of life which could meet the challenge of an always low rainfall, limited pasture, and natural obstacles to survival that were inherent in the conditions they encountered. Given such obstacles, the BaTswana have repeatedly succeeded by means of great persistence, ingenuity and courage. In modern times their total numbers, consisting chiefly of eight large ethnic groups (all of the Bantu-language family) and of several smaller ones, have steadily grown in size. Although varying among

#### THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

**Date of independence**  
30 September 1966

**Unesco date of entry**  
16 January 1980

**Capital**  
Gaborone

**Area**  
600,372 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population**  
1,050,000 (1984)

**Gross national product (per capita)**  
(US\$ 1983)  
908

**Economic activities**  
Agriculture: *sorghum; maize; millet; beans; sunflowers*  
Stockraising  
Industry: *meat; other food products; clothing; textiles; metal products; building materials*  
Mines: *diamond; copper; nickel; coal*

**Languages**  
English, Setswana

*An eye to business. With its rich "pipes" of industrial diamonds and gem stones discovered in the last 20 years, Botswana became in the early 1980s the world's fourth largest diamond producer.*





*Botswana village women dressed in a style imported in the 19th century by the Rhenish Missionary Society.*

themselves, their underlying cultures are closely related to each other, and their sense of identity is powerfully expressed in their Botswana nationhood. While their economy has remained largely pastoral, they also depend to a small extent on crop cultivation. Important mineral discoveries have lately begun to provide new sources of national wealth.

One of the world's richest diamond "pipes"—more or less "vertical" rock seams "sewn" with industrial diamonds and gem stones—was found at Orapa in 1967 and began to yield four years later. Another such "pipe" was then discovered nearby at Letlhakane, and a third, possibly richer still, not long after at Jwaneng, where production opened in 1982. By late in the 1980s, it was thought, these three diamond mines would yield as much as 20 per cent of world-wide production. Diamonds bring a valuable and unexpected source of revenue to an otherwise poorly-endowed economy.

Other mineral sources of revenue, notably copper and nickel, have yet to meet initial expectations of profit, but Botswana's large deposits of coal are thought to total some 400 million tonnes. While coal-

mining remains at a relatively early stage, most of what is now produced is already an indispensable source of thermally-produced electric power. Recent mineral surveys have indicated the probable or certain presence of manganese and other useful ores, including uranium. Generally, however, this "mineral revolution" has yet to get into its stride, while its "spread" of resultant benefits so far reaches only a part of the population. The government's programmes of development intend to alter this situation. The years immediately ahead should see progress in this direction.

Independence brought gains but also problems after colonial Bechuanaland became independent Botswana in 1966. But in facing this challenge the country's political parties and their constituent institutions have borne witness to a quiet confidence in this people's ability to translate problems into solutions. Whatever new difficulties have come or may now come from their neighbour to the south, the South African apartheid State in its endemic instability, the BaTswana have had the advantage of a very instructive history during the imperialist period. The birth of their State has not

been easy, and they have had to learn the lessons of a stern realism. Their present leaders, moreover, can look back to several notable predecessors, notably the Chief Khama—Khama the Great, as he is not unreasonably called—during the late nineteenth century, and, more recently, his descendant Chief Tskedi Khama.

These men proved able to meet and somewhat mitigate the brusque onset of the "modern world" in the abrasive form of British and South African imperialism. For much of the early colonial period the country then known as Bechuanaland was seen by leading British imperialists, above all Cecil John Rhodes, as little more than a "Suez Canal towards the North". Khama and his successors were able to use this perception as a means of avoiding complete colonial enclosure, and to keep most of their country as a "protectorate" which allowed a wide margin for their own political control. Modern Botswana leaders have shown the same political skill in affirming and in buttressing their country's national independence. Here is an African country and people that have repeatedly shown how to develop weakness into strength. ▶

THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE

Date of independence

18 April 1980

Unesco date of entry

22 September 1980

Capital

Harare

Area

390,580 km<sup>2</sup>

Population

7,980,000 (1984)

Gross national product (per capita)

(US\$ 1983)

740

Economic activities

Agriculture: tobacco; maize; cotton; sugar; wheat; soya; coffee

Industry: agro-food products; chemicals; textiles

Mines: gold; asbestos; nickel; copper; silver; emeralds; cobalt; chrome; coal

Languages

English; Chishona; Sindebele

Aerial view of modern Harare (formerly Salisbury), capital of Zimbabwe. The city (pop. 656,000 at the 1982 census) derives its name from that of Chief Neharawe, who, with his people, occupied the site when it was seized in 1890 by the British South Africa Company's Pioneer Column.



Photo Georg Gerster © Hapho, Paris

NAMED after its famous stone ruins, medieval in date and wholly African in conception and construction, the splendid country of Zimbabwe may be said to stand at the heart of southern African history. Every important stage in that history, over many centuries, has left its strong and often dramatic mark upon this people and their land; and this remains as likely to be true in the future as it has been in the past. Zimbabwe, in a large historical sense, epitomizes all the challenges and ventures of the African south, whether for worse or for better, in despair or in vivid hope.

Compared with Botswana, Zimbabwe has been blessed by nature, being a land of wide pastures, pleasant hills and flowing rivers, adequate though seldom abundant rainfall except in times of cyclical drought, and fruitful human settlement. Since independence came in 1980, democratic policies have begun to overcome the gross inequalities of ownership of land and wealth, as between a small minority of white settlers and a large majority of indigenous Africans, that were imposed, often manu militari, during colonial occupation.

The ancient history of Zimbabwe was largely the epic struggle of its Shona people to tame this land for human settlement and to shape and evolve effective means of self-government. Iron Age settlement began here some eighteen centuries ago. But it was in the tenth century, or soon after, that the origins of Shona society began to produce the cultures and traditions which have governed the Shona down to modern times. Shortly after AD 1000, the earliest stone-built centres of self-government were raised on sites which, later on, became famous for the grandeur of their conception and the strength with which they were built. By 1300 or somewhat earlier, using the plentiful granite of the southeastern plateau, powerful rulers had their courts and centres of government at various places. The best known of these, and certainly the most impressive, was at Great Zimbabwe, as later generations have understandably named it.

This cluster of Zimbabwe kingdoms, so named after a Shona term for a stone building, stretched across the central plateau down towards the coastland of Mozambique, and, like other large structures of African authority in medieval times, derived from the dynamics of an internal development as well as from the stimulus of long-distance trade. Very competent metalworkers and miners, these people were able to locate and extract gold from many surface or near-surface seams across their plateau and its eastern hills. At least from the tenth century AD, they were trading this gold to the city-States of the East African coast, notably those of the Swahili who, in turn, exchanged the gold for Indian cottons and other useful imports from the countries of the East. These old kingdoms were thus an integral and even an essential part of the whole network of Eastern trade before the onset of European discovery in 1498.

Although a few Europeans, chiefly Portuguese, were able to penetrate these inland kingdoms during the sixteenth century, and later to make small settlements along the

Right, Zimbabweans waiting in the polling queues during the February 1980 election, in which a new Constitution guaranteed universal adult suffrage. The new State of Zimbabwe became legally independent on 18 April 1980.

middle and lower Zambezi river, no lasting impact from the outside world struck the body of the plateau until the 1830s. Announcing a time of upheaval, warrior groups of the Ndebele (Matabele) people then came north over the Limpopo river from their troubled homeland in the Zulu empire. Searching for a new homeland of their own, the Ndebele invaded the westerly Shona kingdoms and settled in the Matopo hills, with their capital at Bulawayo. To begin with they proved dangerous neighbours, but settlement gradually rubbed off the edges of their aggressiveness.

But new arrivals in the 1880s again announced a time of trouble; and now the time would be long and the trouble would be great. As part of Britain's imperial "drive to the north", white soldiers and settlers from South Africa were able to take possession of all the country of the Shona and the Ndebele. They were stubbornly resisted, but the automatic firearms of the invaders ensured an eventual success. The country was enclosed in the British empire under the name of Southern Rhodesia, although ruled until the 1920s by the British South Africa Company which Cecil Rhodes had formed for the purpose.

Lasting until 1980, this colonial period produced a white dictatorship, severely racist, on lines that were essentially the same as those already formed in South Africa. Only a daring and often painful counter-violence could overthrow that dictatorship: begun in the 1960s, this was the war of liberation which was crowned by independence six years ago. Since then this united people has begun to make its own history once more, fortified by its long traditions of independent development before the coming of the Europeans, and determined to regenerate and modernize the old ancestral cultures which rose in the remote past. ■

BASIL DAVIDSON, British writer and historian, is an authority on African history and current affairs. His many books on Africa include Liberation of Guiné (1969), In the Eye of the Storm: Angola's People (1972), Africa in Modern Society (1980) and Modern Africa (1983). He is the author of Africa, a series of eight television programmes first shown in the United Kingdom in 1984 and since networked in thirty countries.





Photo Maggie Steber © Cosmos, Paris

## *Land-locked islands*



**I**SLAND States and land-locked States, in spite of their different geographical situations, possess one common feature—their relative isolation.

The world's land-locked countries are: in Europe, the principality of Andorra, Austria, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Czechoslovakia; in Africa, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Botswana, Lesotho, Mali, Malawi, Niger, Uganda, the Central African Republic, Rwanda, Swaziland, Chad, Zambia and Zimbabwe; in Asia, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Nepal, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Mongolian People's Republic; in South America, Bolivia and Paraguay.

Some of these States owe their existence to the preservation of a strong ethnic and cultural originality and of forms of social and economic organization which have enabled them to survive in spite of outside pressures. A number of them are set within a barrier of mountains: the Himalayas in the case of Nepal and Bhutan, the Drakensbergs in the case of Lesotho, and the Alps in the case of Switzerland. Others were deprived of access to the sea as a result of the dislocation of the Austro-Hungarian, Spanish, French, Belgian and British empires.

These countries form an extremely disparate group. They differ in terms of history, their endowment of natural resources and their political systems. Nevertheless they do share, especially if they are developing countries, a number of broad general features.

Land-locked States are, for example, generally speaking less wealthy, less populous and smaller than coastal States. In addition, the prop-

ortion of the working population engaged in agriculture is much higher than that engaged in industry and the services sector correspondingly lower. Finally, perhaps because of the absence of ports as centres of natural growth, the percentage of the population living in urban areas is far lower than in coastal States.

The land-locked problem affects all aspects of development, but its consequences are most severe in the field of external trade. Most land-locked countries are remote from world markets; imports and exports must be shipped through another State, in some cases several States. This gives rise to additional costs which reduce the competitiveness of their products on overseas markets and have a negative effect on their balance of payments as a result of higher import bills and currency outflows.

Lack of access to the sea also causes legal, administrative and political problems. Land-locked countries have to negotiate to meet their transit requirements, and the facilities provided may not in every case be satisfactory because the transit countries have their own development priorities and problems, which are often acute. They may, for example, impose cumbersome documentary procedures and formalities in order to safeguard their interests which could be jeopardized by the diversion of transit cargoes to their domestic markets. Transit countries may also wish to limit the use of certain routes within the context of an overall economic policy. Land-locked countries, furthermore, have to incur additional storage expenses in order to maintain inventories in ports or to anticipate possible interruptions in transit-transport services. The fact

that they are at the mercy of technical incidents, natural disasters, industrial disputes, political troubles and even international conflicts, provides some indication of their dependence and the precariousness of their situation.

Fifteen of the land-locked developing countries belong to the category of least developed countries. Their remoteness from world markets has compounded their problem of extreme underdevelopment and made their economies particularly vulnerable. They have been hard hit by the overall deterioration of the world economy in recent years, and by the natural disasters which have stricken the greater part of Africa, where most of them are located.

The international community has come to recognize that land-locked developing countries cannot overcome on their own the formidable obstacles that face them. Several regional and international organizations, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), have over the last decade been actively seeking solutions to the special problems faced by these countries. ■

*Source: Progress in the implementation of specific action related to the particular needs and problems of the land-locked developing countries, Report by the UNCTAD secretariat to the Trade and Development Board and to the General Assembly of the United Nations, October 1985.*



Photo © Corneille Jest, Paris

*Fortresses, monasteries and seats of administration, dzongs were originally built at strategic locations in order to defend Bhutan against invaders. Tongsa dzong (above), one of the biggest in the country, was built in the 17th century in the heart of the region of which it bears the name. It follows the elongated outline of the rocky spur on which it stands. The central tower accommodates three temples at different levels, the highest being dedicated to the divinity of the region.*



# The land of the dragon

by Rigzin Dorji

**D**RUKYUL, "The Land of the Dragon", known to the outside world as Bhutan, is a land-locked Himalayan kingdom. The southern frontier with India follows the line of the tropical foothills overlooking the Indian plains, and is almost at sea level. The northern frontier with the Tibet region of China is formed by great snowclad ranges in which numerous peaks soar to above 6,000 metres.

Agricultural Bhutanese are valley-dwellers and live beside the rapidly flowing rivers that rise in the snowy heights. These perennial rivers, once looked upon only as a source of irrigation, are now being harnessed for hydro-electric power. They are fed by hundreds of tributaries that keep the fields green and productive.

Although closely linked to Tibet and India culturally, Bhutan maintained its independence and individuality over the centuries by deliberately following a systematic policy of isolationism which earned for the country the reputation of being the world's last "Forbidden Kingdom". This policy was pursued until 1952, when the third hereditary monarch, the late King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, ascended the throne. He realized that the old policy of isolation was causing Bhutan to remain socially, economically and politically backward. Gradually, so as not to upset old traditions, but firmly in accordance with modern needs, he introduced administrative reforms, and in 1961 launched the first of a series of Five Year Plans.

In a country where there had been no wheel other than the continuously-turning prayer wheel, no electricity, no post offices, no modern schools or hospitals, and little other sign of the twentieth century, traditional barriers suddenly began to collapse. Roads began to be built, and up them came the carefully sifted benefits of the modern outside world. Today, under the leadership of the young king Jigme Singye Wangchuck, crowned in 1974, the country is all set to achieve a happy co-existence of tradition and progress in the best interests of its particular genius.

There are three distinct ethnic elements in the population. The first comprises the descendants of the original inhabitants, who live in the eastern part of the country. The second ethnic element consists of the descendants of immigrants from Tibet, who occupy the western region. The third comprises the Nepalese settlers who began to immigrate to Bhutan at the turn of the twentieth century. They are found exclusively in the hot and humid southern districts of the country adjoining India.

The State religion is Buddhism, which was introduced into Bhutan towards the second half of the eighth century AD. The first monastic body was established in the seventeenth century with thirty monks only. There are now about 6,000 State-supported monks. No account of the religious life of the country would be complete without mentioning the mask dances. At various festivals, both monks and laity expert in the art of dramatic dance and music, don rich robes of China silk and brocade and fantastic masks representing deities, legendary personages and demons. As the day of the festival draws near, large crowds of people flock in from the countryside to see the sacred mask dance which represents the Buddha in various manifestations. It is believed that the very act of watching the dance helps people to acquire spiritual merit and to achieve liberation from worldly suffering.

Bhutan is a friendly and hospitable country. Meetings are generally acknowledged with an exchange of silk or cotton scarves. Butter, tea and saffron-coloured rice are served as a gesture of hospitality. When Bhutanese pass each other at a distance on their travels they call and yodel to each other. Dzongkha is the country's national language. In official correspondence both English and Dzongkha are used.

The Bhutanese build imposingly large houses of hand-tamped earth, generally two or three storeys high, with shingled roofs. The ground floor is used for stabling cows, pigs and poultry; the first floor for living apartments, the best room always being a







Photos © Corneille Jest, Paris

**Padmasambhava, an Indian saint who in the 9th century introduced Tantric Buddhism to Bhutan and other Himalayan regions, is honoured by many Tshechu festivals, so called because the 12 great episodes by which he is remembered all took place on the tenth day (tshechu) of the month at different periods of his life. One of Bhutan's most renowned Tshechu festivals is that of Paro, a valley in the western part of the country. During the festival religious and folk dances are performed for five consecutive days. The dancers, above, wear sumptuous costumes and fantastic masks representing deities, legendary personages and demons.**

▶ private shrine; and the loft for storing grain and odds and ends. The houses are constructed in a distinctive architectural style; the windows, doors and roof beams are painted in glowing earth colours. All government buildings, both official and residential, are required to adhere to traditional Bhutanese style on the exterior, though every modern convenience may be employed within.

The Bhutanese are experts in arts and crafts. Artists excel in mural and scroll painting, and craftsmen create masterpieces in silver, gold, copper and brass. Bronze-casting, used largely in image-making, is an ancient art form, as is wood-carving, to be seen at its best in the gilded chapels of monasteries and castles. Bhutanese craftsmen also make temple-bells, swords and daggers.

Handloom weaving of woollen, silk and cotton textiles is practised in almost every home. Women wear small fortunes in handwoven cloths and take pride in outfitting their men. Basket- and bamboo-weaving is commonplace and is used for making food baskets, water containers, hats, quivers and other attractive items of everyday use.

Archery is the national sport in a country whose people are extremely sports-minded. Other major sports are soccer, basketball, volleyball, badminton, tennis and table tennis.

The great bulk of Bhutan's trade is with India and with other neighbouring countries. The main exports are timber, minerals and agricultural products. Other export commodities include liquor and canned fruit products. Cardamom and Bhutanese handicrafts are also exported to the Middle East and Western Europe.

The population is increasing rapidly every year as a result of effective health measures taken by the government. Most of the diseases which used to take a heavy toll of human lives have been controlled. As a result of this demographic growth more and more fallow land is being brought under cultivation and forests are being cleared for new settlements. There is no unemployment, and in fact, there is an acute shortage of both skilled and unskilled labour. Due to the heavy demand for such labour, wages are increasing every year. To meet the labour shortage, manpower is being imported from neighbouring countries. ■



**Archery is the national sport of Bhutan and a favourite pastime of young and old. Competitions between villages are important events during which the local divinities confront one another through the medium of opposing teams. Each team is advised by an astrologer, and backed by supporters and dancers who try hard to encourage their own side and dishearten their opponents.**

**RIGZIN DORJI, of Bhutan, is Director of his country's Department of Information and Communication, and an executive member of its National Religious Committee, its National Council for Social and Cultural Promotion, and its Dzongkha Advisory Committee. This article is based on a radio programme devoted to "The Little Countries", produced in December 1984 by Unesco to mark the entry of new Member States into the Organization.**

One of the symbols of Buddhism, the chörten is a small religious construction erected in memory of a great lama, or to ward off evil spirits. The chörten of Chen-den-ji, right, is exceptional because of its size. Nearby, local basket weavers make fencing and a variety of household objects.

## THE KINGDOM OF BHUTAN

### Unesco date of entry

13 April 1982

### Capital

Thimphu

### Area

47,000 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population

1,390,000 (1984)

### Gross national product (per capita)

(US\$ 1981)

102

### Economic activities

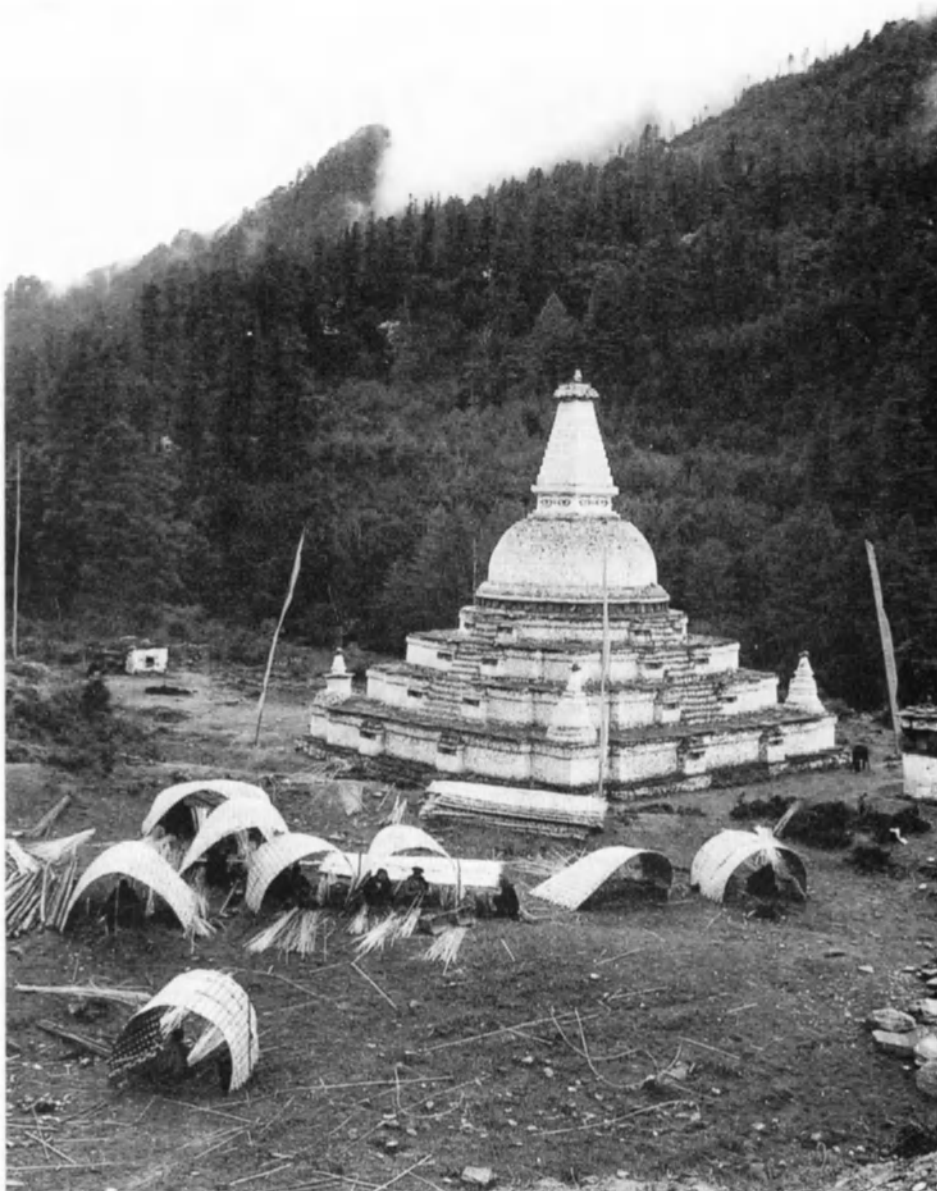
Agriculture: *rice; maize; millet; apples*

Stockraising

Industry: *cement; foodstuffs; distilleries*

### Languages

Dzongkha; Nepalese; English



## In harmony with nature

by Corneille Jest

THE traveller coming from the south who ascends the Wong Chu valley in Bhutan is captivated by a grandiose, rocky landscape with many tumbling waterfalls. He cannot fail to see, carved in huge letters on a bare rockface, this maxim of the late King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck: "Work with Nature". This exhortation by the father of the present sovereign, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, also holds good for the engineers and planners of today, and reflects the major concern of a man who, like his subjects, himself lived in harmony with nature, which is here beautiful, generous and treated with respect.

The landscape, shaped by man, reveals a sequence of surfaces which are often depicted in Bhutanese religious painting and hold deep significance. At the lowest level flows the river, with its corbelled bridges, and its water mills; on its cultivated banks are fields dotted with farmhouses and their outbuildings; higher up stands the temple or monastery, to which lead tracks punctuated by chörten (religious constructions at which offerings are made); higher still, the dzong or fortress dominates these scattered settlements; finally, the mountain ridge with its dense and sombre covering of larch and pine stands out against the sky.

The dwelling house is unquestionably the

most remarkable element in this whole picture: a massive construction in rammed earth on two or three levels, it is so proportioned and decorated that it fits harmoniously into the landscape; the façade is adorned with wooden panels, often carved and painted; the roof widely overhangs the walls on each side, as if simply set down on top of the building.

The feeling of harmony inspired by the sight of these structures deepens as one comes to understand their symbolism, in which a part is played by the choice of site (which must not offend the divinity which owns the ground) and by the final consecration ceremony, which takes place when the roof is put in place. The house in its entirety is conceived as a microcosm of a world which also has three storeys.

In terms of size, the dzong is the most important building in Bhutan. It combines defensive, administrative and religious functions, and is occupied by monks and regional administration officials. Its plan may vary depending on the nature of the site, but the same features are always found: high surrounding walls gradually tapering inwards, pierced by several loopholes; large paved courtyards; a central tower; temples and meeting halls for the monks.

Increasingly aware of the value of its architectural heritage, the royal government of

Bhutan has laid down standards for new buildings which attach particular importance to the façades, which must be in the traditional style. Restoration work is carried out along the same lines, using local materials. New buildings such as the hospital devoted to traditional medicine, and the national library, are built in the purest Bhutanese style.

Closed to foreigners until a short time ago, Bhutan is classed among the least developed countries according to the criteria of a world in which scientific and industrial development is considered the most effective, if not the only, motive force; but this is a world to which Bhutan does not belong.

Bhutan's own values provide grounds for reflection and much can be learned from them. The wealth of its traditions cannot be measured, still less "exploited"; it is to be hoped that material progress, desirable though it be, will leave these traditions intact. ■

**CORNEILLE JEST**, of France, is Director of a research programme on the Himalayas at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris. He has recently been involved in an United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) mission responsible for preparing a master plan for the development of tourism in Bhutan.

# 1986: Year of Peace / 10



Among the events marking the International Year of Peace, a Congress of Intellectuals for the Peaceful Future of the World was held in Warsaw (Poland) in January 1986. The 250 participants included scientists, writers and artists from 54 countries representing all the world regions. The discussions, devoted to the main dangers threatening international peace and security, ended with the proclamation of a Message, salient passages of which are published below.

**W**E, intellectuals, have assembled in the heroic city of Warsaw, city of peace, to defend the peaceful future of the world. Anxiety about the destiny of the world has brought us here. Anxiety about our homes and cities, anxiety about our science and culture. The threat of total annihilation hangs over us. Differences of outlook notwithstanding, we express in our diverse languages our common conviction that our prime task is to defend the universal values of culture. At this decisive moment in history we declare ourselves in favour of life. We declare ourselves in favour of peace and co-operation, against war and the arms race which leads to war.

Weapons will not preserve our future. We are convinced that the production and accumulation of weapons of mass extermination cannot be justified by the needs of national or international security. Weapons are an unimaginable waste of the world's material and

intellectual resources. They lead to greater inequalities in the level and quality of life. We declare our support for disarmament in all its aspects. The threat of the extension of weapons into space fills us with anxiety and terror.

A durable peace depends on the renunciation of force in international relations and on the peaceful settlement of all conflicts, the establishment of confidence and détente, and disarmament. With this in view we must stop the race leading to the destruction of our civilization, to the annihilation of the spiritual and material heritage of humanity.

In the nuclear era, an armed conflict would solve no problem. There would be neither victors nor vanquished. Peace is our fundamental common value. The right to life, to live in peace, is the right which underlies all human rights, the first condition for the realization of political, social, economic and cultural rights.

Peace is also threatened by the aggravation of injustices in economic relationships. In spite of enormous advances made within our civilization, the numbers of the hungry, the homeless, the unemployed, and the sick are growing.

The survival of humanity thus depends on finding urgent solutions to crises with worldwide ramifications: the food and energy crises, crises of ecology and massive debt. Common global problems will only be solved through global co-operation.

Wars are born in the hearts and minds of men. The construction of peace begins with

education in the spirit of peace, with the preparation of peoples to live in peace.

Science and technology create a better world as long as they contribute to the creative development of man and not to his destruction. We declare ourselves in favour of freedom of scientific research and of the general availability of the achievements of world science.

We express the hope that literature, the arts and education will play a greater role in the formation of human attitudes.

We consider that nothing divides us in our aspiration to provide present and future generations with the opportunity to live in peaceful conditions, to live a life worthy of man.

We hope that the International Year of Peace will bring, in conformity with the spirit of Geneva, a decisive improvement in the relations between East and West and an end to wars on all the continents.

We support the efforts of the United Nations in favour of international security and peaceful co-operation between States. These efforts spring from the ideals of the Charter of the United Nations and conform to the expectations of peoples.

Gathered at the Congress of Intellectuals in Warsaw, we appeal:

- for renunciation of force in international relations, for an end to the arms race, for renunciation of space weapons programmes, for the liquidation of atomic weapons during this century;

- for the International Year of Peace to mark the start of an era of Peace on our Earth. ■

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Three festive scenes in small countries with a rich cultural heritage: top left, a folk dancer from the Fiji Islands; top right, the wedding reception of a Tongan prince; above, dancing at the Tshechu religious festival in Paro, Bhutan.