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The Courier

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Women
Tradition and change

Also in this issue:

Folklore
Preservation and protection

Two anniversaries:
Johann Sebastian Bach – Niels Bohr

...

A time to live...

33 Switzerland

The carnival at Basel

The masquerade has always been a popular amusement at carnival, itself a survival of masked festivities dating back to ancient times. Merrymaking at the Shrove Tuesday carnival at Basel, Switzerland, lasts for three days during which dozens of masked groups in fancy dress parade through the streets playing drums and fifes. Above, a band of fife-players all wearing the same female disguise. Drummers bring up the rear of the procession.

UNESCO
The Courier
A window open on the world

Editorial

THIS year marks the end of the *United Nations Decade for Women : Equality, Development and Peace.* At the World Conference to be held next July in Nairobi, Kenya, delegates from United Nations Member States will draw up a balance sheet of the results obtained and of the problems which remain unresolved—the many forms of discrimination to which women are still subject both in practice and under the law.

In this issue of the *Unesco Courier* we present three articles which deal respectively with the common traditions which restrict the rights of women in Mediterranean societies, with the situation in Latin America where women themselves have given priority to participation in political and social struggles over the fight to achieve their emancipation and to establish their "identity", and with the triple oppression—as women, on grounds of "race" and of class—to which women are subjected under the apartheid regime of the Republic of South Africa.

Also in this issue we commemorate the tercentenary of the birth of Johann Sebastian Bach, whose music, little appreciated in his own time, seems to us today to be imbued with the power of "memory and prophecy". We salute as well the centenary of the birth of Niels Bohr, a pragmatist of genius who helped lay the foundations of modern physics.

In a further article we examine a question that preoccupies a number of Unesco Member States—that of the need to extend to folklore the protection already afforded to other art forms. Unanimity has yet to be achieved on the appropriate international action required to provide this protection.

The study we present of Bartolomé de Las Casas, the "Apostle of the Indians", demonstrates the astonishing freshness of the thought and actions of this 16th-century Spanish prelate whose opposition to slavery and insistence on respect for cultural differences as the basis of liberty and peace remain of topical interest today.

Finally, as a postscript to our March issue on the urban explosion, we present a pen portrait of Cartagena de Indias, which since November 1984 has been included on the World Heritage List drawn up under the auspices of Unesco. This old Colombian town and seaport, which for four centuries withstood the savage assaults of Caribbean pirates, continues today to resist the excesses of modern urbanism and to retain its old-world charm and its soul.

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Women:
tradition and change

From 15 to 26 July this year a World Conference is to be held at Nairobi, Kenya, with the aim, firstly of evaluating progress made in improving the situation of women during the *United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace* and identifying obstacles to achievement of its objectives and, secondly, of establishing as a result of this appraisal priorities and strategies for overcoming these obstacles, especially in the fields of employment, health and education. United Nations Member States are being invited to send official delegations to represent them at the Conference, and intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations with consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council are being invited to send observers. The *Unesco Courier* presents on the following pages three articles by women who express their personal viewpoint on various aspects of the condition of women today in the different world regions.

Photo Richard Kalvar © Magnum, Paris

Two Turkish women whose different approaches to life are reflected in their dress

"Westernization has been associated with a degradation of public morality, an attack on women's honour; and the signs of this degradation have always been perceived in the transformation of women's ways of dressing and the emancipation of their presence in the public arena."

Nora Seni (Turkey)

'A shared destiny'

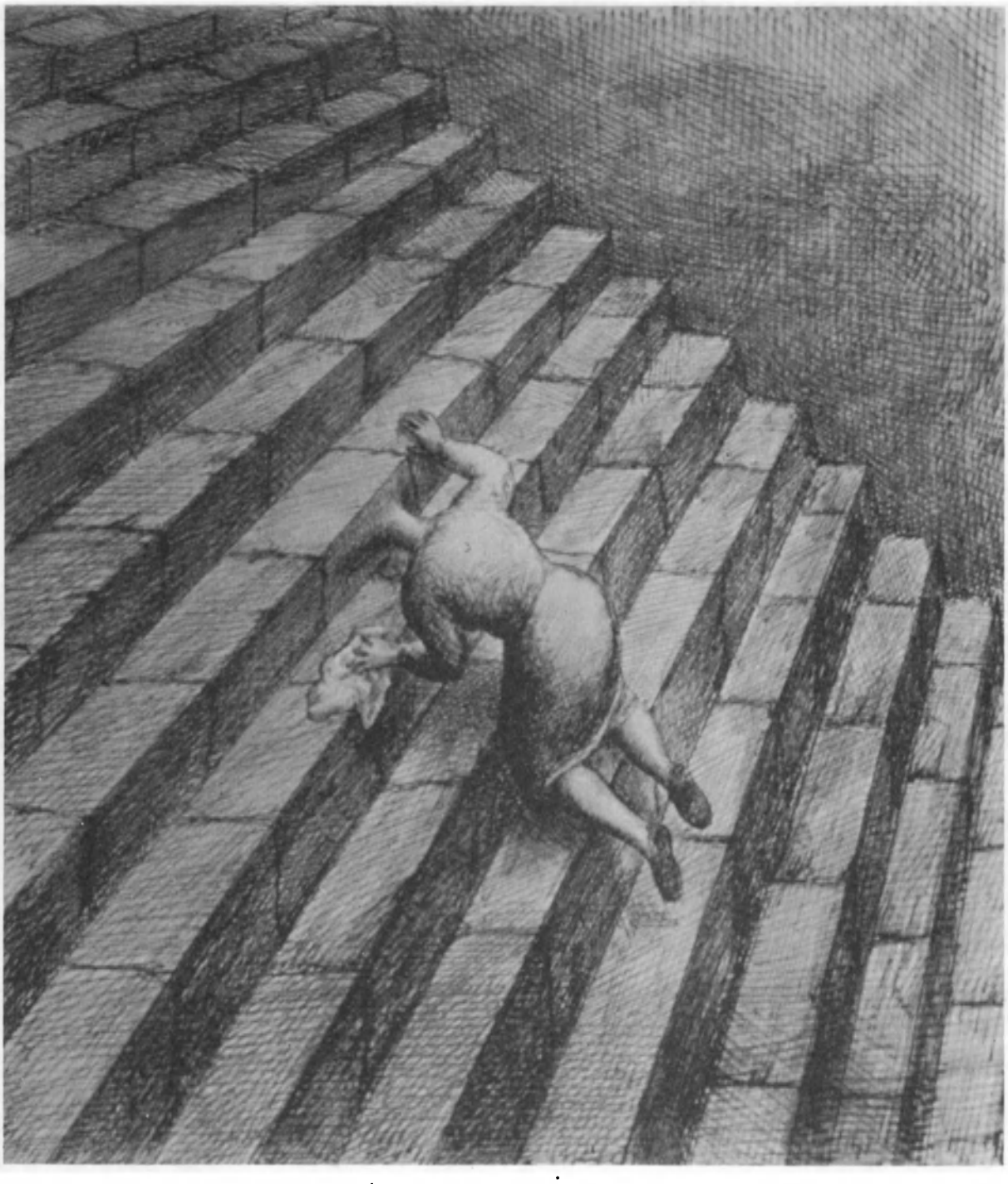
Women of the Mediterranean

by Nilüfer Göle

RUNNING in filigree through studies on the situation of women in various Mediterranean societies is a common thread: a desire to seek out the feminine presence wherever it lies hidden, in the political and cultural as well as the religious and urban context. Far from attempting to analyse the situation of "the Mediterranean woman" as a stereotype stamped with the seal of absolute subservience, they aim to identify the specific tensions which arise from confrontation between a particular cultural heritage and a hegemonic cultural model.

The two dominant aspirations of feminist movements in the industrialized countries—the equality of the sexes and the search for a specifically feminine identity—find an echo in the perceptions of women of the Mediterranean countries. The first of these preoccupations gives rise to calls for modernization, for removal of the social, economic and juridical obstacles that inhibit the expression of women's individuality and militate against equality of opportunity between men and women as far as rights and career possibilities are concerned. Equality of the sexes forms part of the liberal tradition (encompassed by the rights of man and of the citizen) and enables women to escape from the confinement of a world apart, punctuated by childbirth, and to aspire, like men, to the wider status of "human beings".

The second aspiration arising from the female experience, from the sexual specificity of her body, has become the ground of battle against male domination. Here the purpose is not, as in the case of the demand for equality of the sexes, the breaking down of barriers that stand in the way ▶



Drawing taken from *Roland Topor, Rêves de Jour* © Diogenes Verlag, Zurich

Drawing by the French artist Topor

"Over and above theoretical divergences, it is clear that no egalitarian ideology establishes the principle of equality between men and women as long as it does not recognize the notion of individual rights. Most of these ideologies have restricted themselves to proclaiming equality between men and denouncing the forms of domination of which they are the object, and have disregarded the domination man imposes on woman."

Judith Astelarra (Spain)

▶ of the free participation of women in all spheres of public life. It is above all the recognition by women of their repressed femininity, imprisoned by the one-way language of man, and the desire to give back to women "their own territory". Rather than social integration and reform, what is demanded is a transformation of the psychological social climate, until now dominated by male-oriented language; it is a call for recognition of the difference between the sexes and a rejection of reductionist destruction of specificity in the name of universality.

In the industrialized countries these two themes of the feminist movement, equality of the sexes and affirmation of the female identity, made headway only with difficulty. The difficulty arises from their very nature: the dilemma is how to affirm the female identity, the specificity of woman, without leaving the way open to claims that woman is inferior? At the same time, is there not a danger that affirmation of women's status as "human beings", of their participation in "the universal", will lead to an erosion of the notion of the specificity of woman? Does not the demand for both equality and recognition of a specific identity leave women in a "Catch 22" situation?

This thorny problem also faces the women of the Mediterranean. The societies in which they live are exposed to the onslaught of the hegemonic cultural model of the industrialized countries, a homogenizing model conceived in terms of the Universal, of History, of Progress, as opposed to regional, national and cultural specificities. Yet, at the same time, Mediterranean women are subject to these specificities which are the source of their confined situation.

How, in Mediterranean cultures, does this principle of the equality of the sexes, which is alien to their cultural model, fit in with the indigenous culture in which the identity of and the relations between the

Photo © Marc Garanger, Paris

Algerian woman

"It is up to us to dismantle the mechanisms of invisibility, all those processes which impoverish our relationship with the world, impose silence on the majority of women, and bring to the fore a few of us, under certain conditions, to legitimize the exclusion process as a whole."

Fatma Oussedik (Algeria)

sexes are based on differentiation, a hierarchical organization and segregation? In other words, leaving aside national and religious differences, to what extent is there a specific Mediterranean culture?

The fact is that the unity of the Mediterranean is revealed in the broad sweep of its history, a unity so profoundly experienced that the peoples of every Mediterranean shore share the same destiny, with the Muslim and the Christian Mediterranean sharing the same life rhythm.

Within this geo-cultural grouping, the oppression of women is current in both Christian and Islamic countries. This belies the widespread misconception that the servitude of women on the southern shores of the Mediterranean springs from Islamic doctrine; in fact it is a socio-geographical rather than a religious phenomenon.

The veil and the harem pre-date the Qur'an, which advocates according women the rights due to all persons and is thus more advanced than the code of custom in these societies. If women are systematically deprived of their rights in the Muslim and Christian countries of the Mediterranean, this is despite the Qur'an and the French Revolution.

The distinction which designates countries of Mediterranean culture as "kinship societies" and those of "Western" culture as "societies of citizens" highlights the crucial importance of family structure in the former as opposed to the concept of the individual that characterizes the latter. Modern culture is individualist in the sense that the individual is of supreme importance, whereas in anti-individualist societies the highest value is society itself and the community as a whole.

The norms which govern kinship structures also control sexual relationships and community groupings and are often the basic cause of the constraints on women.

Some of those who see a direct link bet- ▶

Photo © G. Host "Nachrichten von Marokós und Fes", Copenhagen

Portrait of a woman of the time of Lalla Khenata, who was the effective ruler of Morocco during the reign of her son Moulay Abdallah (1729-1757)

"It is in the light of history that we can judge whether the few women who have managed to infiltrate into political life constitute a break with the past, of decisive importance because it is symbolic in a society in which the essence of power is masculine, or, whether, on the contrary, they simply perpetuate the heritage of the past."

Fatima Mernissi (Morocco)

▶ ween the kinship structure and the oppression of Mediterranean women attribute this not to the practice of endogamy, which is characteristic of the kinship structure in these regions, but to the weakening of this practice due to contact between urban and tribal societies. In a truly endogamous group, a woman, in virtue of her status as a "cousin", is treated with tenderness and regard. In a "detribalized" society, however, she ceases to be a "cousin" yet fails to receive the regard due to a human being, an individual.

An ethnological analysis of history reveals the distortions that can arise when differing social realities come face to face, a confrontation that sometimes provokes a defensive attitude on the part of peoples subject to the hegemony of other cultures and incites them to seek in the past an "uncontaminated" cultural identity.

Mediterranean societies are not, by nature, modern societies in the individualistic, egalitarian, liberal sense. Liberal ideology situates and defines Western society both in the "public" area (social relationships) and in the "private area" (the relationship between the sexes); when it intrudes on Mediterranean societies, it not only meets strong resistance with regard to matters concerning the "private" area but also creates a duality in the social sphere. Italy is an example of a Mediterranean country in which these two influences cohabit and even have the effect of creating geographical dichotomy between the North and the South, with the northern influence more and more gaining the upper hand.

The Italian women's movement has thus developed a new set of values in tune with a new cultural background. These values include: equality at all levels in the relations between men and women, whether at work, in politics, and in the home; acceptance of the woman's identity and her right to make

Photo Bajande © Rapho, Paris

Feminist demonstration in Milan, Italy

"The history of men is the history of a form of bias. Women, once they realized this, decided to take back the history, the life, the space and time that had been denied to them."

Gioia di Cristofaro Longo (Italy)

her own decisions regarding sex and maternity; finally, the notion of the community of women, the keystone of this cultural project.

Certain "evolutionist" analysts maintain that Mediterranean woman is apart, outside the mainstream of emancipation, and is destined to go through the same stages as women of liberal societies as Mediterranean societies relinquish their cultural heritage. But this is to succumb to reductionism and to fail to see the tensions provoked by the introduction of phenomena related to a liberal-type emancipation into societies with more specific cultural backgrounds.

Turkey offers another good example. Whilst it is an Islamic country and generally classed as one of the developing countries, following the modernist tradition of its ruling élite Turkey adopted the principle of the equality of the sexes—even before there was any pressure on it to do so—giving women legal and political rights (such as the right to vote, which was granted earlier in Turkey than in many Western countries) and established the principle of equal right to education for boys and girls (the only non-mixed schools in Turkey are the French lycées).

The complexity of the situation in which Mediterranean women find themselves results, therefore, from the specificity of their cultural heritage, the impact of a hegemonic cultural model and the claims of the feminist movement. The conflict between the sexes thus takes on a particular coloration in each country as a result of the interaction and the opposition between these elements in the religious, political and cultural fields.

In the political and religious context of the Arab Mediterranean the question arises as to whether or not the Islamic cultural heritage constitutes an obstacle to equality of the sexes. Must the Arabo-Islamic past be "mutilated" in order to enable equality of the sexes to be established, or should this past be sifted and analysed, in which case might not a measure of hidden political power of women stand revealed?

In Morocco, women who have exercised direct power have been given a dehumanized image, being represented either as something "monstrous" or as pertaining to the "sacred". However, the exercise of indirect power via a husband or a son seems to have been more acceptable to the extent that it conjured up the image of the devoted wife or mother.

Analysis of outward signs, such as physical attributes and clothing, reveals the extent of the influence that Ottoman rulers exercised over sexual and ethnic differentiation. It shows how, in a hierarchical, non-liberal society such as the Ottoman society, this accentuation of sexual and ethnic differences, far from ceding to a process of homogenization and egalitarianism, as was the case in the "modern" countries, was institutionalized and regulated down to details of dress so that sexual, ethnic or religious affiliation could be seen at a glance.

In Spain, the historic partnership between Church and State, due to the strength of the Catholic religion and the late development of capitalism there, had prevented the spread of liberal ideology and delayed the development of feminism.

Contemporary Spanish feminism only really took hold from 1975, after the death of Franco, but without the fully-fledged social mobilization that occurred in other European countries. This absence of solidly based feminism explains why Spanish feminists associated themselves with certain political parties so as to obtain a foothold in a society that had a reserved attitude towards women's rights. This alliance gave rise to clashes within the feminist movement and to debate on such questions as feminism and political parties, militancy on two fronts, feminism and the female identity and feminism and equality.

Examination of the specific form domination of women takes in Algeria comes down to an examination of the various aspects Algerian women's "invisibility", that is to say, the various forms of social rejection to which they are subject as being "Other". It also involves study of the struggle of those women who have attempted to escape from this cloak of "invisibility" by acquiring a certain autonomy in their private lives or by outright militancy.

One aspect at least of the condition of Mediterranean women can be defined. From the situation of Algerian women to that of Italian women there is a progression from "silent" action towards conscious, collective action by women. The "silent" way is perhaps peculiar to Muslim societies; nevertheless, outspoken, independent expression by women is possible only within the context of a lay society. ■

NILUFER GOLE *is a Turkish sociologist and the author of many articles and studies on women's participation in public affairs, the discrimination from which they suffer and the solutions proposed by feminist movements. This article is extracted from the introduction she wrote to a study to be published shortly by Unesco on the situation of women in Mediterranean countries. Other contributors to this study are Fatma Oussedik (Algeria), Fatima Mernissi (Morocco), Nora Seni (Turkey), Judith Astelarra (Spain) and Gioia di Cristofaro Longo (Italy).*

Latin American Woman
'An elusive shadow'

by Luisa Futoransky

LATIN America is no more a homogeneous entity than are Africa or Europe. The very term *Latin America* brings to mind a jigsaw puzzle whose pieces are extremely difficult to fit together, so varied are the countries of which it is composed both as regards their past history and their present situation. Of course, we still share a common language; and I say "still" advisedly, since it is no secret that Castilian Spanish, so long a powerful bond between the countries of Latin America, is undergoing an accelerating process of differentiation, similar to that which separated the Romance languages from Latin. Language apart, the countries that comprise Latin America have developed along quite distinct lines as a result of the diversity of their geography and climate, of the origins of their populations and of their political and cultural backgrounds.

As if by common accord, the best contemporary women singers of Latin America seem united in their desire to rediscover their national folklore and to spread it, even to other countries and other continents, to revive popular poetry and to create new songs of protest or of hope that are rooted in social reality. Their goal is to achieve a renewal of the popular music of the continent, to bear witness to their times and to speak out for the peoples of their countries. On these pages we present seven such singers together with brief excerpts from some of their best-known songs. Unless the singer wrote the song herself, the author's name is given in brackets after the title.

Photo Lucero © All rights reserved

Violeta Parra (Chile)

The poor of this world
Know not where to turn their eyes,
So in the undying hope
Of finding there the prize
In this world stolen from them
By their peers, they upward look
to the skies

("Porque los pobres no tienen")

To attempt to give a global picture of Latin American women over the past decade would, therefore, be simply to add to the sum total of generalizations and prejudices. To launch into a disquisition on that abstraction *the Latin American woman* within the limits of this article would be more than pretentious, it would be impossible. I shall therefore confine myself to offering a few indications and pointers to those interested in pursuing this subject.

Try as I would, I could not conjure up a face, hands, legs, or indeed any kind of portrait of that disjointed doll that bears the label *a Latin American woman.* In the windows of the old-fashioned village shops, at carnival time, everything was much easier. There you could see *Madame Pompadour,* with powdered wig, a beauty-spot on either cheek and hooped skirt; or *Manola* (the typical Spanish dancer), her red and white spotted cotton skirt with its ruffles, fitting tightly over her hips, high-heeled dancing shoes and with carnations in her hair; or a *grand lady of the past,* her mantilla, held in place by a comb, allowing a glimpse of kiss-curls plastered to her temples, wearing a crinoline and holding an ever open fan—the sunshade was an optional extra.

All too quickly, life dissipated the fine certainties of carnival day, when a person could be easily identified by his or her apparel. Falling back thus on my childhood memories in search of the elusive outline of this *Latin American woman,* I found only a fugitive shadow, a graceful masquerade.

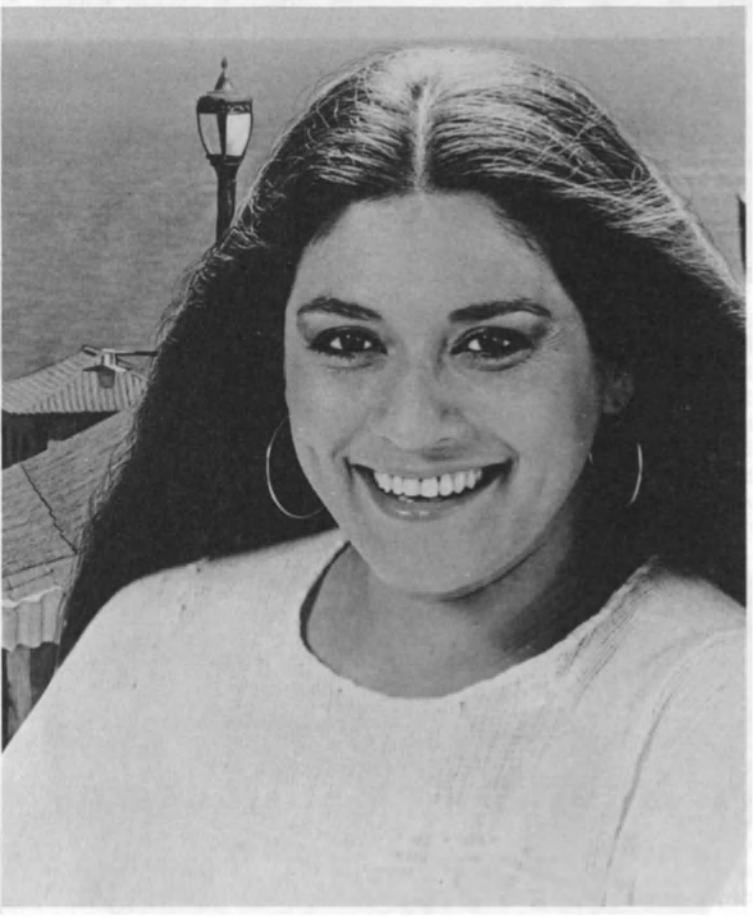
Who is this peasant girl from Oruro, in Bolivia, whose photograph could be slipped into a newspaper story on Tibet or Burma, without anyone being the wiser? What have a Colombian housewife, a young Mexican bank employee, an Argentine textile worker and a Brazilian sweet-vendor in common?

Were we to follow up these questions we should find ourselves enmeshed in an inextricable web of theories, ranging from anthropological studies of the first wave of migration across the Behring Straits to psycho-sociological analyses of the after-effects of slavery upon the Black populations of the Atlantic coast.

I shall, therefore, attempt the more modest task of examining the context within which women have found themselves during the more recent past. As everyone knows, the last twenty years have been a difficult period in the history of the continent, marked by the rise of authoritarian and repressive regimes. The growth or the restriction of democracy has been closely related to the mobilization of women, since this is clearly bound up with the evolution of the labour market and the family structure.

It should be noted that, as I write these lines, at least three of these Latin American countries have returned to the democratic fold, which gives one hope that, freed from other constraints, women will be able to devote their energies to specific problems relating to the feminine situation.

The women of the Plaza de Mayo, in Buenos Aires, for example, come to mind. ▶



Soledad Bravo (Venezuela)

Little green bird, how can you say
I should not weep?
Little green bird, how can I stem
the tears that pour?
Alas, alas, I have but one life to live,
Little green bird, and they would
cast me through death's door (...)
Alas, alas, they have removed
my chains,
Little green bird, only to clamp them
on once more.

("Pajarillo verde"
Venezuelan folksong)

Amparo Ochoa (Mexico)

The curse remains.
We offer the stranger
Our faith, our culture,
Our bread, our money.
Today we go on exchanging
Gold for glass beads
And giving up our treasure
For shining mirrors (...)
We open our homes to them
And we call them our friends,
Yet when an Indian arrives
Worn out by the long journey from
the mountains,
We spurn him and look upon him
As a foreigner in his own country.

("La maldición de Malinche"
Gabino Palomares - Mexico)

Mercedes Sosa (Argentina)

Each time they wiped me out
I would disappear,
Beside my own funeral bier
Alone I cried,
And in my handkerchief a knot I tied,
But then it went out of my head
That there were other times I had
been dead
And I went on my way singing...

("Como la cigarra"
Maria Elena Walsh - Argentina)

Photo © José Pons

Sara González (Cuba)

How can you say
That a woman is incapable
Of building, thinking
And fighting for life,
When all history proclaims
another truth (...)

("Que dice usted")

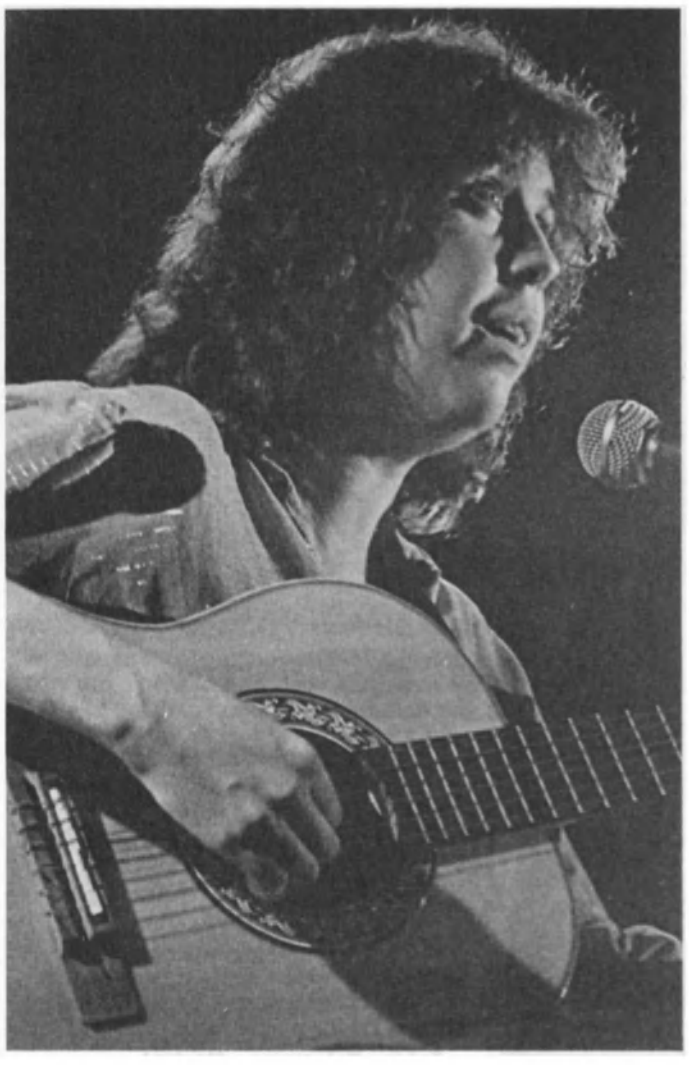


Photo © Sonia

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Maria Bethania (Brazil)

I want to give out an unearthly scream
For this is one way to make myself
heard (...)
Father, remove this cup from me,
Father, remove this cup from me,
Father, remove this cup from me,
This cup of blood-red wine (...)

("Caliz"
Chico Buarque - Brazil)

Photo © Jorge Esquiroz

Tania Libertad (Peru)

His tread was light,
His heart was of steel,
And the messenger declared:
The people have awakened (...)

("Pescador de luz"
V. Merino - Peru)

▶When the armed forces seized power in March 1976, Argentina sank into economic crisis accompanied by unemployment and repression. In 1977, a few mothers of *los desaparecidos* (victims of the military who had "disappeared") began to meet regularly at the Plaza de Mayo, a square near the presidential palace, demanding a hearing which the authorities systematically refused. Gradually as many as two thousand women joined this group. Various forms of pressure were applied in an attempt to reduce them to silence, to which they replied by organizing "lightning" demonstrations and meetings in churches. In 1979, they formed an association which was joined by women from all over the country and which launched an inquiry into the fate of the hundreds of children reported missing, children who had been taken away with their parents or had been born while their mothers were in prison.

The association never concerned itself with the kind of problems normally tackled by feminist movements but relied instead on the traditionally accepted role of women to sanction their message and their protest. They were united by something that transcended social differences; this was a matter of life and death—everything else could wait. Faced with a common social catastrophe, solidarity and a united front was the only answer.

It would, therefore, be difficult, a mistake even, to try to establish a parallel between the demands of Latin American women and those of European feminists.

Brazil is another special case. From 1972, modelling themselves on the mothers' associations that had been formed in the suburbs of São Paulo, Brazilian housewives began to take action to improve their living conditions, in particular to obtain the creation of crèches, dispensaries and schools as well as an improvement in public transport facilities. Housewives' Associations and Mothers' Clubs were formed, with the backing of some sections of the Catholic Church. From 1978 on, they concentrated on fighting against the rise in the cost of living.

Without doubt this movement will go down in history as one of the most popular ever, since between May and August 1978 it succeeded in collecting one million three hundred thousand signatures to a petition which it presented to the government. The demands which aroused such unanimous support included a price freeze on all essential foodstuffs, a wage increase proportionately higher than the rise in the cost of living and the immediate payment of a flat rate bonus to all workers.

Special mention should be made of those women who, during the last decade, impelled by the flood tides of history, have ventured far beyond the domestic front and the arena of the work place to participate in liberation movements. To cite but one example, women made up thirty per cent of the people's army that fought against the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua.

It could be objected that all these are extreme cases. Yet even if this were true, the difference as compared with events in other Latin American countries is only one of degree. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that, for many Latin American feminist groups, the *United Nations Decade for Women* acted as a powerful catalyst, stimulating them to action and laying the foundations for their success.

This is why the Latin American reality is so disconcerting—it is extremely difficult to find a common denominator among its multiple facets.

On the one hand we find women engaged in the national struggle; on the other we have women in certain countries still demanding the most elementary rights in such matters as divorce, abortion or protection from sexual abuse. At all events, whatever may be our political persuasion, the situation could well be summed up in these words of Nora Astorga, lawyer, mother of five and Nicaragua's deputy minister of foreign affairs: "I have never been a feminist in the sense that this is understood in the industrialized countries. Our struggle is quite different. Where oppression and exploitation exist we believe that to liberate women we must first liberate society".

Respecting the principle that the best way to illustrate a point of view is to maintain a judicious balance between the general and the particular, I return to my personal memories of infancy and youth which may provide a yardstick by which to measure what has been accomplished. The changes that have occurred in the field of education, for example, where twenty years ago mixed schooling would have been unthinkable, have been enormous. Young girls at school were taught handicrafts, to play the piano and to read music; as young adolescents they progressed to sewing and dressmaking and, finally, to training as teachers or as bookkeepers. Entry to university was much more restricted and some professors could still be heard to say that "they did not want students in skirts attending their courses".

Sex education to prepare us for marriage or maternity was limited to discreet examination of an illustration of a cross-section of the human body in an anatomy textbook.

The arduous and often disheartening struggle to achieve an identity still continues. For some women, for example, it may be the symbolic rejection of the little word "of", as used in such phrases as "the pupil *of*", "the wife *of*", "the mother *of*", "the widow *of*", "the mistress *of*", "the companion *of*"...

The battle is being fought on many fronts and the objectives vary widely according to the specific situation being faced. Each small step forward is achieved at the cost of great effort and sacrifice, but also brings and will continue to bring with it moments of joy and fulfilment.

Of one thing I am sure; if in twenty years time I have the good fortune to be able to reflect once again on what has been achieved by that elusive figure *the Latin American woman,* I am sure that the balance will be very positive. In the meantime, for my part, I am ready to give of my best to ensure that it will be so. ■

LUISA FUTORANSKY *is an Argentine writer whose works include the novel* Cuentos Chinos *(Chinese Tales) and several books of poetry, notably* Babel Babel, Lo Regado por lo Seco, El Diván de la Puerta Derecha *and* Partir Digo.

Women under apartheid

'A triple oppression'

by Caroline Flepp

IN the Republic of South Africa women constitute the category of the population most seriously affected by the apartheid system. They are subject to a triple oppression: as women and on the grounds of "race" and of class.

By adopting the principles of the patriarchal society, the apartheid system has accentuated the subjection of women. Some of the rights they had in pre-colonial days, such as the right to work, which in rural areas consisted traditionally of gathering fruit and working the fields, have been taken from them. In some regions, where it did not exist before, the White authorities have even legalized polygamy. In other regions they have re-introduced corporal punishment.

Apartheid pushes to its extreme the division of labour between men and women; men, the producers, are employed in the White economy, whereas women, the non-producers, are confined to the Bantustans (the "States" reserved for the Black populations), their only right being to reproduce an African labour force.

To say that they are "confined" is no exaggeration; they cannot leave the Bantustans because they are forbidden to take up residence in the White zones. If they do, they are liable to a fine or imprisonment. A woman who enters one of these zones to visit her husband can only stay for seventy-two hours. The White authorities fear that the permanent presence of these women in the White areas would lead to the installation of a Black urban population that would then demand permanent residence permits as well as other rights at present denied to them.

Apartheid means the systematic destruction of the family unit, which forms the basis of classic capitalist society. In the Republic of South Africa, a society, it can never be repeated often enough, unlike any other, everything is done to prevent the Blacks from leading a normal family life.

Thus women are looked upon by the Whites as nothing more or less than superfluous hangers-on. Half the female population lives in the Black reserves among all the other "undesirables" of the apartheid system—children, the sick, the elderly and the handicapped as well as those rejected as trouble-makers, such as militant union men and strikers.

Most of these women live on money sent to them by their husbands out of the miserable wages they earn working in the White zones. It should be remembered that Black workers are all treated as bachelors and are therefore consistently underpaid, since, according to the curious logic of the system, the Bantustans are held responsible for meeting the costs of maintaining their families.

Many women, however, receive nothing from their husbands and sometimes lose all trace of them. In the Bantustans, the education of the children is undertaken by the women. In the absence of a hospital system, the infant mortality rate is one of the highest in the world with nearly one child in two dying before the age of five, chiefly from malnutrition.

In order to survive the women cultivate a plot of land or work on a White man's farm for the lowest wages paid anywhere in South Africa. Otherwise they become nurses or teachers.

In 1974, a Black nurse earned two-thirds of the salary of a White nurse. Women teachers earn ten per cent less than their male colleagues. Their training is inadequate; in 1978, out of seventy thousand African teachers, only two hundred and forty had diplomas.

To escape from this wretched, lonely life, the women ignore the prohibitions and go and settle in ghettos near the White towns. The know that in coming to the towns they run a big risk of being deported. Of the three million Africans who have been forcibly expelled from the urban areas the vast majority are women.

The reason they go to the White areas is to live with their husbands or to try to find them. Some of the ghettos in which they have settled, such as the Crossroads settlement, near Cape Town, which has a population of some twenty thousand, have survived thanks to the determination of the

Exodus from the city, in Pretoria, Republic of South Africa

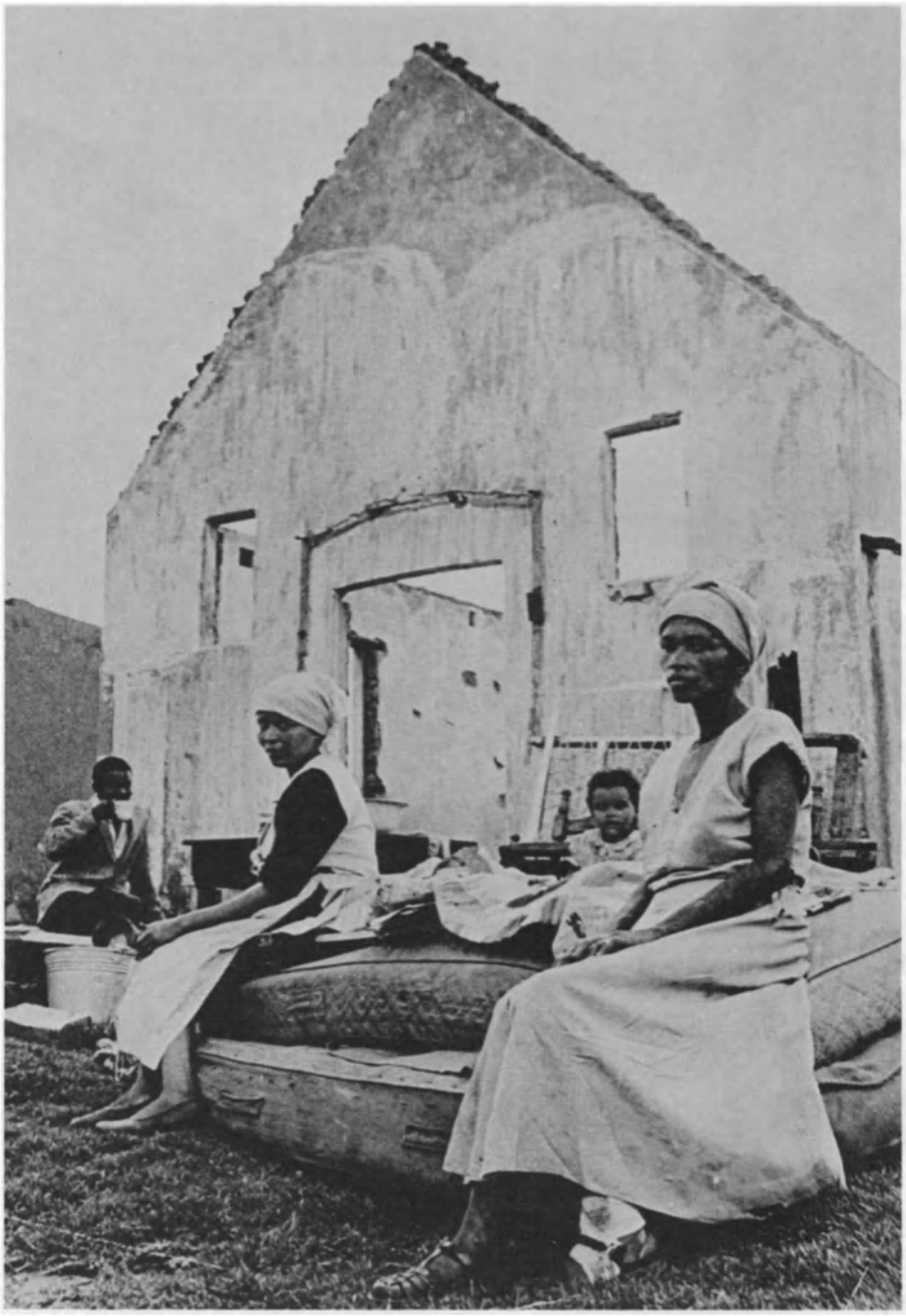


Photo © International Defense and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, London

In the Republic of South Africa a family is evicted under the Group Areas Act.

"The problem of improving the situation of women in Africa is inextricably linked with the problem of poverty and can only be resolved if we first tackle the latter (...) A human being cannot walk very far or very fast on one leg. How, then, can we expect half the population of a country to be capable of ensuring its development? Yet, in fact, when it is a matter of discussing development questions or of taking decisions on methods of implementing development projects, women are generally left out of it..."

Julius Nyerere
President of the United Republic of Tanzania

women. Men and women live there together, but this is not always possible. Everything is done to try to separate them. The Whites have built a number of hostels for bachelors, but these, in fact, are occupied by married couples who have children. However, the women who live there are not allowed to keep their children with them and they have to send them back to the reserves.

As far as work is concerned these women have little choice since most of them have had no education or professional training. In the mid-1970s there was not a single African woman judge, lawyer, magistrate, engineer, architect, veterinary surgeon, chemist or pharmacist.

The only possibility open to them is to work for a White family as domestic servants. The conditions of work for a domestic servant in the Republic of South Africa are tantamount to slavery. They work sixty hours a week, on average, but some work as many as eighty-five hours a week. A third of them work seven days a week for a pittance.

Furthermore, domestic servants are housed in huts at the bottom of their employers' garden and are strictly forbidden to have their husbands and children living there with them. In the past they were allowed to keep their children with them up to the age of three or four, but nowadays that is strictly forbidden. They are therefore unable to care for their own infant children, a particularly cruel predicament for women who spend their days looking after White children. On top of all this there is no legislation to protect them and they are not permitted to join a union.

Women also work in the textile, food, dress-making and canning industries in which there are no fixed hours, no social security and no guaranteed minimum wages. Sexism is often sanctioned by legislation, as, for example, in the textile industry where a twenty per cent difference in wages between men and women is decreed by law. Women who become pregnant are liable to instant dismissal and may even be sent back to a Bantustan. On average, African women workers earn less than half as much as their partners and eighty per cent less than White men.

Suffering from the evil effects of apartheid not only in their daily lives but also in their very bodies, women took up the struggle against the system very early on and their role in that struggle has been very important.

Their first combat, in 1913, was against the pass laws which limited their freedom of movement. This was one of the high peaks of their struggle when for the first time they began to organize themselves. A key principle was at stake. The women knew that by being obliged to carry a special pass they were effectively being forbidden either to live with their husbands in the White zones or to work there; in other words, this meant their seclusion in the reserves. For years African women refused to carry these passes which they burnt in public. They demonstrated in the streets and were beaten up and imprisoned in their hundreds by the police.

The movement reached its culminating point on 9 August 1956. On that day twenty thousand women, of every "race", gathered in Pretoria from every part of the country, despite the dangers of the journey and transport difficulties, bringing with them over 100,000 petitions.

Despite this powerful mobilization of forces, they were eventually obliged to yield when the government decreed that it was obligatory to have a pass in order to obtain a job, to go to hospital, to receive a pension or to register the birth of a child.

On 1 February 1963, the pass laws finally came into force, but it had taken the government fifty years to impose its will. ■

CAROLINE FLEPP *is a French journalist and heads the French Anti-Apartheid Movement. This article is based on a speech she made on International Women's Day, 8 March 1985, at the invitation of the International Staff Association of Unesco.*

Photos © Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz-Giraudon, Paris

A composer of genius, Johann Sebastian Bach was also a great organist. Organ works and cantatas predominate in his output, which grew directly from his activities as organist, Kapellmeister, *and* Kantor. *From 1703 to 1707, Bach was organist at the Neukirche ("New Church", known since 1935 as the "Bachkirche") at Arnstadt in Thuringia, some 40 kilometres from Weimar. At this period Bach became acquainted with the art of the great German composer Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707), a decisive experience in his musical development, and wrote his first cantata and possibly his earliest organ works. This 18th-century German engraving shows Bach at the organ of the Neukirche. Virtually nothing remains of this instrument except for the console, which is displayed at the Bach museum in Arnstadt (German Dem. Rep.).*

Johann Sebastian Bach
'Between memory and prophecy'

by Alberto Basso

THE works of Johann Sebastian Bach, the *Kantor maximus,* the musician who more than anyone else left an indelible mark on the musical life of his age (which we now call the "Baroque") are today so widely known, so often performed and recorded, that the three hundredth anniversary of their composer's birth is an event for which the public should not be unprepared.

The course of Bach's industrious life took him all the way from the lowly position of "chamber musician" to that of *director musices* of Leipzig, superintending the musical activity of what was then a city with no more than 30,000 inhabitants, after being an organist, a *konzertmeister* ("concertmaster", leader of a *collegium musicum* at a court), a Kapellmeister in charge of a *Kapelle* or chapel of musicians, and a *Kantor* (the official responsible for musical education in a school and the official composer of a town or city).

Yet scarcely any trace of his itinerary has survived. As a brilliant interpreter of images which after the Renaissance brought grandeur to Baroque art, an obstinate devotee of the past, and a sceptical opponent of things modern, Bach had the good fortune—or, from another standpoint, the misfortune—to voice a message which was somewhere between memory and prophecy and which could only be grasped by a handful of dedicated followers who had been trained in his school.

This community of initiates, which followed the teachings dispensed by a mind that was equipped to deal with any dispute or challenge, subsequently split into small, silent groups which discreetly made their way into the musical world of the second half of the eighteenth century and brought with them both an outstanding mastery and the musical heritage bequeathed to them by the *Kantor.*

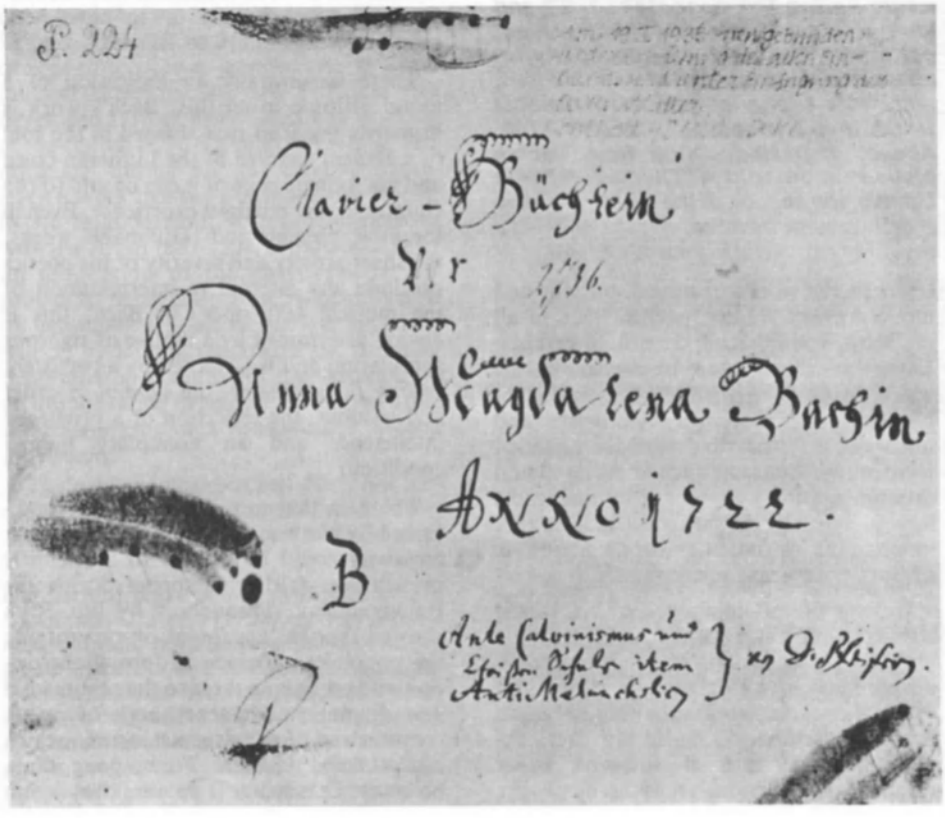
Indeed, these followers, disciples and apostles were to be the channel through which one of the fundamental principles underlying Bach's music was confirmed: its possession of an extraordinarily powerful instructive and exhortatory impact. In other words, it is a music that opens up to the outside world, dictates *exempla* to it, and suggests exercises, practical applications and projects.

Emerging as they did in a fascinating world that was a focus of the clash between the rational and the irrational, between science and divine grace, between the exposition of historical fact and faith, Bach's works did not enjoy the consideration they deserved among his contemporaries. Through one of those contradictions that make historical interpretation so unreliable and hazardous, the most outstanding figure of the age which we have become accustomed to call the Late Baroque, and his undisputed musical leadership, do not occupy their rightful place in the annals of the period, indeed can scarcely be said to feature in them at all.

There was widespread indifference to his art, because Bach himself was generally, and even provocatively indifferent to the new trends. The society of his time thus did not trouble to transmit to future generations documentary evidence about a life that was dedicated exclusively and unconditionally to art.

As a result, his biography is riddled with gaps. Contemporary sources are few and far between; information about Bach's material situation is unreliable and indeed almost non-existent; psychological data about him are vague; attempts to establish definitive dates for many of his works, especially the instrumental music, have been vain; it is impossible to calculate how many of his compositions have been lost; the contribution made by his meagre correspondence—there are only some thirty letters extant—is very modest; the commercial impact of his works, which were virtually unknown outside Thuringia and Saxony, was insignificant; and the critical response they aroused was slight and by no means enthusiastic. In 1737, one of his pupils, Johann Adolph Scheibe, would tax him with being a musical anachronism.

Bach's music was forgotten by those who had lived in close contact with the composer. His own sons regarded it as odd, as fit for the museum, and it was unknown to music lovers of the succeeding generation. "Officially", it did not exist. This abnormal silence, which was nevertheless to some extent justified by historical circumstances, did not start to be broken until near the end ▶



In 1707 Bach married his cousin, Maria Barbara Bach. Four of their children survived, two of them becoming musicians: Wilhelm Friedmann (1710-1784) and Carl-Philipp Emanuel (1714-1788). In 1720 Maria Barbara died and the following year Bach married Anna Magdalena Wülcken (or Wilcken), a singer at the court of prince Leopold of Köthen near Halle (in what is now the German Democratic Republic), where Bach was Kapellmeister. Anna Magdalena bore 13 children, two of whom became musicians: J. Christoph Friedrich (1732-1795) and Johann Christian (1735-1782). In spite of her onerous household tasks she constantly helped her husband by copying many of his scores, singing for him, taking part in rehearsals and entertaining visitors. Bach wrote several works for her. At the beginning of 1722 he wrote for her a Clavierbuchlein, left, containing the first five of his French Suites.

Photos © Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz-Giraudon, Paris

▶ of the eighteenth century when a number of theorists began to quote scattered fragments of Bach's works in support of certain technical approaches and a handful of music lovers sponsored hesitant and sporadic private performances of the instrumental music. The German musicologist and composer Johann Nikolaus Forkel, in 1802, was the first person to tackle the problem of Bach's life and work. This spelt the beginning of the "Bach Renaissance", and a number of publishers immediately began to put some of his works on the market.

In 1829 Felix Mendelssohn, then aged twenty, presented a recast version of the *St. Matthew Passion,* 120 years after its first known performance, and thereby launched what might be called the "Bach phenomenon". Paradoxically, the "discovery" of the Leipzig musician was primarily an outcome of the crisis of Lutheranism which spanned two centuries. The decisive impetus in the "rehabilitation" of Bach came from those who, in a bid to give a new and vigorous lease of life to Lutheranism, brought back to light the great treasury of chorales which formed the lifeblood of the German nation.

Once the Lutheran musical repertory had been rediscovered and studied, it was only natural that attention should be focused on Bach. There was an immediate chain reaction: a "Bach Society" was founded in 1850 and a year later embarked on the publication of the master's collected works. An important study by C.H. Bitter was published in 1865, followed in 1873 and 1880 by two monumental volumes by another German musicologist, Philipp Spitta. History is full of contradictions; once rejected, Bach was now regarded as a turning point. With him, one era came to an end and another began.

Indeed, Bach had never lost sight of history. He took an extraordinarily close interest in the works of others, ancient and modern alike. He approached them in all modesty, with the mind of a researcher. Study was the purpose of his life, and his art was the expression of a tireless scientific application. His taste for eclecticism and historical synthesis undoubtedly stemmed from study. Concepts such as research and experimentation were part of his innermost nature. It is significant, for example, that much of his instrumental work is a product of both poetry and science.

In view of certain aspects of his artistic temperament there would appear to be grounds for believing that he intended to devote himself to an abstract art, and that external circumstances alone obliged him to produce "ordinary" music. In fact, the real, concrete musical situation never escaped his attention, ready as he always was to grasp opportunities to display the novelty of his thinking and to communicate his musical findings.

In this respect, Bach made no distinction between works sacred and profane, between vocal and instrumental music, between theory and practice. The mediums, styles, materials and situations—in other words, his working tools—were always the same (and many were the times that Bach made use of pages that had originally been conceived for quite another purpose), but he transformed them with flashes of intuitive expression, breathing life and poetic substance into what seems to have been conceived in the abstract or to have been capable of adaptation to all uses.

There is naturally an indication of a moral attitude in all this. Bach's work is primarily the fruit that ripened in the soul of a fervent devotee of the Lutheran creed and not a single page of it can be said to run counter to that religious experience. Even in the most popular and fashionable works, the sheer gravity and severity of his poetics preclude any alternative interpretation of the musical text since, in Bach, this is always determined by a motive of rigorous speculation and is governed by a persistent *feeling for geometry,* the symbol of order and wisdom, the reflection of a privileged intelligence and an exemplary human condition.

The idea that musical space was conditioned by mathematical principles and that creativity could be likened to a scientific pursuit was fairly widespread during the Enlightenment. Throughout his life, Bach showed that he was intent on quantifying the principles of logic and formal abstraction and on linking them to the sentimental and dramatic consistency both of poetic creation and of the circumstances in which a work was created. For a long time, however, he acted as if he were obeying an

In 1723, Bach was appointed* Kantor *of the Thomaskirche (St. Thomas' church) in Leipzig, a major German economic and musical centre, and* director musices*—director of church music—for the city. As well as organizing programmes of sacred music, he taught music and Latin at the Thomaskirche school adjoining the church, where he lived with his large family. Throughout this long period, Bach wrote abundant church music, especially admirable cantata cycles. From 1729 to 1740 he also directed the* Collegium Musicum*, one of Germany's leading associations for organizing public concerts, which had been founded in 1702 by Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767) and gave a concert each week. He travelled, performed at concerts outside the city, inaugurated organs, visited his children, and wrote a large number of occasional works until his death on 28 July 1750. Above, engraving dating from Bach's lifetime showing the Thomaskirche in Leipzig; the school, at the end of the alley at left, cannot be seen.

instinct or an irresistible force of attraction, perhaps even unconsciously in some cases, driven on by a *modus operandi* that was specific to his time.

Even so, with the passage of time, his approach became more refined and his in-depth analysis of "composition" gave rise to a burst of speculative energy and to theoretical conceptions which, when he came to apply them, went beyond the bounds of contemporary musical practice. Accordingly, little by little, Bach drew closer to what was to be the supreme goal of his life: the exercise of perfect inner discipline, control of the imagination, and the stifling of instinct. At the same time, the great musician showed that he was retracing the steps of musical history, as it were, and was drinking from the pure wellsprings of polyphony. What he was proposing was tantamount to a "return to the antique" which, because it was so singular and individualistic, had absolutely no influence on contemporary musical developments, and remained isolated and unique, an enigmatic reminder of the past, an impregnable bastion of memory.

The approach to the "new music" was gradual, but it became a burning issue in the last decade of Bach's life. The principle of construction adopted with the aim of renewing musical language and its significance was that of the variation, but the variation as understood in a totally different sense from that which later became established. The material was organized on the basis of a theme or *arbor* (trunk), which was then developed in a series of derivations and ramifications in accordance with an organic plan, although this was always linked to the starting point. At the same time, the overall architectural structure of the composition was also a manifestation of an encyclopaedic approach, in that the composer aimed at combining in a single entity the different aspects of a given technique or a number of seemingly incompatible formal possibilities.

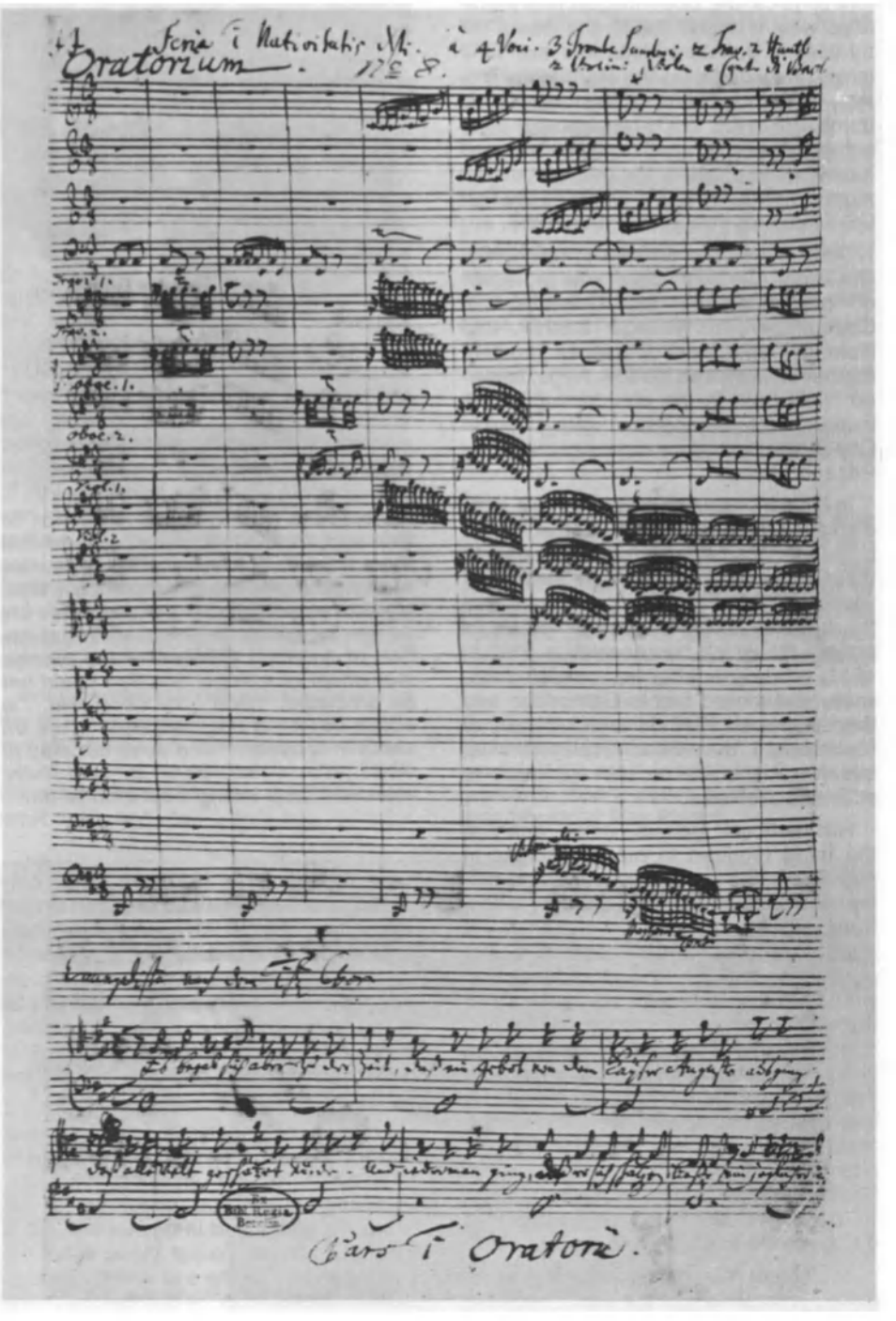
All Bach's works, including those he composed before taking up residence in Leipzig, are authentic proof of an encyclopaedic culture applied to a given musical situation. But the principle was developed further while Bach was working at the church of St. Thomas in Leipzig, and especially during his last creative phase. Even a work like the *B Minor Mass* which, in its final version, is contemporaneous with the *Art of the Fugue,* is the outcome of an application of the encyclopaedic approach to musical doctrine, which reached its culminating point in the last keyboard works, by linking them with the common denominator of the art of the variation, in an unspoken bid to achieve perfection using the instruments of a consummate *scientia universalis.*

The new and rigorous self-discipline and the new-found mysticism entailed devoting the utmost attention to the facts of geometry, to order, and to reduction of the macrocosm and the microcosm within a symmetrically designed organic system in which the cabalistic, alchemical and mathematical disciplines were finely balanced. Rationalism was impregnated with magic, occultism and hermeticism, and the approach to music of a certain type involved initiatory rites after the manner of a secret society. Indeed, Bach's ultimate aim was to gain access to that secret knowledge, which he only succeeded in mastering on the eve of his death.

Bach prepared himself for the difficult art of dying, the *ars moriendi* of the ancients, by engaging in acts of purification and exercises in musical asceticism. In the last ten years of his life he changed beyond recognition. Perhaps he lost touch with his old self when his sight failed. Once he had forsaken his old habits and severed his links with the outside world—perhaps because, in his heart of hearts, he no longer believed in the forms and styles which he had so fiercely championed in the first ten or fifteen years of his association with the institutions of Leipzig—Bach withdrew to Mount Zion, into the solid fortress, the citadel, the tower, where the only guest was science, with its virtues as an elect creature and its luminous and vibrant aura of acquired certainties and unexpected developments.

It was a new apocalypse, and hence a revelation of what is and what has been, a testimony to prophecy not so much in the sense of prediction of the future as of a reading of the past and an interpretation of the signs through which thought manifests itself, thought that can also be composed of pure sounds that are the faithful mirror of a strict spiritual discipline. ■

ALBERTO BASSO, *Italian musicologist, was president of the Italian Musicology Society from 1973 to 1979. He is the author of several books including a history of music and a two-volume study of the life and works of Johann Sebastian Bach. He is at present editing an eight-volume* Dizionario Enciclopedico Universale della Musica e dei Musicisti *(Universal Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Music and Musicians).*



***Manuscript page of the first part of the* Christmas Oratorio *(1734), one of Bach's most popular religious works. It consists of six beautiful and melodious cantatas. "One can sense the man who, each year, experienced with his children the poetry of Christmas," wrote the French doctor and organist Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) of the* Christmas Oratorio.

NIELS BOHR

NIELS Bohr, who was born in Copenhagen on 7 October, 1885, was one of the foremost scientists of the twentieth century. Before the First World War, he took the new quantum theory and used it to construct the first successful, detailed picture of how atoms work; in the 1920s, he first extended this understanding to explain the periodic table of the elements. Then revolutionary new developments transformed quantum theory into the foundation stone of modern physics, and Bohr was instrumental in providing the interpretation of quantum physics, the Copenhagen Interpretation, which is still today the basis for translating quantum ideas into everyday terms. He worked on the Manhattan Project, the construction of the first atomic bomb, but in the 1950s he campaigned to achieve control of nuclear weapons, and his efforts to promote the peaceful use of atomic energy led to his receiving the first US Atoms for Peace award, in 1957.

Bohr came from an intellectual family. His father, Christian Bohr, was professor of physiology at the University of Copenhagen; his younger brother, and lifelong friend, Harald, was an eminent mathematician; and his son, Aage, followed Niels both in the directorship of the Institute of Theoretical Physics in Copenhagen and as a winner of the Nobel Prize in physics.

In his early academic career Niels Bohr displayed thoroughness rather than brilliance, carrying out a painstaking measurement of the surface tension of water in 1906, then moving on to analyse the behaviour of electrons in metals, a project for which he received a PhD in 1911. It was only after he completed this work, and moved first to Cambridge and then, in March 1912, to the University of Manchester, that Bohr displayed what became his characteristic approach to scientific problems.

His particular genius, which was just the thing required to make progress in atomic physics in those days, was his willingness to patch together different ideas, from different sources, to make an imaginary "model" of the atom (a set of equations, and a physical picture) that worked at least in rough agreement with the way observations suggested that real atoms worked. Once he had a rough idea what was going on, Bohr could tinker with the theories to make the bits fit together even better, and so work towards a complete picture. This was just about the only approach that could have worked in the second decade of the twentieth century, for what physicists knew about atoms was decidedly fragmentary and incomplete.

The electron itself, which we now know to be a component of the atom, had only been discovered in 1887, and it was only in 1911 that New Zealand physicist Ernest Rutherford (1871-1937), on the basis of experiments carried out in Manchester, suggested that there must be a small central nucleus to every atom, containing all of its positive charge and most of its mass, while the electrons formed a cloud of negatively charged particles around the nucleus.

Later experiments showed he was correct—the nucleus is only one hundred thousandth of the size of the atom. Typically, a nucleus about 10^{-13} cm across is embedded in an electron cloud 10^{-8} cm across. To put these figures in perspective, imagine a pinhead, perhaps a millimetre across, in the centre of the dome of St Paul's Cathedral (35 metres in diameter), surrounded by a cloud of microscopic dust motes far out in the dome. The pinhead represents the nucleus, and the dust motes represent electrons. Atoms are mostly empty space.

But at the beginning of 1912, Rutherford's picture of the atom was still controversial. In particular, since opposite electric charges attract one another, physicists could not explain why all the electrons in every atom did not immediately fall in to their nuclei, releasing a burst of energy (radiation) in the process. This is where Bohr came in, naturally gravitating to Manchester to work with Rutherford's group as his interest in the atomic puzzle grew.

The simplest image of the atom that emerged from Rutherford's work was something like the Solar System, with a nucleus at its heart, in place of the Sun, and electrons orbiting around it, in place of the planets. The picture is oversimplistic, but it was the first step on the road to understanding the atom. Everything physicists knew about charged particles in orbit said that they should radiate electromagnetic energy (light, X-rays or radio waves) and spiral inwards. So there was an obvious flaw with the model. Bohr resolved the dilemma by

Niels Bohr (right) with Einstein in Brussels, in 1930. Einstein believed that there were laws governing the behaviour of everything in the universe from electrons to planets and to the end of his life he was unwilling to accept a central notion of quantum theory that the precise movement of a single electron could not be predicted. "God", he once said, "is subtle but he is not malicious." And on another occasion "God does not play at dice." To which Bohr is said have retorted "Stop telling God what to do."

a pragmatic genius

by John Gribbin

plucking a totally different idea out of current developments in physics, and sticking it on to Rutherford's atomic model.

This was the idea, stemming from the work of German physicist Max Planck (1858-1947) at the turn of the century, that electromagnetic radiation (light, or the other forms) could only be emitted or absorbed by an atom in discrete units, called quanta. The automatic bank-note distributor at my bank in London operates much the same way. It will only issue me with money in units of £5. I can get £20, or £45, but I cannot get £1, or £37, out of it. Bohr said that the electrons "in orbit" around the nucleus of an atom could not spiral gently inward because that would involve radiating energy continuously. Quantum theory said that they could only release certain fixed amounts of energy, and to do so an electron would have to "jump", instantaneously, from one "orbit" to another—rather as if Mars suddenly jumped into the Earth's orbit. There were stable orbits, said Bohr, corresponding to fixed amounts of energy, rather like the rungs on a ladder. But there were no in between orbits, and an electron could not spiral into the nucleus because that would involve releasing fractional amounts of energy.

What Bohr did had no right to work. The whole idea of an orbit depends on classical physics, Newton's laws; the idea of electron states corresponding to fixed amounts of energy (energy levels, as they came to be called) came from quantum theory. Making a model which patched together bits of each theory gave no insight into what made atoms tick, but it provided just enough of a starting point for Bohr to make progress throughout the next ten years.

Niels Bohr used to begin his lectures by saying to his students "Every sentence that I utter should be regarded by you not as an assertion but as a question." He is seen here, in 1936, at the Niels Bohr Institute, Copenhagen, in conversation with two other Nobel Prizewinning physicists, Werner Heisenberg (centre) and Wolfang Pauli (right).

That progress continued in Copenhagen, where the authorities created a new Institute to entice Bohr back. He became director of the Niels Bohr Institute in 1920, developing it into one of the great scientific centres, where theoretical physicists came from all over the world to bounce ideas off one another and to probe the mysteries of quanta and the atom. And in the early 1920s Bohr produced his greatest single achievement, a theory of the atom which explained, at least in broad outline, the whole science of chemistry.

The Siberian Dmitri Mendeleyev (1834-1907) had come up with his classification of the elements in the 1860s. He showed that these fundamental substances could be ranked in a table in order of increasing atomic weight, in such a way that elements with similar properties appeared beneath each other in the columns of the table. But there was no explanation of why elements with very different atomic masses should just happen to have similar chemical properties, until Bohr improved his theory of the atom in the years following the First World War. It was clear to Bohr, and his contemporaries, that the chemical properties of atoms depend almost exclusively on the number of electrons they contain. These are related to the number of protons (positively charged particles) in the nucleus, and therefore to the atomic mass. But the electrons themselves are the visible face an atom shows to the world, the "handles" by which it interacts with other atoms. So why should an atom of lithium, which has three electrons, be very similar chemically to an atom of sodium, which has eleven electrons, and potassium with nineteen? Once again, Bohr produced an imaginary model of the atom to explain the observations, without waiting for the fundamental physics to be worked out.

Imagine the electron "orbits" around the atom as more like onion skins, nestling one inside the other, than like the orbits of the planets around the Sun. What Bohr said, in effect, was that the innermost orbit, or "shell", only has room for two electrons. He didn't worry why this should be so; he just chose the restriction to match the observed patterns of chemical properties of the elements. The next shell out from the nucleus, however, has room for eight electrons. So an atom which has, say, six protons in its nucleus, and therefore "needs" six electrons to ensure its electrical neutrality, will slot two into the innermost shell, and four into the second shell. But an atom with eleven protons (sodium) has two in the innermost shell, eight in the second, full, shell, and the last has to go into a new shell, out on its own. This is very similar to the pattern for lithium, which has two electrons in its innermost shell, and, once again, just one out on its own. And potassium fits the picture if we imagine it to have three filled shells (two, eight and eight electrons each), with a lone electron in the fourth shell.

What matters for chemistry is primarily the number of electrons in the outermost shell that contains any electrons at all. Working outward through the shells for heavier and heavier atoms, with more and more electrons, Bohr was able to explain the relationship between the elements in Mendeleyev's periodic table in terms of atomic structure, and although he had no idea why a shell containing eight electrons should be "closed" to further additions, he could use the fact that it was to explain how atoms combine with one another.

Bohr proved nothing mathematically—he just knew that things had to be this ▶

Niels Bohr (left) sitting back-to-back with Ernest Rutherford during a river-side picnic in 1923, at Cambridge, where he had gone to receive an honorary Doctor of Science degree. In 1911, Rutherford had made the greatest of his many contributions to science—his nuclear theory of the atom (see article). It was while working with Rutherford at Manchester University that Niels Bohr developed the theoretical implications of the nuclear model of the atom, combining it with the quantum theory developed by the German physicist Max Planck.

▶ way. In his Autobiographical Notes, published in 1949, Einstein said of Bohr's work and the early quantum theory "that this insecure and contradictory foundation was sufficient to enable a man of Bohr's unique instinct and talent to discover the major laws of spectral lines and of the electron-shells of the atoms together with their significance for chemistry appeared to me like a miracle—and appears to me as a miracle even today".

In 1922, Bohr received the Nobel Prize for physics for this work; in the same year, a previously unknown element, whose existence had been predicted by his atomic theory, was discovered, and named hafnium. But it was only in 1926 and 1927 that physicists at last began to put the quantum theory on a secure footing, discovering the relationships and laws which explained why electrons had to behave in this peculiar manner, why the numbers allowed in each shell were limited. That full version of the quantum theory brought in concepts that still seem bizarre. No longer could the electron be thought of as a tiny particle, but rather as an entity which could be both wave and particle at the same time. Any experiment designed to find a particle would indeed show the electron behaving as a particle—but set up an experiment to measure wave properties, and it would show electrons behaving like waves. What was "really" going on?

By the late 1920s, physicists had a complete theory, a set of self-consistent equations, to describe the behaviour of atoms, electrons and radiation. The only trouble was it didn't make sense. Once again,

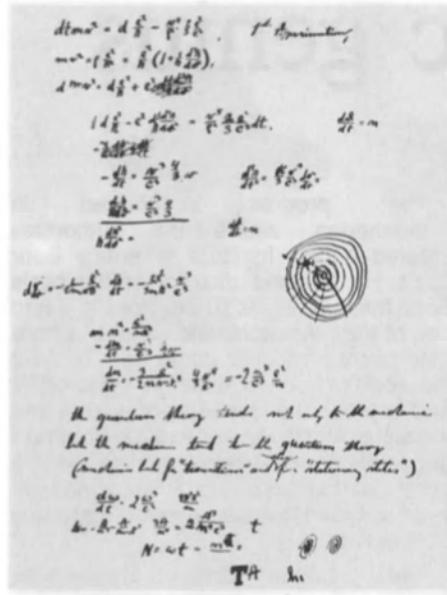


Photo © Niels Bohr Institute, Copenhagen

This document, in Niels Bohr's handwriting, is a calculation of the rate of change of radius and frequency of an electron moving in a circle.

Bohr came to the rescue. It didn't have to make sense, he said. The only thing we have direct knowledge of is the outcome of an experiment, and as long as we can predict how experiments will turn out, there is no need to worry about what the particles (or waves) do when we are not looking at them. This is a slight oversimplification of the philosophy that became known as the "Copenhagen Interpretation" of quantum mechanics, but only a slight simplification.

For more than half a century, following Bohr's teaching, physicists have used the quantum theory to explain the behaviour of molecules, including biological molecules such as DNA, to design nuclear power stations (and bombs), to build solid state computers, digital watches, and lasers. To this day, nobody "knows" what the particles of the quantum world are really like, what they are "doing" when they are not being monitored by our experiments. But every experiment carried out in the past half century has produced results in agreement with the predictions of the quantum theory.

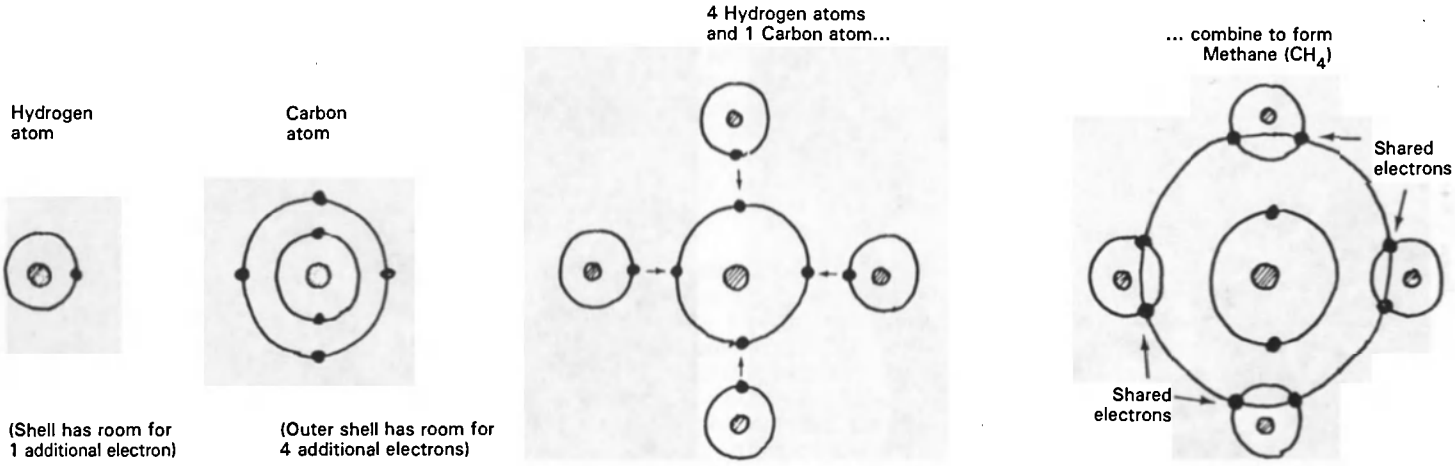
Bohr's greatest triumph was undoubtedly his explanation of the periodic table of the elements; and his pragmatic approach to the contradictions of quantum theory, that as long as it works it is not of overriding importance to know why it works, influenced a generation of researchers and still influences many scientists today. But even after the 1920s he made major contributions, especially to the understanding of nuclear fission, and as one of the prime movers in the establishment of the European Centre for Nuclear Research (CERN) in 1952. He died peacefully in Copenhagen on 18 November, 1962, a few weeks after his seventy-seventh birthday. ■

JOHN GRIBBIN, *British astrophysicist and science writer, former member of the Science Policy Research Unit of the University of Sussex, England, is physics consultant to the magazine* New Scientist. *He has written many books on astronomy, geophysics and climatic change. His most recent book,* In Search of Schrodinger's Cat *(1984), deals with the development of quantum physics.*

Nuclear Nirvana

For some reason, an atom seeks out a state in which its outermost shell is closed, or full. For an atom like sodium, the easiest way to achieve this is to discard its outermost electron, leaving bare the closed shell of eight electrons beneath; for an atom like chlorine, which happens to have seven electrons in its outermost shell, the easiest way to achieve chemical nirvana is to find a spare electron to add to its collection. So sodium and chlorine eagerly react together. Each sodium atom loses an electron and is left with a net positive charge; each chlorine atom gains an electron, and has a net negative charge. And the charged atoms (ions) then arrange themselves in a crystal lattice, held together by electric forces. The crystals are those of common salt, that we sprinkle on our food.

The same end can be achieved in another way. A pair of electrons can be shared between two atoms, to form a chemical bond. This happens, for example, when hydrogen and carbon combine to form methane. Each carbon atom "wants" another four electrons to complete its outer shell; each hydrogen atom needs just one electron to fill its only shell, the innermost one, which only holds two electrons. So four hydrogen atoms surround a carbon atom in such a way that eight electrons are shared between them, and each atom has the illusion of existing in the desired state, with a closed shell of electrons around it.■



In defence of folklore

by Jean Paul Guibbert

Design on a playing card from Puri, a town in the province of Orissa, India, depicts an incarnation of the Hindu deity Vishnu who is shown in the form of a hybrid creature, Navagunjara, a combination of man and beast, bird and snake.

FOLKLORE in its various manifestations forms part of the heritage of mankind; enshrining folk memory and traditions, it constitutes the living museum of our civilizations. Transmitted by the oral tradition, inherited and assimilated by imitation or learning, folklore is volatile and fluctuating. In other words it is living, which also means that it can die.

Transposed, adapted, modified, folklore appears in a variety of guises. It is a reflection of man, and like man may be well or ill nourished, rich or poor. Precious and fragile, prone to loss, oblivion, caricature and, of course, to plunder, it eludes close definition and its range is difficult to circumscribe. In other words it is both highly vulnerable and hard to defend. ▶

Photo © Musée de l'Homme, Paris

Photo © Jocelyne Etienne-Nuque, *Benin* 1982

Two examples of handicrafts from Benin. Left, a ceremonial drinking cup fashioned from a gourd engraved with friezes bordering a bicycle motif. Right, in the market at Porto Novo, the administrative capital of Benin, metalsmiths have transformed used tins into sieves by perforating them with traditional decorative patterns.

▶ Folklore today seems to be in a less fortunate position than art, the protection of which not so long ago provoked the same doubts and hesitations. However, this ill-fortune is also a sign of vitality, for the resistance and opposition which folklore arouses suggests that it does mean something to us and that it does have a life of its own, in addition to its rarely mentioned attributes: the poetic and didactic powers, the symbolic force and cathartic possibilities, which make folklore an effective instrument of creation, education and the transmission of values.

It is symptomatic of a growing trend that Unesco should today be concerned with the problem of the conservation and protection of folklore. People everywhere are coming to feel the need for roots, for the preservation of identity. Without self-knowledge and self-respect it is impossible to know and respect others, and the cultural diversity in which differences are rooted is also—through those very differences—the hallmark of the originality of the entire human race.

The key issue is folklore's right to exist, a right which extends further than recognition that it actually does exist and raises more technical problems—how should folklore be defined, how should its various forms be identified and kept alive? This is why it will be necessary to act with great flexibility. The machinery which will have to be created could well be based on models that have been adopted for other forms of creative activity; but they will need to be adapted, and provision will have to be made for exceptions and special cases in order to stimulate folklore as far as possible and prevent it from becoming ossified. An excess of legislation or categorization could cause irretrievable losses. It is not impossible that a kind of consensus may spontaneously emerge from among those concerned with the technicalities of folklore, scholars and the representatives of the different interest groups so that excessive measures, whatever their nature, will not be taken.

Opportunities must be created for the widest public to discover, enjoy and study folklore. It must also be explained, put in its context or contexts, compared and exchanged. Through an approach of this kind folklore offers great potential for promoting contact and understanding between different peoples and cultures.

But there is no doubt, either, that folklore can be misused or caricatured in ways which pervert its aims while exploiting—and even degrading—its substance, for its charm and fascination are well known.

This raises the problem of the protection of the rights connected with folklore, as well as the more immediate concern to protect folklore collections that exist today. Here too, it will be necessary to act with a certain flexibility; otherwise folklore may be confined within a protectionist system which would defeat its own ends. Folklore will thus have to be administered and protected, like all human property, through laws guaranteeing it against attacks on its integrity and authenticity. This all-round protection will not be possible without purposeful action on the part of the international community, which, if its action is to be fully valid, will have to take account of the judgements and viewpoints of each of its members.

Folklore cannot exist without people to transmit it, and these people must be protected, primarily within their own country and community. But their protection is a matter for universal concern. Awareness of the issues involved must exist both at the national and the international level.

The fact that such concern is felt, and in many cases has been felt for some time, in a number of countries which have already created the necessary mechanisms for the protection of folklore, is a source of valuable experience which may help other countries avoid a number of pitfalls. Co-operation with these countries and use of the knowledge they have acquired may ease the way to the establishment of various forms of prospection, collection and indexing of folklore, as well as the diffusion of all kinds of background data relating to it.

If the timeliness and even the feasibility of establishing a binding international instrument has been questioned, a majority has nevertheless emerged in favour of a flexible instrument, perhaps in the form of an international recommendation. Unesco's next General Conference could formulate a number of principles which States would be invited to adopt in the form of national laws. Through international co-operation and with the support of clearly expressed wishes by the nations, Unesco could contribute to the establishment of the necessary infrastructures, the formulation of a typology, the training of personnel, the listing of relevant institutions and the constitution of an international register of folklore cultural property. ■

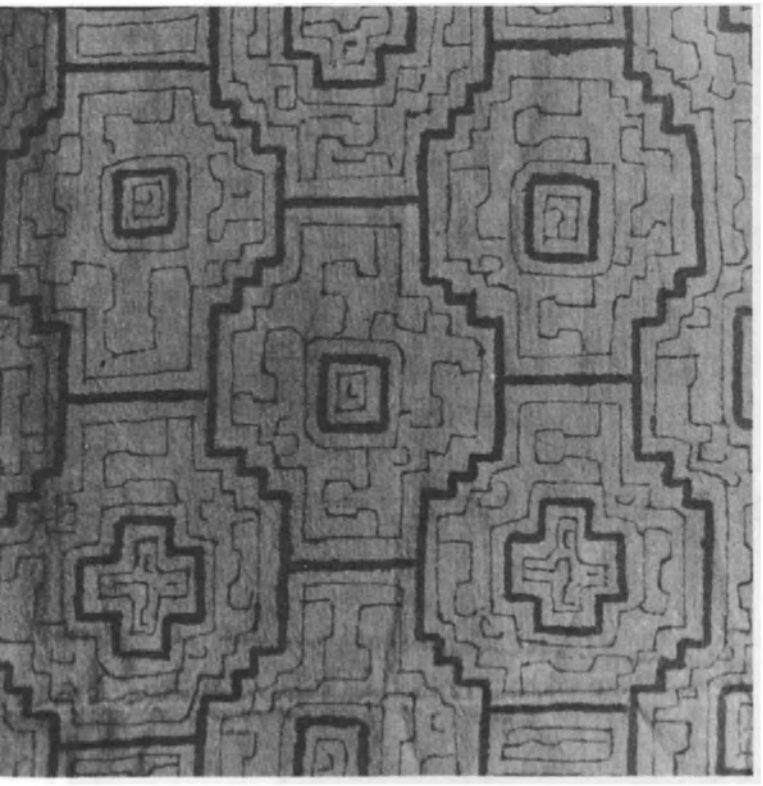
JEAN PAUL GUIBBERT, *French sculptor, poet and writer, is the author of a number of studies on art and on the oral tradition. He has a special interest in the popular and so-called "primitive" arts and in problems relating to the preservation and diffusion of, and exchanges between, the cultures of the world.*

Photo © Tadahisa Sakurai, Japan

The classical repertory of Japanese Noh *theatre is performed by professional actors belonging to five schools which have been officially recognized since the 17th century. In 1910 a very ancient form of* Noh *was discovered in Kurokawa, an isolated rice-growing village northeast of Tokyo. It had survived for centuries, and is still performed six times a year by two troupes of talented local actors on an improvised candle-lit stage (left).*

Since it emerged in the early 1960s, Butoh *has become a leading modern dance form in Japan. Moving with dreamlike slowness in an atmosphere of intense concentration,* Butoh *performers plunge into a world of shadows, in search of the sources of life and dance.* Butoh *is largely improvised when executed by solo dancers whose bodies are covered with white make-up and who express through bodily movements the images of their inner world. it may also be danced to highly precise choreography, executed by groups who try to create a universe or rediscover a language of gestures inherited from traditional daily life.*

Photo © Mitsotuchi Hanaga, Tokyo



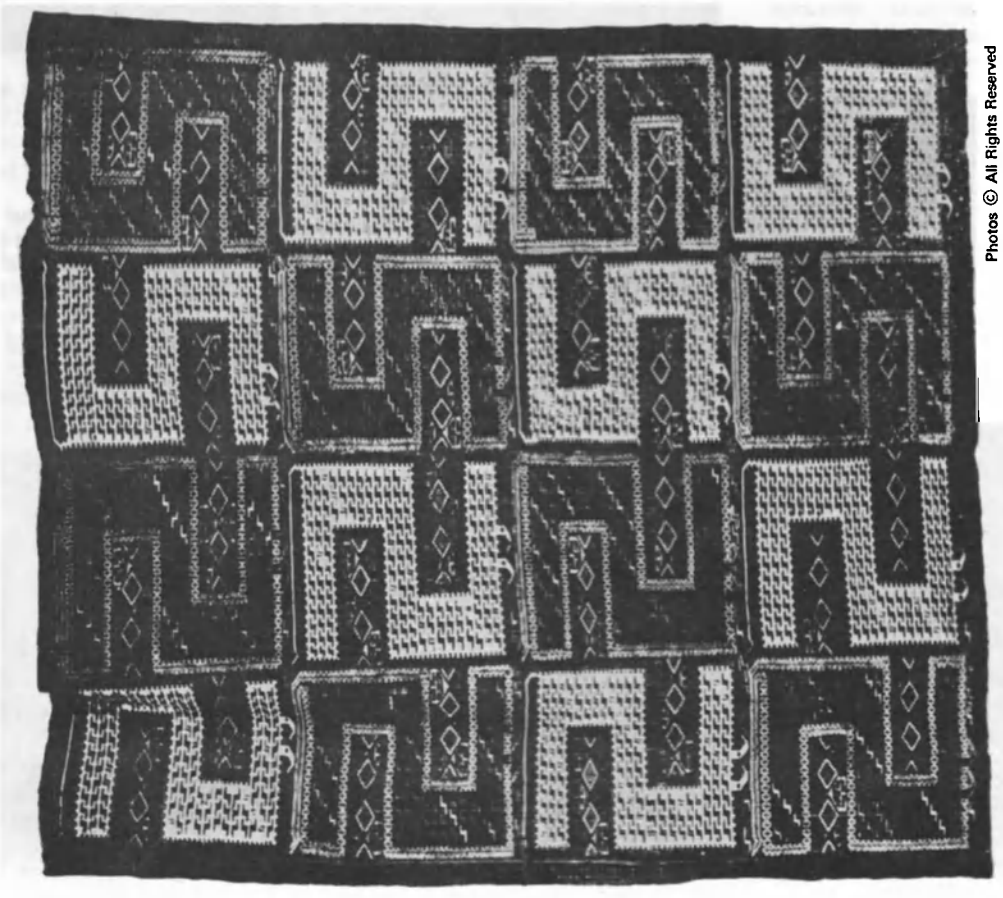
A piece of painted cotton cloth and a ceramic bowl made by Peru's Shipibo Indians and decorated with traditional geometrical motifs, the emblems of the tribe.

Photos © Little Bobby Hanson/World Crafts Council, New York

Photo © Okregowe Museum, Torun, Poland

This apple-wood gingerbread mould depicting Adam and Eve is part of a collection of wooden stamps and moulds made in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries at the town of Torun, Poland.

Bottom photo : this 19th-century Caucasian carpet is from the Karabakh region of Azerbaidjan (USSR). The S-shaped figures symbolize benevolent dragons, and the diagonal lines, running water. Below, Liatif Kerimov is an ornamental weaver and designer who has written a major work on the carpets of Azerbaidjan.



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Unesco and the Preservation and Protection of Folklore

ACTIVITIES for the safeguarding of folklore were included in Unesco's Programme in 1973 as the result of a communication from the Government of Bolivia asking that consideration might be given to the possibility of drawing up a Protocol to the Universal Copyright Convention which would govern "the conservation, the promotion and the diffusion of folklore".

Following a number of preliminary studies and exchanges of views with the Committees set up by the International Copyright Conventions (the Universal Convention and the Berne Convention) in order to determine the extent to which the protection of folklore might involve copyright, Unesco embarked on a global study of the protection of folklore which, if it is to be complete, requires an interdisciplinary effort, and on a study of the "intellectual property" aspects involved. The latter is being carried out jointly with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

The comprehensive study of the protection of folklore was begun in 1981 when a questionnaire was sent out to Unesco Member States. Then, in February 1982, a Committee of Governmental Experts met at Unesco headquarters in Paris; it did not reach a consensus on the definition of folklore but invited Unesco to continue its work aimed at formulating general regulations concerning the safeguarding of folklore.

In January 1985 a second Committee of Governmental Experts met at Unesco headquarters to study the possible range and scope of such regulations. In its conclusions the Committee proposed that folklore could be *defined* as follows: "Folklore (in a broader sense, traditional and popular folk culture) is a group-oriented and tradition-based creation of groups or individuals reflecting the expectations of the community as an adequate expression of its cultural and social identity; its standards and values are transmitted orally, by imitation or by other means. Its forms include, among others, language, literature, music, dance, games, mythology, rituals, customs, handicrafts, architecture and other arts."

Concerning the *identification* of folklore, the Committee considered it advisable that systems should be set up to collect and record its various manifestations, and to co-ordinate the classification systems used by different institutions.

The Committee also concluded that the *conservation* of documentation regarding folk traditions calls for the establishment of a network of archives, the standardization of archiving methods and the creation of museums where folklore would be represented. To provide for the *safeguarding* of folk traditions, it would be advisable to introduce the study of folklore into educational curricula, to guarantee the right of the various ethnic groups and national communities to their own folklore and to set up national folklore councils where various interest groups would be represented.

The *dissemination* of folklore should be encouraged through organizing regional, national and international folklore events and keeping the mass media informed about them, publishing periodicals, and creating documentation centres and libraries specializing in folklore.

As far as the *use* of folklore is concerned, the Committee concluded that it would be useful to call the attention of the relevant authorities not only to the "intellectual property" aspects of the question which are the subject of the "model provisions for national laws" adopted in June 1982 under the joint auspices of Unesco and the World Intellectual Property Organization, but also to the fact that the protection of folklore should cover the transmitters of tradition as well as the materials gathered, and that measures should be taken to safeguard against misuse, whether intentional or due to negligence.

The Committee considered that Unesco Member States should be invited to co-operate with the relevant institutions and organizations and among themselves, notably to ensure internationally that the various interested parties (communities, or natural or legal persons) enjoy the economic and moral rights resulting from the investigation, creation, performance, recording and/or dissemination of folklore.

With regard to the nature of possible international regulations, the Committee felt that these should not take the form of an international convention. On the other hand, there was unanimous agreement that they might take the form of an international recommendation, whereby Unesco's General Conference formulates principles that it invites Member States to adopt in the form of a national law or in some other way. ■

Established in 1981 with the support of Unesco and its International Fund for the Promotion of Culture, the anthropological cinema workshop in Cairo is the first of its kind in the Arab world. As a centre for training, research and production its aim is to preserve and assert traditional cultural values. Below, still from a film made in Egypt by the workshop shows a young potter at work.

To preserve China's outstandingly rich heritage of traditional folk music and make it more widely known, the Chinese authorities have launched a project to collect popular songs from every province in the country. The resulting anthology will eventually comprise 30 volumes. Unesco's International Fund for the Promotion of Culture is supporting the project by providing the necessary recording equipment. Photo shows musicians from Xianghe (Hebei province) playing traditional instruments. In foreground, a 75-year-old farmer is playing a kind of flute, known as* Shuang Guan, *in a bowl of water to evoke swans at play.

Photo © Zeinab El-Deeb, Cairo

Photo © Chinese Musicians Association, Beijing

Bartolomé de Las Casas
'The apostle of the Indians'

by Silvio Zavala

NOT long ago, I saw in the window of a Spanish bookshop a work entitled "European Anti-colonialism from Las Casas to Karl Marx". "Good", I said to myself. "Our hero has again been summoned to lend a hand, as always when great causes are at stake".

At first sight it seems obvious that Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, the great critic of Spanish colonialism in the New World, should have been an opponent of colonialism and that today's anti-colonialist movement should count him among its great precursors.

Although he accepted Pope Alexander VI's bulls of 3 and 4 May 1493 granting the kings of Spain authority over the West Indies, he interpreted them as conferring responsibility on the Spanish temporal power to work for the religious conversion of the recently discovered peoples while safeguarding their sovereignty and possessions in a political structure which he described as quasi-imperial, maintaining their freedom and their right to property and bringing them to the faith as Christ and His Apostles had preached, by persuasion and not by force.

After his controversy with the Cordoban humanist Ginés de Sepúlveda at Valladolid in 1550-1551, Las Casas was asked "what in his view it would be legitimate and expedient to do". He replied that in places where there was no danger the appropriate form of evangelization was that only preachers, together with those who could teach the indigenous people good customs in conformity with the Christian faith, and those who could speak to them of peace, should enter such territories. In those places where danger was to be feared a few fortresses should be built on the frontiers from which negotiations could be started and religion would spread gradually and make headway through peace, love and good example.

Las Casas added that this and only this was the intention of Alexander VI's bull and that of Paul III, that once they became Christians (the indigenous people) would be subjected to His Majesty..., not enslaved nor deprived of their land, but placed under

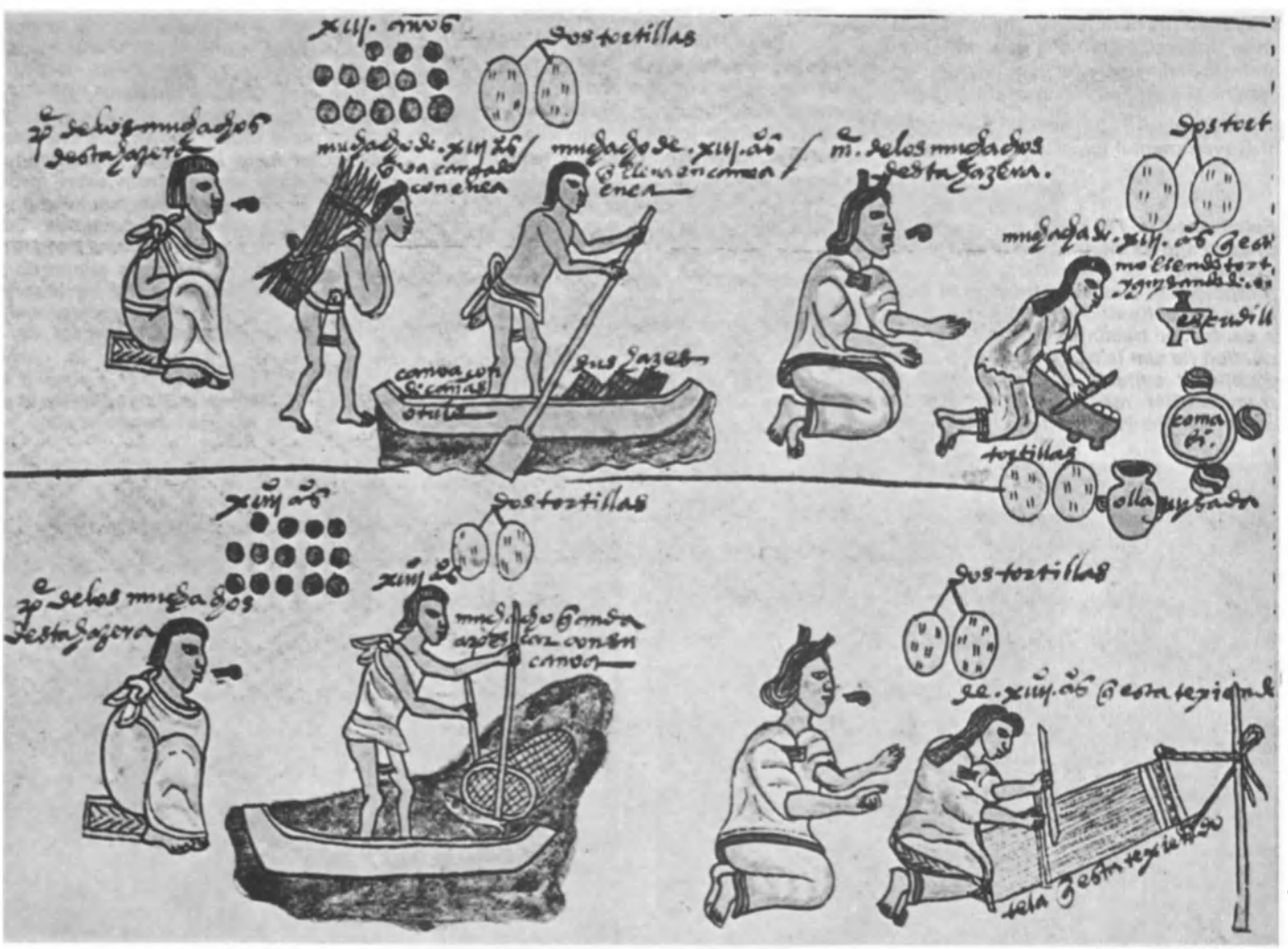

Photo © Bodleian Library, Oxford

Scenes from daily life among the Aztecs (fishing, weaving, collecting reeds, pounding maize and cooking tortillas) such as Bartolomé de Las Casas must have witnessed many times during his long stay in Mexico. The drawings are from the Codex Mendoza, a 16th-century Aztec manuscript ordered by the first Viceroy of New Spain, Don Antonio de Mendoza, for the Emperor Charles V. Drawn by an Aztec artist, with text by a Spanish priest, the Codex never reached the Emperor. It turned up a century later at the Bodleian Library, Oxford where it has remained to this day.

In 1502, ten years after Christopher Columbus, Bartolomé de Las Casas, a young man from Seville, arrived in the West Indies where he became famous for his passionate defence of the Indians against the excesses of the Spanish colonists. Yet this man who was to go down in history as "The Apostle of the Indians" has also been described by an eminent 20th-century Spanish historian as a psychopath and a fanatic. His strong opposition to colonialism was indeed surprising at a time when other European countries, following the example of Spain and Portugal, were setting out on the road of colonial expansion, with complete disregard for the rights of other peoples. Above, this engraving of Las Casas was made from his only known portrait, the work of the Spanish artist Antonio Lara.

his supreme jurisdiction, with some reasonable tribute being exacted from them for the protection of the faith and instruction in good customs and government.

In other words, notwithstanding the religious purpose assigned by him to the Spanish penetration of the New World, Las Casas admitted that side by side with the preachers were those who could teach good customs to the indigenous population and discuss peace with them and that instruction in the faith, in good customs and in government went together. In his *History of the Indies* (book III, chapter 102) he asked that real settlers be sent, "industrious people who would live by cultivating such happy lands as these, which would be granted by their own natural owners and occupiers, the Indians, and that they would intermarry, and together would become one of the best and perhaps most Christian and peaceful republics in the world, and not to send indiscriminately all kinds of profligates who would rob and destroy them."

Thus, as the French historian Marcel Bataillon has rightly remarked, Las Casas did not entirely exclude the idea of colonization but stressed that it should be peaceful and educational, and that in order to create a better republic the colonists should be decent, kindly folk who would not refuse to intermarry with the indigenous population. Las Casas thus foresaw the union through intermarriage which was to be a feature of the Latin American peoples up to our own time.

Las Casas assumed that the right to rule the Indians conferred on the Spanish monarchs by the Papal bulls became effective when the Indians freely accepted the faith. The former Indian rulers then ceased to rule in their own right and became ministers of the Spanish crown. However, for Las Casas, this rule was not purely political; it constituted a convenient and necessary means of spreading the Christian faith.

Moreover, in a petition of February 1543, Las Casas proposed that "in order to establish the royal rights over these peoples and lands legally and securely, and to ensure that they shall be perpetual and undisturbed, it should be considered whether the best way to achieve this might not be for the religious, the king's officers, and learned persons nominated by the authorities to conclude an agreement between the emperor on the one hand and the Indian lords and chiefs on the other, so that all agree freely and voluntarily to be subjects of his majesty and agree upon the moderate royal tributes, dues and taxes to be paid to the king"

Las Casas was opposed not only to the armed conquest of the Indians but also to their subjection to the *encomienda* system whereby the Spanish crown granted numbers of Indians as workers to Spanish settlers known as *encomenderos*. His approach to this problem did not lead to the abolition of the system but it did lead to its restriction by royal power and consequently to better protection for the Indians who were the victims of it.

In a preliminary study for his treatise *De Regia Potestate,* he laid down that "no State, king or emperor may alienate territories or change their political regime without the express consent of the inhabitants". Here Fray Bartolomé proclaims the right to self-determination, that the cession of peoples or territories is not legally possible unless the free consent of the people or citizens concerned has first been obtained. Las Casas concluded in his treatise *De Thesauris* that "as long as the people of this world of the Indies and their kings do not freely consent to the papal grant in favour of our monarchs, do not ratify it and surrender possession to them, they have only a title, that is to say a reason for obtaining primacy over the said world and a right to the kingdoms and their universal supremacy or dominion which is derived from the title, but have no right over them". In the absence of this consent, the kings of Spain lack the most important right.

Las Casas' doctrine on freedom and slavery is one of those which has caused the most controversy between his admirers and his opponents.

Born in Seville about 1484, Bartolomé de Las Casas must have been familiar from childhood with captives brought back from the Levant, the Barbary Coast, the Canary Islands and West Africa, who included men and women with white, black and copper-coloured skins. In his early experience as a colonist in the West Indies in the manioc fields, in places where gold was washed and livestock reared, he had to do with An-

Photo Jean Mazenod © Editions d'Art Lucien Mazenod, Paris

In 1544, at the age of 70, the controversial Bartolomé de Las Casas received recognition for his action on behalf of the Indians when, on the recommendation of Charles V, the Pope named him Bishop of Chiapa, in the present-day Mexican State of Chiapas. Under the terms of his appointment this land was declared "prohibited to the conquistadors". Above, Maya bas-relief from Chiapas depicts a woman offering a helmet to the governor of Yaxchilán. Right, a conchero or danzante de la conquista (dancer of the conquest), one of a group of Indian dancers who, during religious festivals at Querétado, in Guanajuato State, Mexico, commemorate a battle between Aztecs and Spaniards which took place at the time Las Casas was fighting desperately to protect the Indians of New Spain.

▶ tillean labour: Indian domestic servants and workers, as well as with Caribs and other indigenous people enslaved in wars and raids by the colonists.

It was in this environment, after hearing an uncompromising, courageous sermon preached in Hispaniola in 1511 by the Dominican Father Antón de Montesinos that Las Casas was converted to the cause of the Indians. The fundamental questions, as recorded by Las Casas were: "Are these not men? Should the precepts of charity and justice not be observed towards them? Did they not have their own lands and masters? Have these people offended us in any way?".

Las Casas campaigned against the enslavement of the Indians because he did not admit the justice of the wars waged against them or the legitimacy of the so-called ransom whereby Indian slaves seeking their freedom from their Spanish masters were forced to enslave another Indian to take their place, since there were very few slaves among the Indians and the word *slave* did not have the same significance for the Indians as it did for Europeans.

In *Algunos principios,* a document which he included in the *Tratados,* or "Treatises" published in Seville in 1552, Las Casas asserted that every man is presumed to be free unless the contrary is proved. All rational creatures are born free, and freedom is therefore a natural right. Slavery is an accident which befalls a human being by chance. It is a matter for the law of nations.

In the fifth "Treatise" he declares that "after life itself, human freedom is the most precious thing and consequently the most worthy cause to defend, and whenever anyone's freedom is in doubt, the decision must be on the side of freedom". Thus, according to Las Casas "His Majesty is obliged by divine precept to order that all Indians enslaved by the Spaniards be set free. Bishops must be extremely solicitous and diligent in seeking this. The religious should agree amongst themselves in a learned and saintly manner not to give absolution to any Spaniard who holds Indian slaves unless he

Photo © Andrea Nissardi, Paris

first presents them for examination by the Royal Tribunal *(Audiencia)* in conformity with the New Laws, but they would do better still to resolve this without taking them before the *Audiencia,* because of possible sophistries in the legal proceedings".

As far as the slavery of Africans is concerned, it must be said that when Las Casas was in the West Indies, he believed that the precarious condition of the indigenous population, who were close to extinction, could be relieved if they were replaced by manpower brought from Africa.

In her book *Las Casas as a Bishop* (Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 1980) Helen Rand Parish confirms that around 1543-1544 Las Casas was still thinking of bringing two dozen African slaves to his diocese of Chiapas to help the new Spanish colonists and the religious by sowing cassava. She rightly believes that it was only later, perhaps from 1546 and certainly by 1552, that Las Casas came to realize the utter injustice of black slavery and repented of his earlier opinion.

On 30 June 1560, the archbishop of Mexico, Fray Alonso de Montúfar, wrote to the king of Spain that "we do not see why blacks should be captives any more than Indians since, according to reports, they willingly accept the Holy Gospel and do not make war on Christians".

In a famous passage in his *History of the Indies* (book II, chapter 58), Las Casas himself explains that he proposed the introduction of Blacks in order to alleviate the condition of the Indians, but later repented when he saw the injustices committed by the Portuguese in seizing and enslaving them, and from then on regarded them as unjustly and tyrannically enslaved because "the same reasoning should be applied to them as to the Indians".

In his opposition both to the enslavement of the indigenous peoples and of the Africans, Las Casas has left us two admirable definitions, one of his universal concept of man, the other, which we have already quoted, of the fundamental value of freedom.

In the *History of the Indies* (book II, chapter 58), he repeats his famous conclusion that "all nations of the world are men and are thus defined once and for all. All of them possess understanding and will, all have five external and four internal senses (...), all take pleasure in what is good and reject and detest evil, are disturbed by what is disagreeable and harms them".

Furthermore, he believed in the aptitude for civilization of all untutored peoples and in their capacity to contribute to human progress, because "just as uncultivated land does not yield fruit but thistles and thorns, yet contains inherent virtue which enables it when cultivated to produce useful and desirable domestic fruit, so there can be no people in the world, however barbaric or inhuman, nor any nation which, when taught and instructed in the manner required by the natural condition of man, especially in the doctrine of the faith, cannot produce a plenitude of reasonable men".

Las Casas' conversion to the anti-slavery cause was a long and painful process, but the conclusions he reached are just, and he left valuable seeds for those who would later undertake similar campaigns.

When, influenced by the events of the Napoleonic Wars, the Spanish colonies began to revolt in 1808, the personality and work of Las Casas again came to the fore. His memory helped the insurgents to prove that Spanish domination was harmful and must be ended. His writings became bedside reading for Fray Servando Teresa de Mier in Mexico, for Simón Bolívar in Caracas and Jamaica, and for Gregorio Funes in Córdoba and Tucumán. And his memory was revived by Juan Antonio Llorente, a Spanish liberal in exile in France.

In his preface to the 1965 edition of the *Tratados* of 1552, Lewis Hanke remarked that it was topical to commemorate Las Casas because the principles and ideas he championed in the sixteenth century are still being debated at a time when the world is laboriously seeking an honourable basis for lasting peace between peoples of different cultures.

The critical examination conducted by Las Casas not only led towards a repudiation of the use of force in subjecting other peoples and of the evils of slavery and oppression which accompany colonial rules, it was also applied to his own thinking. This is clear from the effort it cost him as he came to insist on the consent of the Indians as a prerequisite to their evangelization and conversion and to their submission to the temporal rule of the Spanish crown. The same capacity for self-criticism is revealed in the evolution of his thinking on the enslavement of the Africans, to the point where he applied to them the same doctrine of freedom which he tirelessly defended in the case of the Indians. ■

Photo © Austrian National Library, Vienna

Las Casas has often been reproached with having proposed the introduction of Black slaves to replace Indian labour. The French historian Marcel Bataillon has shown conclusively that Las Casas was not the first to suggest this and that, in any case, the suggestion was never followed up in practice. Moreover, he later bitterly regretted his words and in his* Historia de las Indias *(History of the Indies) he wrote that "the same reasoning should be applied to them [the Blacks] as to the Indians". Above,* Portrait of a Black, *charcoal drawing by a contemporary of Las Casas, the great German artist Albert Dürer.

SILVIO ZAVALA, *of Mexico, is a specialist in the history of Latin America with a particular interest in the Conquest and the Colonial period. He was formerly director of Mexico's National Museum of History, president of the History Committee of the Panamerican Institute of Geography and History, president of the International Institute of Philosophy and Human Sciences, and a member of Unesco's Executive Board. His many books on political philosophy and the history of Latin America include* Sir Thomas Moore in New Spain, *published in English translation.*

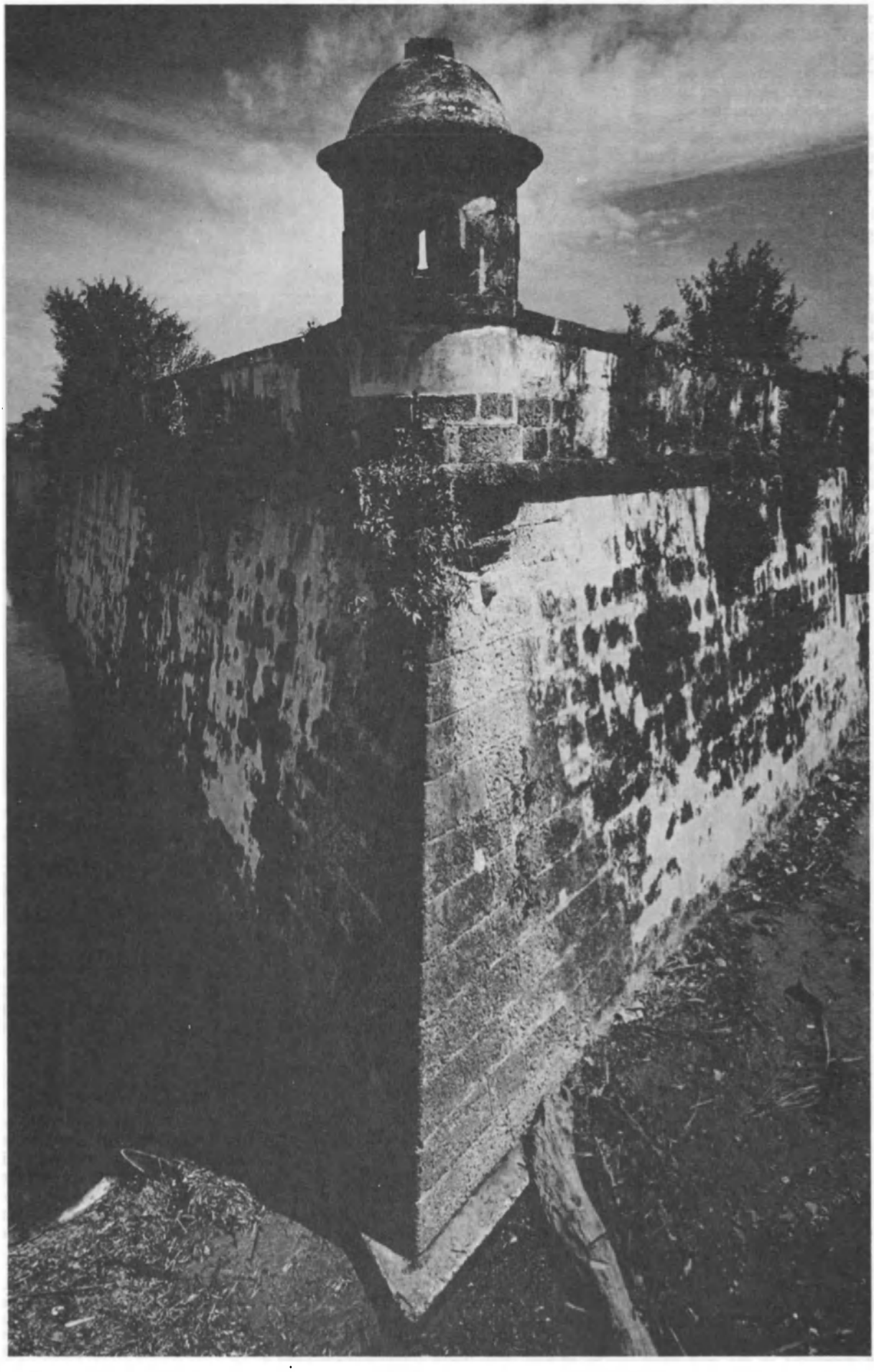

Photo German Tellez © Colombian National Tourist Office

Built between 1753 and 1759 during the reign of Ferdinand IV of Spain and named after him, the fortress of San Fernando controlled the strait of Bocachica, the narrow passage that gives access to the outer bay of Cartagena. It was built in the shape of a horseshoe the two points of which were on the land side with a solid, semi-circular wall facing out to sea. Above, one of the many turrets in which lookouts were posted to warn of the approach of enemy warships.

Cartagena de Indias
'A city with a soul'

by Renata Durán

THE string of tall luxury blocks stretched along torrid Caribbean beaches suggests a modern city meekly submissive to the demands of international tourism. This is only partially and superficially true. Not far away stand the steeply rising fortifications of old Cartagena, the city built on the lovely bay of the same name, on the Atlantic coast of Colombia, as a magnificent riposte to the attacks which this region coveted by the enemies of imperial Spain had to endure in the seventeenth century.

In the sixteenth century Europeans were dazzled by the New World and longed to possess it. The seventeenth century, the age of pirates and privateers (the latter, unlike the former, obeyed the laws of the State which granted them "letters of marque" authorizing them to seize enemy ships and merchandise), saw the growth of strongholds whose ramparts and defences were vastly superior to those of medieval times.

Solid and massive fortresses were needed to withstand attack by heavy artillery and cannon. The Spanish forts in America met these specifications. Cartagena was one of the most typical of them and is, perhaps, the only one to have survived virtually intact.

Sir Francis Drake, the English sailor and privateer who fought the Spaniards in the Gulf of Mexico and ravaged the coasts of Chile and Peru, suffered a severe defeat at the hands of the terrorized but valiant citizens of Cartagena. The man who would later take on the Invincible Armada attacked the city a second time, in 1586, when he granted it freedom in exchange for 100,000 ducats, 200 black slaves and the church bells. On account of this humiliation the Council of the Indies in Madrid decided on the complete fortification of the city. For the Spanish empire, Cartagena, the prey of greedy pirates, was a vital point for the defence of its communications with the whole of South America, and especially with the viceroyalty of Peru, since it was through this warehouse and arsenal that all the treasures of the former Inca empire were sent to Spain.

Hence the exceptional geopolitical importance of Cartagena for the Spaniards and, of course, for their enemies. Hence too the strategic position of what was then called "the key to the Indies of Peru".

The walls of Cartagena, rebuilt and improved over two centuries, constitute a piece of military architecture that resisted repeated assaults by the Dutch, the English and the French. Treasures of colonial architecture are conserved within them. Traces of the original inhabitants, many of whom came from Andalusia, survive in the Mozarabic design of balconies, windows and patios, and in the language and traditions. Stone-lined pools and luxuriant gardens surround the ▶

Photo Dominique Roger, Unesco

The skyline of the old city of Cartagena (founded in 1533) provides a backdrop to the old port through which passed the treasure of the New World to replenish the coffers of Imperial Spain.

Photo © Colombian National Tourist Office

▶ inner thoroughfares of a still living city with moisture and magic.

Cartagena has not suffered from the excesses of progress. Thanks to its wise master plan and architects, a substantial part of the original layout has been preserved. It is still possible to relive the moments of the city's splendour. Saint Peter Claver (1580-1654), the Spanish missionary to the black slaves of America, still imbues the city with that heroic humanism that helped to mitigate the cruelties of the Inquisition (the place where its sombre ritual was performed has wisely been preserved almost intact). Convents, churches, public fountains, cobbled alleys, tiny circular plazas bring to the city an evocative charm. Even the vaults built here and there in the city walls have been preserved; they not only served as shelters for the inhabitants during attacks by the English and French but—ironically—were later used by the Creoles when they fought the Spaniards for independence, having previously served as prisons for these self-same heroes.

The forts of San Felipe de Barajas and San Fernando de Bocachica which defended the harbour are remarkable for their original and ingenious design. A group of fine mansions bears witness to the magnificence of a port that grew rich from the merchandise it redistributed throughout South America.

The city was a rallying point for people and ideas as well as for goods and ambitions. In Cartagena, a city with a soul, blacks, mulattoes, mestizos and whites lived—and still live—together. The crucible of a new world, it has been the scene of successive experiments in Latin American integration. The Andine Pact and the Cartagena Agreement are sufficient proof of this vocation. During the colonial period the city succeeded in integrating Catholic austerity with a passion for adventure; today it combines fidelity to the past with love of life. Cartagena's vitality greets the visitor at every step. Its present creativity gives the lie to those who simplistically identify conservation with stagnation. It is impossible to escape the bewitchment of the city's colonial atmosphere and fortress-like character, but its people are not drugged by the perfume of its past.

Photo Lozouet © Colombian National Tourist Office

A typical street in the old town of Cartagena. Corbelled balconies provide welcome shade and add interest to the façades of the houses.

On the contrary it stimulates them to face the challenges of today.

Cartagena de Indias is a city which has miraculously resisted the corrosion of time, the assaults of pirates and smugglers who also tried to sell its soul, and the indifference of the powers-that-be. But above all it has survived the more dangerous assaults of the worshippers of progress who, insensitive to the charm of the past, are always ready to demolish a colonial house and replace it with a pretentious concrete cube to show that the city is vigorously facing the future. Fortunately this wonderful city is also determined to preserve its past, and the intelligent expression of this determination is, perhaps, the best contribution Cartagena can make to the year 2000. ■

RENATA DURAN, *Colombian lawyer and writer, is a member of her country's permanent delegation to Unesco. She is the author of two volumes of poems,* La Muñeca Rota *(The broken Doll) and, to be published shortly,* Oculta Ceremonia *(Secret Ceremony).*

Photo Jean-Claude Cecile © Colombian National Tourist Office

Covered balcony with carved wooden balustrade is a feature of the house of the Marquis of Valdehoyos, a wealthy merchant of the 18th century. Recently restored, this lordly property is one of the finest examples of colonial architecture in Cartagena.

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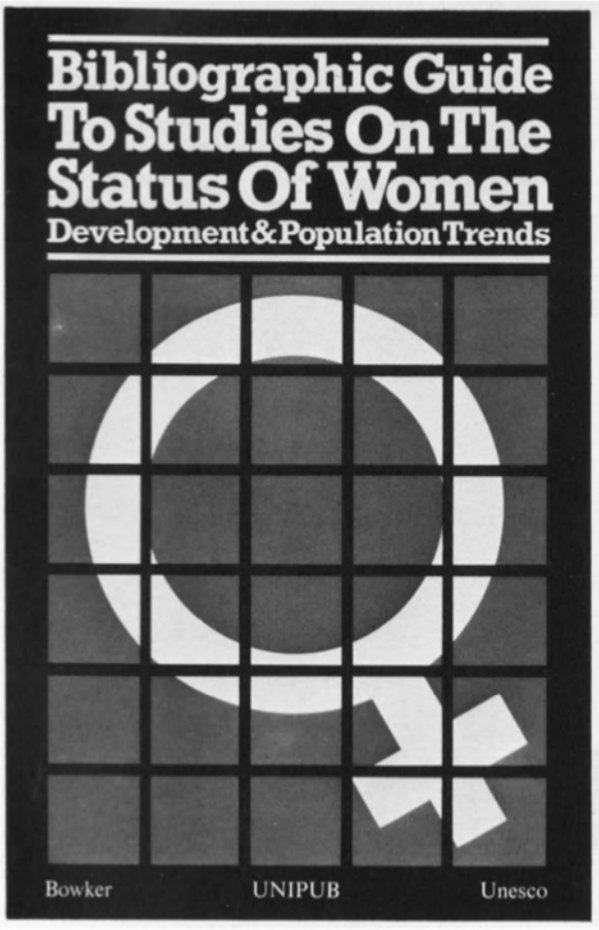

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Kamil Gok, Turkey's grocer-architect

"I feel as though, like an octopus, I can stretch out my tentacles in every direction. I can paint fields, sculpt mountains, carve great rocks. When I close my eyes in meditation I see all these landscapes transformed by my hand..." So speaks Kamil Gok, grocer by trade, but architect and landscaper at heart. At his village of Derekoy, in the mountain region of Bodrum, Turkey, this self-taught sculptor and painter has created a wide range of unusual works of popular art and visionary architecture. Above, view of part of the uncompleted mausoleum Kamil Gok has built for himself near the village cemetery. Turkish sculptor Mustafa Altintas, who told us about Kamil Gok, feels that the world should know more about the work of this "odd-man-out" of art.