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INTERVIEW WITH  
**ANDRÉ  
BRINK**



**RHYTHM,  
GESTURE AND  
THE SACRED**

**SECRET  
HARMONIES**

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We invite readers to send us photographs to be considered for publication in this feature. Your photo should show a painting, a sculpture, piece of architecture or any other subject which seems to be an example of cross-fertilization between cultures.

Alternatively, you could send us pictures of two works from different cultural backgrounds in which you see some striking connection or resemblance. Please add a short caption to all photographs.

## IDENTITY PROBLEMS

1993, oil on canvas  
(101 x 77 cm)  
by Moïses Finalé

*"In Cuba there has been a fusion between African cultures and the Hispano-Christian tradition," says the Cuban painter Moïses Finalé. "In my case I have been influenced by American and German art, and I use African symbolism in my own way." Finalé draws on these different cultural strata to produce dramatic images of great plastic force. This masked, armed, aggressive figure is a striking example of his work. Winged like an archangel, it also calls to mind the hieratic silhouettes of ancient Egyptian art.*





RHYTHM, GESTURE AND THE SACRED  
**SECRET HARMONIES**



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# ANDRÉ BRINK

talks to  
Bahgat Elnadi and Adel Rifaat

André Brink, one of South Africa's leading novelists, has resisted apartheid through his writing since the 1960s. Long banned within South Africa but translated into many languages, his novels have brought him an international reputation. They include: *Looking on Darkness* (1974); *A Dry White Season* (1979); *A Chain of Voices* (1982); *The Wall of the Plague* (1984); *States of Emergency* (1988); and *An Act of Terror* (1991). In this interview he talks about his life and convictions and reveals some of his ideas about the future of his country and of his work.

■ *Given your background, what led you to turn against apartheid?*

—I grew up in a very conservative Afrikaner family. My father was a magistrate, one of those grey eminences who are the powers behind the throne in South Africa because they implement the official policies. In his case it was done with a real sense of justice; most of the others were bigots. I know, because throughout my childhood and adolescence I was surrounded by such people, the pillars of an evil ideology. The opportunity never arose for me to question apartheid because I didn't have anything to compare it with. I needed to see my country in perspective, and that only happened when I was living in Paris, between 1959 and 1961, at the time of the Sharpeville massacre. Sharpeville was the shock that forced me to see what was happening in my country, with the clarity that distance can provide.

At the same time I made another discovery. For the first time, I had the oppor-

tunity to meet black people on equal terms. The only black people I had met in South Africa had been workers or domestic servants. I'd never even imagined that there could be black lawyers, teachers or students! And suddenly there I was in Paris surrounded by black students—some of whom in fact knew more about literature than I did after studying it for seven years. It was a cultural shock, a very pleasant shock, what's more, a discovery that opened up entirely new horizons for me. It was a voyage of discovery into unknown territory.

■ *There were obstacles and threats in store when you went back to South Africa. How did you begin to detach yourself from your background?*

—When I got back to South Africa, I had no idea at first what to do about my new discoveries. For almost ten years, Albert Camus and the literary and philosophical ideas I'd encountered in Paris were the main influence on my writing. In a way I used them to avoid exploring my own roots—roots of which I was a little ashamed, to be honest. I wanted to focus my attention on Europe, which for me was the peak of civilization.

So during that time my writing was existentialist in style and mood. It was only when I went to live in Paris a second time that I realized that I needed to go further and accept my African origins. Today the best thing about being a South African writer is to have two sets of roots, one Lot European, the other African.

When I returned to South Africa in 1961, I was appointed to a post as lecturer at an English-language university with a more liberal tradition than the very conservative Afrikaner university where I had myself studied. The atmosphere at this university helped me to gain self-confidence. I met a number of blacks there, students and professional people. Slowly I became aware of the situation of black people in South Africa. But I still didn't really know what to do about it.

In 1967 I decided to leave the country. I had just got divorced, and I had no more social or family reasons to stay there. I had made friends in Paris, writers and



painters, and at that time I thought of Paris as paradise. I took a year's leave, which could be extended if necessary, and returned to Paris with the secret intention of staying there for good.

■ *How did you get on with your family between these two trips?*

—Relations were very difficult to begin with. My father sensed that I was cutting loose, and we talked things over. Our relationship was very ambiguous. On the one hand we had very strong family feelings, but as far as politics was concerned, a gulf had opened up between us. We had several fierce arguments before we realized that we had no common ground, politically speaking. So we took a calm, rational decision not to talk about politics any more.

■ *What really triggered your change of heart?*

—I think it was the ideas of Albert Camus. I was in Paris at the time of the Algerian war and all the problems it caused in France, the time when Camus was writing about the *pièdes noirs*, the French settlers in Algeria. I'd started reading Camus before I went to France, and he died a few months after I arrived there. For me his death was a shock that gave an extraordinary significance to his work.

■ *Were you influenced by Sartre?*

—Not much. I read Sartre before I read Camus. Intellectually, I admired Sartre very much. But Camus bowled me over, emotionally and morally. Sartre affected me intellectually, but that was all.

■ *As you describe it, your relationship with Europe at that time was almost as strong as your relationship with South Africa. Was that true of many of your fellow-countrymen?*

—No, only a few of them. I found that there were five or six other young Afrikaner writers who like myself were interested in novels and the theatre and who had also lived in Europe, especially Paris. We hadn't met in Paris, but we got in touch after returning to South Africa. What we experienced was something akin to that "bliss to be alive" the English Romantics had talked about. We were aware of doing something that had never been done before in Afrikaans, where the narrative tradition had always reflected a very conservative nationalism and the usual subjects of literature were the lives of poor whites, drought, agricultural problems. We had had enough of that.

We were condemned by the authorities for writing European-style novels. Sermons were preached against us in the churches. Our books were accused of moral, sexual and religious subversion by the Directorate of Publications. They were

even publicly burned. But we didn't suffer any political persecution, because we all hesitated to take the final step into politics. But while the authorities condemned us, we got an enthusiastic reception from the younger generation, the students, who were as fed up with the older type of literature as we were.

Altogether, though, it was a disturbing time. It wasn't easy to live with the distress of being rejected by our parents' generation. We had grown up as part of a tradition of blind obedience to previous generations, accepting without discussion what had been said in the past.

■ *How far did this conflict go?*

—At that time—it was while I was writing my novel *The Ambassador*—I went so far as to criticize religion, which for Afrikaners is the cornerstone of morality. I became an atheist, rejecting both religion and conventional morality lock, stock and barrel. My parents took this very hard and I was severely criticized. But because there were other writers around who shared my ideas and because we had the support of the younger generation, I didn't feel ostracized. Usually, when the authorities turned against someone, it was disastrous. The victims were crushed. Some turned to drink and became alcoholics. But we had the support of the younger generation, we didn't care what the authorities said. And since they didn't want to alienate an entire generation, they were afraid to go too far. They didn't really know what to do with us.

■ *But at that stage you had still not questioned the idea of racial inequality.*

—No, not really. Sometimes I would dare to drop a phrase into an article or a book to the effect that "We're all equal" or "Things have got to change", but I'd not really thought it through. My critical faculties focused mainly on matters of religion, sex and morality. I think I was afraid to question the foundations of the regime. That was another reason for leaving South Africa.

The most decisive year of my life was 1968. I was in Paris during the events of May, which raised the whole question of





Left and opposite page: two scenes from *A Dry White Season* (1989), a film by Euzhan Palcy based on the novel by André Brink.

the responsibility of the individual towards society and made me ask myself what I as a writer wanted to do in my own society. I realized that it would be too easy to stay on in Paris and enjoy a pleasant life with my friends, criticizing what was happening over 10,000 kilometres away in South Africa. I had to make a commitment, open up a dialogue with my own society. I had to do what the Paris students were trying to do, which was to change society.

I suddenly realized that my African roots were my most precious possession. I wanted to go back, and I knew that it wouldn't be easy. In late 1968 some South African politicians and journalists came to see me in Paris, and they warned me that if I stayed there much longer, it would be impossible for me to return. The authorities knew about everything I had written that year in Paris. Some of my articles had even been published in South Africa, where they had attracted fierce criticism.

■ *So you were still being published in South Africa, in spite of all the restrictions. Was it possible at that time for white people to live freely in South Africa, tainted though it was by racism?*

—I think I benefited from the fact that I was an Afrikaner. It was as though everything had to be kept in the family, that allowances could be made for difficult children. And maybe too because I had never

openly challenged government policy. But I knew at the end of 1968 that if I went back, my writing would in future be politically committed, and that I would really have to step out of line. I knew that there were dangers ahead, but I had made up my mind. It had become very important for me to go back, to write on the spot and to accept full responsibility for my work.

It was a decision that required a lot of reflection. But once I had taken it I never, even in the darkest days of the 1970s, had any doubt that it was the right one.

■ *Why did you take that decision? Was it because you felt that, as a writer, you were getting cut off from your source of inspiration, from the daily life of the land and its people?*

—Very much so. In deciding to go back, I wanted to use all the South African material I could, but above all I wanted to find out new things. For the first time in my life, I was fascinated by Africa. I wanted to explore the land, its history, its geography, the people. . . . For the first time I was seeing it as my own country, and I wanted to learn all I could about it.

I had no sooner got back than I found myself in trouble with the authorities over some university lectures I gave. The first novel I published after my return was *Looking on Darkness*, which was also the

first book in which I openly criticized the country's political system. I questioned the laws on racial segregation and the ban on marriage between blacks and whites. It was the first novel in Afrikaans to be banned. Until then only English-language writers had been banned. It was an extraordinary thing for a member of the Afrikaner family to provoke such a reaction. From then on, however, Afrikaner writers were banned more and more often. The Afrikaner literary establishment was dumbfounded, and raised its voice against the authorities for the first time. The silent consensus that had always existed within the community—you weren't supposed to mix politics and literature, culture was something apart—suddenly dissolved.

With my work banned, I suddenly found that I had lost my audience, because I only wrote in Afrikaans. So I decided to push things further by translating the novel into English, so it could reach a public outside South Africa. I was furious with the authorities for annexing Afrikaner art, culture and history to the ideology of apartheid. I wanted to show that Afrikaner culture was bigger than that, that it had to break free from apartheid, that when apartheid finally disappeared Afrikaner language and culture would continue. From that time on I wrote separate Afrikaans and English versions of my novels; in *A Chain of Voices* I used the languages alternately. Nowadays my readership in South Africa is half Afrikaner and half English-speaking.

■ *Did you have a long-term plan in mind when you returned to South Africa, or did you simply criticize the existing state of things?*

—In those days there was no grassroots movement for an Afrikaner who wanted to become politically involved, as there was later, in the 1980s. The A.N.C. was a banned organization at that time. You felt very much on your own when you wanted

to do something. I wanted to play a part in smashing the inhuman apartheid system. I had some vague idea of replacing it with a democratically-elected government in which blacks and whites would be citizens on an equal footing, with a black-majority government. I knew where I wanted to go, but I didn't know how to get there.

■ *You must have had increasing contact with the black community?*

—Yes. It caused me a lot of problems, but I also made some wonderful discoveries. After *Looking on Darkness* was banned, more and more black people heard about me and came to me for help. So I became increasingly involved in their everyday lives. In human terms it was a unique experience, and it opened up a new world for me. Some of the people who came to see me became very close friends. Through them I began to get a clearer idea of the black experience. But I'd never be so presumptuous as to say that I know what it's like to be black in South Africa.

■ *In A Chain of Voices, you identify with the character of a black slave. That was an audacious thing to do, wasn't it?*

—Yes. I had shared so many close and violent experiences with black people that I wanted to put myself in their place and imagine what they really felt. It was a challenge to me as a writer.

My increasingly close relations with black people, and the growing militancy of the books and articles I published in the 1970s, attracted the attention of the police. I and my family were put under permanent surveillance. We were followed wherever we went, even outside the country. It was hard to take, but I had to accept it since I didn't want to leave the country. My house was searched several times, and my notes, my manuscripts and my mail were confiscated. They even took my typewriters, just to make things difficult for me.



I don't know why the authorities never went further than that. Perhaps it was because my books had been translated worldwide. After the riots that shook the country in 1976, the government was extremely isolated on the world stage. It had a growing need for aid from the Western powers, especially the United Kingdom and the United States. It probably didn't want to take direct action against me. The authorities knew that even governments as conservative as those of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan would not accept overt repression of South African intellectuals.

In the late 1970s I began to meet A.N.C. representatives in various places: London, Ireland, Australia. That was another discovery for me, because although I fully supported the black cause, I still thought of the A.N.C. as a terrorist organization. Making contact with it seemed almost like treason. I've spent all my life crossing frontiers, and this was a very difficult one to cross. Yet when I did cross it, I met remarkable people, warm and rich in experience, people who have taught me most of the things I know.

During the 1980s I deliberately set out to try to explain the policies of the A.N.C. in my articles and essays. The astonishing thing was that I was still allowed to publish these pieces in the newspapers. Some people within the Establishment must have

been starting to think it was time to take a look at these problems, to find out about the A.N.C., the people on the other side. There wasn't any real understanding yet, but there was a curiosity, a desire to know. Perhaps the people who were in power thought that I was so cut off from the Afrikaner community that no-one would be interested in what I said. Then I began to explain why the A.N.C. espoused violence. That led to all kinds of reactions in the press. A chorus of voices called for me to be put in prison.

■ *Which members of the A.N.C. had the biggest personal influence on you?*

—I've never met Nelson Mandela, but he has made a big impression on me from a distance. Someone who spent a long time as a prisoner on Robben Island once told me that Mandela recommended my books to his fellow-detainees. That was the ultimate accolade from my point of view. Obviously, he was one of my heroes.

Among the people who had a big effect on me were Johnny Makatini, an A.N.C. representative I met in Paris, Thabo Mbeki, Barbara Masekela, Kader Asmal, Mac Maharaj, Essop Pahad, Steve Tswete. Then there was the poet Wally Serote to whom I am indebted for the title of *A Dry White Season*. They made a particularly strong impression on me, personally, culturally and politically, because each of them had



suffered violence either in prison or in the guerrilla war, yet they remained very cultivated people with radiant personalities.

The result of my encounters with them was my book *An Act of Terror*, which was an attempt to explore the act of violence *per se*. Are there situations that can only be changed through violence? Writing the book, which took me nearly eight years, was a journey of initiation for me. At first I thought I knew what I wanted to say, but everything changed as I was writing it, largely because of one of the characters, a young woman who appeared halfway through the book and imposed her point of view on me. She simply wouldn't listen to what I was trying to explain to her. She rejected violence completely, and I couldn't find any easy answer to her arguments.

■ *For obvious reasons, the black majority in South Africa has no experience of government. Are you afraid that there might be some anti-democratic backsliding of the kind that has happened in other countries after becoming independent?*

—No. I'm extremely confident about this. The A.N.C. has eighty years' history behind it, an eighty-year tradition of non-racism. All South Africa's communities—black, white, coloureds—are represented in it. They've had plenty of experience of political, as well as cultural and educational, organization. As far as the future is concerned, I am reassured by the movement's experience and its history of tolerance. I know one must be realistic and recognize that there is a younger generation of blacks who have grown up with violence in the streets and whose first reaction will be to use violence to solve whatever problems may arise. But I also believe that the extreme violence South Africa has experienced in the past few years has led more and more of these young people to understand and accept the need for dialogue, reason and compromise.

■ *And yet the world today seems beset by separatist, exclusionist tendencies that are the opposite of the democratic integration you favour.*

—I think that, particularly in the East European countries, this tendency for



countries to split up is a reaction against enforced assimilation. In South Africa, the situation is quite different and the reaction is against enforced segregation. As things stand today we are at a difficult and dangerous stage, but I hope it will not be long before people everywhere understand the need for interdependence, accepting not only the differences between peoples and cultures but also the need to coexist and find common solutions. That's why South Africa is a testing-ground. It is a country with the human potential to achieve this kind of solution and set an example for other countries. But there is also the possibility that everything may go up in smoke.

Personally, I take heart from the example of Namibia, which had the same ethnic mixture and which experienced the same political and racial tensions. When it achieved independence, the different factions found they could still live together and that independence wasn't the end of the world. You must understand too the deep ties that bind Afrikaners to their land. They can't conceive of leaving South Africa. More and more of them are realizing that the only way to stay where they are is to come to terms with the black majority.

■ *Do you believe in the unifying principle of citizenship or in the principle*

*of difference with guarantees for each community?*

—Both are necessary. We need to respect differences of identity, while also finding the common denominators that link everyone so as to promote a South African identity. Some people have suggested federalism, but that risks perpetuating existing divisions. We need to combine the two principles.

Last year—1992—was a sombre year which showed up the divisions within South African society. But now all the South African communities are seeking common ground. I think there's a chance of reaching a solution that won't necessarily be a panacea for all ills but that will be a step forward. It might take the form of a transitional government. . . . We'll find a way.

■ *Finally, do you think the changing situation in South Africa will affect the style and subject-matter of your writing?*

—Like every writer of my generation, I have been deeply marked by apartheid. Of course that doesn't mean that I needed apartheid to be able to write! With its dismantling—which threatens to be a long-drawn-out process because, sadly, apartheid won't be easily forgotten—I'm starting to feel a new sense of freedom about the subjects I want to explore. Part of that freedom may take the form of filling in gaps in our history, scouting territory that was overlooked or forbidden during the years of apartheid. There won't be any further need for fiction writers like myself to be overtly political and to explain the A.N.C.'s policies, because now the A.N.C. can do that for itself. So I'll be able to concentrate more fully on the experiences of individuals, which have in fact always interested me more than the political or ideological side of things. As for my style, I already tried my hand at writing what one might call an "entertainment" in 1985, with *Adamastor*. In *On the Contrary*, which will be published in English shortly, I have made my first attempt to correct the historical record and fill in a gap, and I think there's rather more humour in it than in my earlier writings. In forthcoming novels I shall be trying to get more and more of an imaginative grasp on reality, to invent history. ■



# EDITORIAL BY BAHGAT ELNADI AND ADEL RIFAAT

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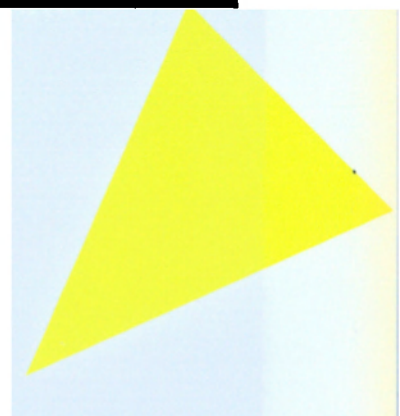
The Western world today may be rediscovering something that Asia and Africa have never lost sight of—the importance of gesture and rhythm in the lives of individuals and communities. Natural, functional and ritualistic gestures, and biological, seasonal and cosmic rhythms may, unbeknown to us, set the tempo of our relationship with the world around us and with ourselves. In anthropology and the history of religions, in art, dance and poetry, these ideas are beginning to regain their long-lost central place.

In the last 200 years, industrial society has asserted the primacy of the intellect over the body and of reason over intuition. Human beings have had to adapt to time as measured by the clock rather than to biological time, to the requirements of machines rather than to those of nature. They may as a result have acquired an impressive mastery of the material world, but they have also in many cases become gradually alienated from their bodies, from their environment and from other people.

It is perhaps because our societies have gone too far in this direction that we are today witnessing a reaction, in the form of types of individual or collective behaviour which, however different or even contradictory they may be, are all rooted in a search for the values of the body and of nature or in nostalgia for a lost sense of community and for collective ritual experiences on a grand scale. All these phenomena—which include the vogue for physical exercise and sport, the practice of yoga, zen and meditation, the popularity of dance music with a strong beat, mammoth concerts attended by many thousands of spectators—may be seen as signs of a desire for a less abstract, less disembodied, less individualistic world.

Some commentators think that this trend has an even wider and more fundamental significance. They see it as a return to something very basic to human life, and believe that gesture and rhythm may give us a unique glimpse of certain essential truths, of a primordial wisdom reconciling nature and culture, the sacred and the profane, the human being and the universe.

Opinion has long been divided between those who maintain that the origins of society are of a historical, social and cultural order, and those who believe in a transcendental, spiritual explanation. This debate is far from over. We hope to make a useful contribution to it in this issue by giving a hearing to some original ideas about gesture, rhythm and the sacred. ■



**The new-born baby enjoys an extraordinary moment of union with its mother. All later spiritual experience may spring from the memory of that primal state**



# **The baby and the saint**

*by Varenka Marc*

**A**T the beginning of its life outside the womb, a baby exists in what I would call a “state of being”. It is its heart, its breathing; it is merged with its mother. From this initial state it derives a basic sense of security and experiences what may be described as a spiritual condition which enables its mind to live, free from all thought, feeling and imagination. If, much later, during its adult life, its balance is threatened, then it calls on this basic sense of security.

The English paediatrician and psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott, who was consulted by more than 60,000 mothers and babies during his long career, showed how far the baby “is” its mother and how vital it is for the baby that its mother is also it. As a result of “empathy”, a kind of

healthy “madness” that the mother experiences around the third month before the birth and that continues until several weeks after it, the mother is under the illusion that she and her new-born child are one and the same. The empathy is expressed physiologically by an increase in the level of progesterone in the body. The baby delivers the mother from this condition when it passes from a state of absolute dependence to one of relative dependence.

The state of empathy is so profound that when a mother loses her baby before the baby has liberated her from it, she remains a prisoner of it and is only able to mourn her lost child when another child has taken its place within her body.

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**VARENKA MARC**

is a French child psychoanalyst working mainly in the field of autism.



## BODY CONTACT BETWEEN MOTHER AND CHILD

In this state in which the baby is its mother, and vice versa, they form a single being and at this stage no thoughts, feelings or images come between them. "The fundamental relationship . . . is the mother-child dyad at the beginning of existence," wrote the Indian psychoanalyst Sudhir Kakar, echoing Winnicott.

When I think of the child's spiritual dimension, I am thinking of this original (or unitary) state in which it is its mother and, through her, the entire universe. This is the archaic state that is rediscovered and transcended by the mystic, whose asceticism consists of "leading the spirit into the heart" by prayer. In his book *Der Zenweg* ("The Way of Zen"), Eugene Herrigel writes about the state of "satori" (illumination) as follows: "Perhaps this mode of contemplation is the reconstitution of a form of spontaneous childhood behaviour. In a conversation I once had with him, the Zen master Taisen Deshimaru drew a parallel between the state of 'satori' and certain very early childhood experiences in which, he said, in a state of rapt concentration characterized by astonishing subjectivity and power, one sees, one lives, one holds and is held at the same time. Isn't that how little children play?"

The French psychiatrist and paediatrician Françoise Dolto believed that "The sophisticated way of life in Western societies is too unnatural and leads to brutal disruptions in the

mother-baby dyad, and these disruptions cause suffering. For it has been impossible for a real and healthy separation to take place."

Two-thirds of children in industrialized societies no longer have a family life. They are socialized in crèches or with child-minders from when they are two months old. The separation brings suffering and makes it impossible for them to achieve a healthy social life. The increase in the number of suicides among young people, drug addiction and delinquency may to a large extent be due to these premature separations which take place before sufficient time has elapsed for attachment to develop. "This is one of the causes of psychosis in children today," Françoise Dolto wrote. "Each child has a genetic capital which enables it, or not, as the case may be, to endure separations which have not been prepared for or mediatized by speech or by rhythmic gestures such as breast feeding, rocking or carrying."

Breast feeding extends into the world outside the womb a liquid bond with the inside of the mother's body, a bond close to that the baby had with its placenta inside the uterus. Rhythmic rocking to and fro is a continuation of the movements that the child experienced before it was born. As for the baby's pressure against its mother's body, it reminds the child of the reassuring pressure of the uterus (that perfect container lost at birth), and enables it to rediscover the rhythms of its mother's breathing and heartbeat. This rhythmic continuity ensures "continuity of being".

Bonding through looking.



## The metrics of the world

Nature is a symphony; everything in it is cadence and measure; and one might almost say that God made the world in verse.

VICTOR HUGO  
*Tas de pierres* (1851-1853)

Françoise Dolto believed that early childhood disturbances today are the result of a lack of the structuring provided by body-to-body contact with the mother. “In the past, a child found the rhythm of this pulsatory existence whenever it wanted to. When it was carried and breast-fed by its mother, the vibrations of its mother’s voice reached as far as its stomach. If a mother talks to her baby while breast-feeding it, the vibrations of her voice are carried by the warm liquid current which enters the baby and deposits within its body a linguistic inscription of love. . . .” Surely this sense of bonding is being lost today because of disruptions in the continuity of corporal rhythms.

### RHYTHM AND PRAYER

Contemplatives use rhythm to induce bonding. For some years I worked with a number of Christian contemplative communities (Carmelites, Benedictines, Dominicans, Poor Clares and Franciscans) for whom the important moments in the contemplative life came during the communal practice of sung prayers. Singing is important

in these orders not so much because of the content of the texts as because of the rhythmic sharing of the chant.

This rhythmic chanting, which requires the participants to breathe in unison, reminded me in some ways—making allowances for the different degrees of intensity of the physical commitment—of the *ziker* (or *dbiker*), the prayers of the Sufi mystics of Afghanistan which I have also witnessed. During these prayer sessions, the body is shaken by the rhythm and its acceleration until the person loses consciousness. The combined rhythm of heartbeats and breathing banish thought and only the spirit at the centre of the heart is left. During the ritual dancing of the whirling dervishes in Istanbul and Konya the dancers mime the movement of the planet through their gyrations and thus identify themselves with the cosmos through rhythm.

In all these ascetic practices, the purpose and effect of rhythm are to lead the mind back to the heart and, I think, thus to rediscover an original state in which one “is”, like a new-born baby, the heart and breathing closest to what Winnicott called the “true self” which, he wrote, “comes from the aliveness of the body tissues and the working of body-functions, including the heart’s action and breathing.” The new-born baby becomes incarnate through the heart and breathing, whereas the mystic, through a deliberate act of supreme incarnation, returns to the primal unity.

Psychoanalysts such as Wilfred Bion, D.W. Winnicott, Marion Milner and Françoise Dolto who have explored the origin of the formation of the psyche are undoubtedly familiar with mystical states. In their writings we find the “oceanic spheres” in which the baby finds itself, the per-



A mother belonging to Thailand’s Mon people carries her baby on her back.





meability of thought and the comprehension of the newborn baby's state of mind. Perhaps this primal "oceanism", this unitary place, is where Jungian archetypes are formed—the pre-images that make possible the emergence of forms and the birth of the imagination.

All babies—boys or girls—are female until the third month of their growth *in utero* and the male sex emerges from the single female sex after ten to twelve weeks of foetal life. Consequently, any being is initially feminine. "The female element," writes Sudhir Kakar, "is that which establishes the simplest and most fundamental experience, that of being."

As someone who works with mothers and their babies and with autistic young people, I wanted to meet the Malangs (Sufi mystics) of Afghanistan. I felt that an encounter with them might teach me more about the origins of the formation of psychism. I thought the Sufi holy men were akin to the holy men of the Russian Orthodox church, inhabited continually by the prayer of the heart. I met a Malang on the great northern plain on the road to Samarkand, not far from Kunduz and the border with Uzbekistan. As he chanted interminably, he rocked backwards and forwards, seemingly oblivious to the world, while answering questions about practical and spiritual matters put to him by villagers, passing

nomads, and even Afghan dignitaries who had come to consult him for political reasons.

All these mystics seem to be in a state of oneness in which the difference between I and thou is transcended and in which one person for an instant becomes another. This is very similar to the state shared by the new-born baby and its mother! It is the Oneness that the ninth-century Muslim mystic Hallaj expressed in these words:

*Thy image is in my eye  
Thy invocation in my mouth  
Thy dwelling in my heart  
Where then canst Thou be absent?*

From these observations which locate the origin of all spiritual experience in babyhood, a state whose traces we bear, as if forgotten, deep within ourselves, we may conclude that such experience belongs potentially to all, that it is neither unreal nor magical nor mysterious, and that it binds us all to each other and to the universe.

But I should hasten to add that, if human affairs are to prosper, it would be better not to confuse the baby's state of being with the mystic's state of being. The French theologian Olivier Clément has encapsulated the similarity and the difference in these words: "Children sleep as saints pray." ■

**Young Kalou Rimpotche has been enthroned as the reincarnation of a Tibetan spiritual leader of the same name who died in 1989. Above, he gives his blessing to a monk in a monastery near Darjeeling (India).**

# The heartbeat of day and night

by Ysé Tardan-Masquelier

The connection between natural rhythms and sacred gestures is a common factor in world religions



**T**HE soul, before giving itself to the body, hearkened unto the divine harmony. As a result, after it has entered the body, whenever it hears the melodies which best preserve traces of the divine harmony, it greets them and is reminded of the divine harmony. The soul is drawn towards that harmony, responds to it and participates in it as far as it is possible to participate in it.<sup>1</sup> This quotation from the Syrian philosopher Iamblichus (c. 250-c. 330) is an apt starting point from which to consider the place of religion within the vast context of the relationship between rhythm and culture. Earlier, Plato, when discussing poetic inspiration, had spoken of the “dance of the soul”.<sup>2</sup> Once the soul becomes incarnate, he believed, its “dance” is paralleled by a “dance of the body” based on the natural pulsations on which religions confer a sacred character.

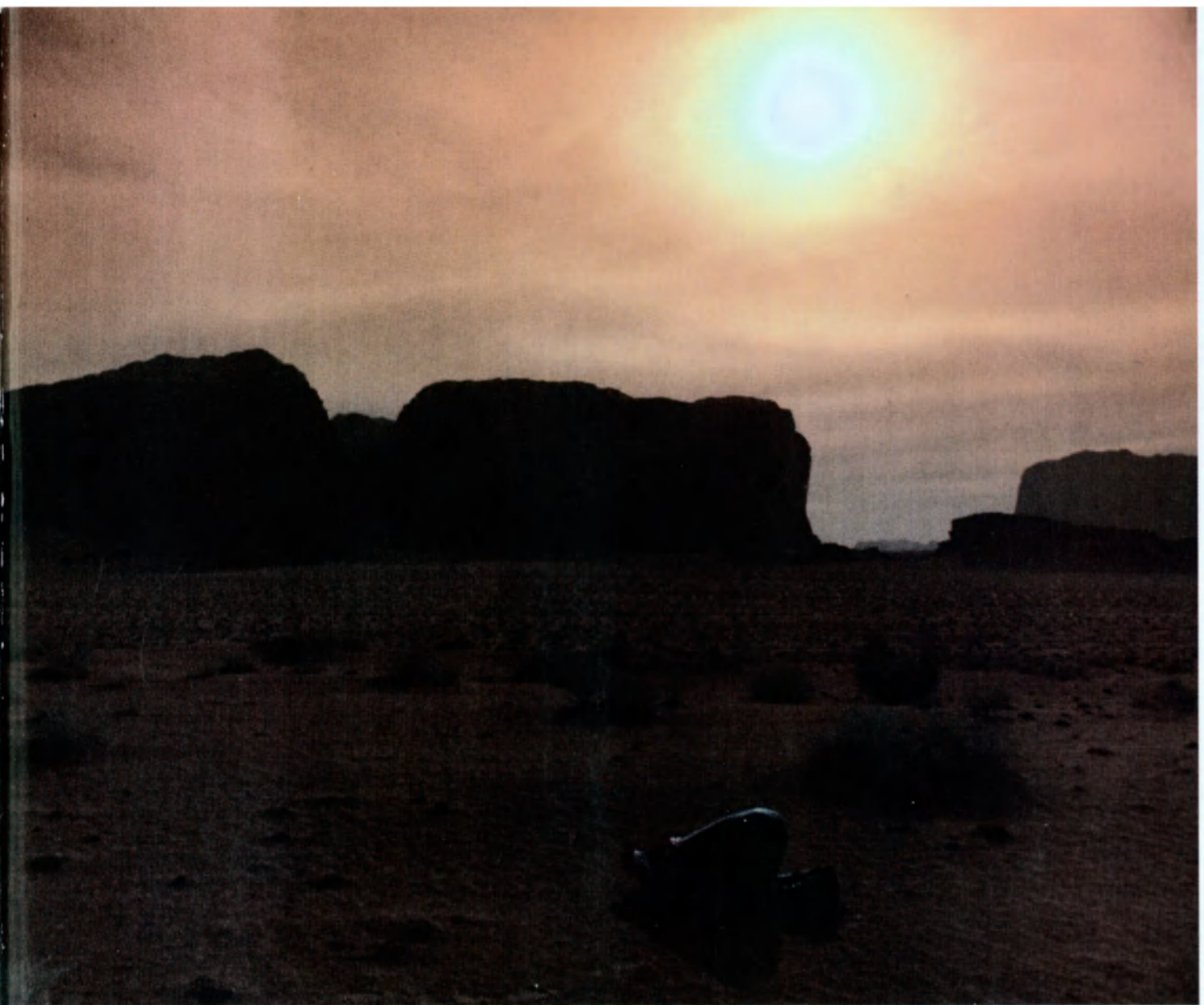
It is tempting for us in the modern world to believe that biological rhythms, by tending to induce calm, regularity or intense excitement, create a feeling of communion with supernatural reality, but Iamblichus, a spiritual heir of Pythagoras and the mystery cults, says precisely the opposite. In his view, the “dance of the body” does no more than reproduce the “dance of the soul”. Body rhythms owe their existence to the innate presence of an all-pervading energy known to the Greeks as “harmony”.

## SAYING IT WITH GESTURES

The words “rhythm” and “harmony” apparently derive from a common Indo-European root. The basic idea is that of a correlation of parts that can produce an organic whole. That is why the word “rhythm”, before taking on in Plato’s time the meaning familiar to us today, included the notion of “form”, of a modifiable pattern capable of moving from one state to another, but subject to defined measures and categories of movement.<sup>3</sup> Dance immediately comes to mind, but it is also worth looking at another, etymologically related term, the Sanskrit word *rita*, which designates a harmonious set of attitudes or gestures that are meant to maintain or recreate the order of the world, the primordial organization of reality intended by the divine. Close to *rita* is the word *ritu*, which means instant, season, moment of transition. Religions have always flourished in that area between







rhythm and rite, between the vibration that denotes the presence of life and the sacralization of life through gestures ordained by religion.

In classical China, for example, when a son performed a series of formalized little jumps as a sign of mourning for his father, he was not only expressing his grief through a cathartic and gestural rite, but also miming death and transition, since jumping, with its connotation of discontinuity, symbolized the point of separation between two states and two worlds. He actualized separation, representing it in a ceremonial context which enabled him to come to terms with it and make it psychologically and socially acceptable.

Another important word is “gesture”, which is found in the Romance languages and comes from the Latin *gerere*, meaning to act or to accomplish. Religious gestures originate in habitual acts, in the alternation of night and day, or even in simpler phenomena such as breathing or the beating of the heart, but they also have a broader dimension bound up with myth and the cultural community. It is possible to detect in French expressions like *chanson de geste* and *la geste des Francs* a highly specific usage of the word *geste*

(with a change in gender) whereby the religious gesture is given the character of a great deed, a transhistorical model. Without this symbolization, which distinguishes them from other human actions, religious gestures would lose their force.

The same is true of the trance, on which some of the oldest social rituals are based. The trance manifests itself clinically by spasmodic movements that may either be spontaneous or be brought on by cultural stimuli such as music, lights, or toxic substances. Generally speaking, such movements might be interpreted by an inexperienced observer as pathological manifestations—and outlets—of unbearable social pressures, as phenomena accompanying a form of possession. What makes trance a specifically religious experience is the fact that it is a borderline state between life and death, between the human and the non-human, between wisdom and madness.

“Rhythm”, “gesture” and “trance” all imply the notion of a transition from a natural condition whose pace is set by the norms which usually regulate human life to a “different” situation. Such a transition can be obtained only if these norms are

Evening prayer in Jordan.



A dramatic moment during the Festival of Our Lady of Guadalupe, in Mexico.

diverted towards other goals: ecstasy, therapy, fusion with cosmic forces or communion with a deity. This transition from natural rhythms to sacred gestures gives rise to tension between two poles—the pole of a biological existence that has not yet been given symbolic expression, and the pole of a life regarded as spiritual because it gives meaning to the culture as a whole. Human beings deliberately impose order on the apparently haphazard nature of cycles that are natural to them: they regulate their breathing or observe the beating of their hearts so these can best express “the trace of divine harmony”.<sup>4</sup> Biological life thus ceases to be something profane and insignificant and becomes a vehicle for the sacred. Most initiation rites aimed at giving the neophyte a “second birth” are specifically based on this notion.

### BREATHING CONTROL AND MEDITATION

Breathing is the universal intermediary between the body and culture. In virtually all traditions it serves as the *prima materia*, in the alchemical sense of the term,<sup>5</sup> for prayer, meditation and chanting. In human beings, it is a reminder of the primordial energy, which is often imagined as a breath instilled in them by one or more divine creators at the beginning of the world. As it is the most spontaneous and most necessary of acts, it carries with it a very wide range of associations, particularly numerous in some cultures.

One thinks of yoga, which is primarily a

breathing discipline and only secondarily a concerted series of postural exercises. In yoga, control of breathing is not an end in itself but a means of lulling physiological functions, characterized by an extreme slowing down of the respiratory cycle and by prolonged immobility. Agitation and distraction are states in which the vegetative mechanisms remain below the level of consciousness. Calm and concentration, on the other hand, encourage awareness of breathing as a gift of life, of the connection between respiratory rhythm and the emotions, and of the great value of that function, which is both automatic and deliberate.

The yogi works on two levels simultaneously—the immediate, somatic level, and a more subtle level of archetypes and representations. Yoga becomes truly effective when it gives its practitioners the means to “work their way up” from reflex pulsations to the subtle systems which supply them with energy. Breathing, by its continuous presence and extreme flexibility, serves as a “golden thread” leading from one level to another.

In another cultural context, the “Jesus prayer”, a remarkable practice of the Eastern Orthodox Church, also comes to mind. This spiritual exercise, which was formalized by three major theologians (St. Nicephorus the Hesychast,<sup>6</sup> Gregory of Sinai and St. Gregory Palamas) in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, is of very ancient origin. It has something in common with the

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## Cosmic rhythms

In the primitive and archaic religions . . . the sacred calendar proves to be the “eternal return” of a limited number of divine gesta. . . . The eternal repetition of paradigmatic gestures and the eternal recovery of the same mythical time of origin, sanctified by the gods, in no sense implies a pessimistic vision of life. On the contrary, it is by virtue of this eternal return to the sources of the sacred and the real that human existence appears to be saved from nothingness and death.

The perspective changes completely when the sense of the *religiousness of the cosmos becomes lost*. . . . The gods are no longer accessible through the cosmic rhythms. The religious meaning of the repetition of paradigmatic gestures is forgotten. . . . *When it is desacralized, cyclic time becomes terrifying; it is seen as a circle forever turning on itself, repeating itself to infinity.*

MIRCEA ELIADE

*The Sacred and the Profane*, translated from the French by Willard R. Trask © 1959 by Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

thinking of the Desert Fathers, who believed that the invocation of the Saviour against the forces of evil around or within them was a sovereign remedy. Down the centuries there has been a constant reinforcement of the close link between the force released by utterance of the Holy Name, the Spirit inherent in it, the state of meditation sustained by controlled breathing, and access to a life of perpetual communion with God. All these themes—the motion of the Spirit, the invocation of the Name, the transition from energy to meaning in the Word, the attaining of deconditioned states of consciousness—live under the same symbolic roof, whether it be yoga, Muslim Sufism or Christian wisdom.

### THE HIDDEN WORKINGS OF THE HEART

Like breathing, the heart-beat has a marked effect on the tempo of life, and, like it, can within certain limits be modified, unintentionally or intentionally. So in spiritual experience the “heart” is often seen as the symbolic seat of a divine life granted to the individual, and the “centre of the heart” as the innermost recess from which love and prayer spring forth. Thus the Pseudo-

Symeon, another hesychast master, explains: “As soon as the spirit has found the place of the heart, it suddenly sees what it has never seen before. It sees the air that is within the heart, it sees itself as completely luminous and full of discernment.”

A similar inspiration—due perhaps to historical influences—guides the Muslim practice of *dhikr*, a continuous recitation of the name of God based on the rhythm of the heartbeat, which enjoins the worshipper to “gather” himself into the centre of his breast and to coordinate the various phases of breathing with rhythmical invocation. Superior to the “vocal *dhikr*” or the “*dhikr* with the tongue” is the “internal *dhikr*” or “*dhikr* practised in the heart”, for “the heart is the seat of Faith”, “the mine of secrets” and “the source of enlightenment”.<sup>7</sup>

In the West, such disciplines must have been practised in medieval monasteries, and were perhaps still practised in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to judge from St. Ignatius of Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises*. In the calm of the cloisters, sheltered from the elements, it was customary to practise *lectio divina*, that is a reading aloud, or sometimes a murmuring, of the scriptures. This ritual activity was modelled on the rhythm of breathing and a regular pattern imposed by taking several paces in the direction of each of the four cardinal points. It was less a “reading with the eyes” than something that came from the heart, as can be seen from the fact that the same word was used to denote reading as such and reciting by heart. At that time the aim was probably for the whole body to take part in spiritual life. Putting one foot in front of the other while communing with nature was in itself a form of meditation: in this respect St. Francis of Assisi perhaps had something in common with Gandhi, the source of whose thinking was a prayer of the heart encouraged by long silent peregrinations.

This broader context should also include psychic life—the vibration of the emotions and of the principal human feeling, love, whose seat is in the hidden workings of the heart. Diastole and systole, like breathing in and breathing out, show life

Food and incense are offered to the Buddha in a Chinese monastery.





In this painting from an ancient Egyptian tomb, the god of dry air (Shu) is shown supporting the body of Nut the sky-goddess, as it arches above him.

to be the result of two consistently polar movements that both exclude and attract each other, creating a complex pulsation that expresses itself in emotional instability. When humans really grasp what occurs in that “place of the heart” they can also feel the heart of the world beating in it, as one of the Upanishads suggests with wonderful intuition: “That space within the heart is as immense as the space without: it is there that all worlds are to be found—heaven and earth, fire and wind, sun, stars, moon and lightning, everything.”<sup>5</sup>

It would seem, then, that the Hindu notion of a cyclical creation proceeding by successive dilations and contractions is the macrocosmic extension of a physiological reality that has taken on a symbolic significance.

### DAY AND NIGHT

Circadian rhythms also play an important part in religions, and the light/darkness polarity in cultural dynamics. Thus, the Egyptian Pharaoh is depicted with his legs firmly planted on the earth and his arms raised skywards, holding aloft the belly of the starry Night, through which the sun travels to be born again at dawn. His body's perfectly vertical posture makes him the mediator between the earth and the night sky. The meaning of this archetypal gesture, represented on many tombs in the Valley of the Kings, is that it joins the poles to ensure the birth of a new day. It is easy to understand why this image should have played such an important role in funerary art, since it expresses in mythical language a belief in a certain form of rebirth and, perhaps, immortality.

Elsewhere, the alternation of day and night punctuates the various stages of creation. The best-attested example is that of *Genesis* in the Bible, where each “night” marks a further descent into the *prima materia* from which the following day will be drawn forth, where each “day” marks the emergence from primordial chaos, of some aspect of the real world. Whereas the notion of concentration, of withdrawal into oneself, is connected with “night”, “day” is a time of creative expansion and propagation. It is also during the day that gestures are performed: “separating”, “calling”, “allotting a place”, “blessing”, “saying”, “shaping”, “giving” and so on are all gestural models for prophetic action or the working of miracles. The daytime world is, then, a world of gesture. It marks time and space, in their specifically human dimension, with acts that will become rituals, acts whose ultimate purpose will be to establish or re-establish a harmony or a symphonic organization of reality. Just as roots in the Hebrew language always express an action and are each given a number, so there is, for each gesture, an internal rhythm which the term denoting it brings out to the listener in the form of meaningful sound vibration.

By going back to the cosmogonies contained in sacred texts, we can find the underlying elements of extremely diverse sets of gestures to which cultures allot religious functions. Going into a trance, singing, dancing or playing a musical instrument are outward and visible representations of a more basic, more comprehensive and therefore more elusive insight: to create is to impose a rhythm, or to rediscover, like the poet, the metric seed of the cosmos. ■

1 Iamblichus, *On the Egyptian Mysteries*, III, 9.  
 2 Plato, *Ion*, 533d-536c.  
 3 For further details, see Emile Benveniste, “La notion de rythme et son expression linguistique”, in *Problèmes de linguistique générale I*, pp. 327-35. The root concerned is the root Ri, the form of which changes according to the prefix or suffix attached to it. It becomes aR, as in “art” or “arm”, oR as in “order”, and so on. See Jean Varenne, “L’art, le rite et l’articulation”, in *Revue Française de Yoga*, No 38, September 1989, pp. 3-15.  
 4 Iamblichus.  
 5 In alchemy, the *prima materia* was identical in all bodies but received its actual form through the addition of qualities expressed by the Aristotelian elements—earth, air, fire and water.  
 6 Hesychasm, a type of Eastern Christian monastic life, whose purpose is to achieve divine quietness (*hesychia*) through the contemplation of God in uninterrupted prayer. Editor  
 7 Quoted by Jean Gouillard, *Petite philologie de la prière du cœur*, pp. 234-48, in an appendix on the *dhikar*, “Une technique soufie de la prière du cœur”.  
 8 *Chandogya Upanishad*, 8, 1-2.



# Marcel Jousse, theorist of gesture

**T**HE French thinker Marcel Jousse (1886-1961) was a pupil of the neurologist Pierre Janet and the noted sociologists Lucien Lévy-Bruhl and Marcel Mauss. In 1924 he published *Le Style oral rythmique et mnémotechnique chez les verbo-moteurs*,<sup>1</sup> a work that provided the basis for a new approach to the study of oral literature.

Born to an illiterate peasant family in the Sarthe, an area of France in which oral traditions were still very much alive, Jousse studied Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic as a young man. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1912, and entered the Jesuit novitiate in the following year.

While lecturing at the School of Anthropology in Paris from 1932 to 1950, he carried out experimental research into the origins of gesture and language, and devised a terminology of his own to express his concepts.

Jousse's studies, which centred on his belief in the historical reality of Jesus, focused largely on the world of the Bible. His "gestural anthropology", which predated Claude Lévi-Strauss's revolutionary 1958 work *L'Anthropologie structurale* ("Structural Anthropology"), was based on three fundamental laws: rhythmic imitation, formula-dependence and bilateralism.

Jousse believed that the human mind and body are linked, forming a single, composite being, and that the universe in which the individual exists is a place of continuous interaction. Taking as his

starting point Aristotle's statement that "Man is the most imitative of creatures; it is through imitation that he acquires knowledge",<sup>2</sup> Jousse elaborated a comprehensive "mechanism" of rhythmic imitative gestures copied by human beings from their surroundings. Of this concept of rhythmic imitation, he wrote that people are "Naturally imitative, make themselves a mirror of the real world around them and echo its interactions. Mimicking gesture, they seek to express themselves in a spontaneous and universal language of gesture. When they mimic sound . . . the oral language they utter is of an ethnic and particularized nature."<sup>3</sup>

Jousse went on to discuss the link between corporal and oral expression, insofar as simple language structures follow the same pattern as the law of rhythmic imitation. Herein lies the root of thought. This physical link between thought and action is the basis of a process of stereotyping of gestures and abstraction of verbal combinations that underlies the development of language, mentalities and cultures. This process is formula-dependence: "Human gestures, whether conscious or unconscious, tend to be repeated, and naturally lead to a form of stereotyping that facilitates expression."<sup>4</sup>

The premise of Jousse's third law, bilateralism, is the symmetrical structure of the human body which, he believed, shapes all forms of human expression, mental and physical. "And human beings were to divide up the world as their bilateral structure dictated," he wrote. "They created a 'right' and a 'left', an 'in front' and a 'behind', an 'above' and a 'below'. With themselves, the people responsible for the division, in the centre."<sup>5</sup>

Marcel Jousse's investigations have been influential, particularly in the field of ethnolinguistics, and have opened up new lines of scientific enquiry. Although overshadowed for a time by the rise of structuralism in the human sciences, his work is attracting renewed attention, notably through its application to anthropology and in education. ■



1 *The Oral Style*, translated by Edgard Sienaeert and Richard Whitaker. Garland Publishing, Inc., New York and London, 1990.

2 Aristotle, *The Poetics*, IV, 2.

3 Marcel Jousse, *L'Anthropologie du geste*, Gallimard publishers, Paris, p. 43.

4 *Op. cit.*, p. 329.

5 *Op. cit.*, p. 203.



# Africa: the power of speech

by Amadou Hampâté Bâ

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Texts chosen by H el ene Heckmann.

**“Listen,” says old Africa.  
“Everything speaks. Everything  
is speech. Everything around us  
imparts a mysterious enriching  
state of being. Learn to listen  
to silence, and you will discover  
that it is music.”**

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## A life-force

The Bambara tradition of the Komo' teaches that the Word, Kuma, is a fundamental force emanating from the Supreme Being himself—Maa Ngala, creator of all things. It is the instrument of creation: “That which Maa Ngala says, is!” proclaims the cantor—the singing priest—of the god Komo.

Maa Ngala, it is taught, deposited in Maa the three potentialities of ability, willing and knowing. But all the forces to which he is the heir lie dumb within him. They are static, till speech comes and sets them into motion. Then, vivified by the divine Word, they begin to vibrate. At a first stage they become thoughts, at a second sound, and at a third words.

In the same way, since speech is the externalization of the vibrations of forces, every manifestation of a force in any form whatever is to be regarded as its speech. That is why everything in the universe speaks: everything is speech that has taken on body and shape.

Let me point out, though, that at this level the terms “speaking” and “listening” refer to realities far more vast than those we usually attribute to them. It is said: “The speech of Maa Ngala is seen, is heard, is smelled, is tasted, is touched.” It is a total perception, a knowing in which the entire being is engaged.

If speech is strength, that is because it creates a bond of coming-and-going which generates movement and rhythm and therefore life and action. This movement to and fro is symbolized by the weaver’s feet going up and down, as we shall see later.

In the image of Maa Ngala’s speech, of which





Amadou Hampâté Bâ in Paris in 1981.

it is an echo, human speech sets latent forces into motion. They are activated and aroused by speech—just as a man gets up, or turns, at the sound of his name.

Speech may create peace, as it may destroy it. It is like fire. One ill-advised word may start a war just as one blazing twig may touch off a great conflagration. According to a Malian adage: “What puts a thing into condition [that is, arranges it, disposes it favourably]? Speech. What damages a thing? Speech. What keeps a thing as it is? Speech.”

Tradition, then, confers on Kuma, the Word, not only creative power but a double function of saving and destroying. That is why speech, speech above all, is the great active agent in African magic.

But for spoken words to produce their full effect they must be chanted rhythmically, because movement needs rhythm, which is itself based on the secret of numbers. Speech must reproduce the to-and-fro that is the essence of rhythm.

In ritual songs and incantatory formulae, therefore, speech is the materialization of cadence. And if it is considered as having the power to act on spirits, that is because its harmony creates movements, movements which generate forces, those forces then acting on spirits which themselves are powers for action.

## The weaver and the blacksmith

In the traditional African society, every artisanal function was linked with an esoteric knowledge transmitted from generation to generation and taking its origin in an initial revelation. The craftsman’s work was sacred because it imitated the work of Maa Ngala and supplemented his creation. Bambara tradition, in fact, teaches that creation is not yet finished and that Maa Ngala, in creating our earth, left things there unfinished so that Maa, his interlocutor, might supplement or modify them with a view to leading nature towards its perfection. The craftsman’s activity in operation was supposed to repeat the mystery of creation. It therefore focused an occult force which one could not approach without respecting certain ritual conditions.

That is why traditional craftsmen accompany their work with ritual chants or sacramental rhythmic words, and their very gestures are considered a language. In fact the gestures of each craft reproduce in a symbolism proper to each one the mystery of the primal creation, which, as I indicated earlier, was bound up with the power of the Word. It is said:

**HÉLÈNE HECKMANN**, of France, a former staff member of the French Senate, is the literary legatee of the late Amadou Hampâté Bâ and has charge of his manuscript archives. Most of the texts published here have been extracted from “The Living Tradition”, a study which appeared in *General History of Africa* (vol. 1), published by UNESCO and Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1981.

The smith forges the Word,  
The weaver weaves it,  
The leather-worker carries it smooth.

Let us take the example of the weaver, whose craft is linked with the symbolism of the creative Word deploying itself in time and space.

A man who is a weaver by caste is the repository of the secrets of the thirty-three pieces that are basic to the loom, each of which has a meaning. Before starting work, the weaver must touch each piece of the loom, pronouncing words or litanies that correspond to the forces of life embodied in them.

The movement of his feet to and fro as they go up and down to work the pedals recalls the original rhythm of the creative Word, linked with the dualism of all things and the law of cycles. His feet are supposed to speak as follows:

*Fonyonko! Fonyonko!* dualism! dualism!

When one goes up the other goes down.

There is the death of the king and the coronation of the prince, the death of the grandfather and the birth of the grandson. . . .

[In Africa, to say that someone is dead, people use the expression: "His feet are in agreement", in other words "they have ceased moving". "For the wise elders," notes Amadou Hampâté Bâ,<sup>2</sup> "life is movement and movement begins with the contradiction of the limbs. . . . Non-contradiction means death." The shuttle, the throwing of which by each hand evokes a need to "let go", is supposed to say: "Life is a constant toing and froing, a permanent gift of self".]

The gestures of the weaver as he operates his loom [like those of the smith or other traditional craftsmen] are creation in action. His words accompanying his gestures are the very song of Life.

As for the smith, he is the repository of the secret of transmutations. He is pre-eminently the Master of Fire. His origin is mythical and in Bambara tradition he is called the First Son of the Earth.

The elements of the smithy are linked to a sexual symbolism, itself the expression or reflection of a cosmic process of creation.

Thus the two round bellows worked by the smith's assistant are likened to the male's two testicles. The air they are filled with is the substance of life, sent through a kind of tube that represents the phallus into the furnace of the forge, this representing the womb where the transforming fire works.

The traditional smith may enter the smithy only after a ritual purifying bath prepared with a decoction of certain leaves or barks or roots of trees chosen according to the day. Then the smith garbs himself in a special way, since he may not penetrate the forge dressed in just any sort of clothes.

Every morning he purifies the smithy by means of special fumigations based on plants he knows of.

These operations over, cleansed of all outside contacts he has had, the smith is in a sacramental state. He has become pure once again and is equivalent to the primordial smith. Only now can he create in imitation of Maa Ngala, by modifying and fashioning matter.

Before beginning work, he invokes the four mother elements of creation (earth, water, air, fire), which are necessarily represented in the forge: there is always a receptacle filled with *water*, *fire* in the furnace, *air* sent by the bellows, and a little pile of *earth* beside the forge.

During his work, he pronounces special



A Dogon weaver (Mali).





A Bambara mask of a fearsome spirit (Mali).

words as he touches each tool. Taking his anvil, which symbolizes feminine receptivity, he says: "I am not Maa Ngala, I am the representative of Maa Ngala. It is he who creates and not I." Then he takes some water or an egg and presents it to the anvil, saying: "Here is your bride-price."

He takes his hammer, which symbolizes the phallus, and strikes the anvil a few times to sensitize it. Communication established, he can begin to work.

The apprentice must not ask questions. He must only look and blow. This is the mute stage of apprenticeship. As he advances in knowledge, he blows in rhythms that are more and more complex, each one having a meaning. During the oral stage of apprenticeship, the master will gradually transmit all his skills to the pupil, training him and correcting him until he acquires mastery. Then, after a liberation ceremony, the new smith may leave his master and set up his own forge. [In most cases he will previously have made a tour of the country to work for other great masters from whom he will have learned not only new techniques but also new practical or occult skills that form part of the great initiatory tradition of the blacksmiths.]

The smith must have knowledge covering a vast sector of life. With his reputation as an occultist, his mastery of the secrets of fire and iron make him the only person entitled to perform circumcision—the grand Master of the Knife in the Komo initiation is always a smith. In addition to all his knowledge of metallurgy, he has a perfect knowledge of the Sons of the womb of the Earth (mineralogy) and the secrets of plants and the bush. He knows what kind of vegetation covers the earth, where it contains a particular metal, and he can detect a lode of gold merely by examining plants and pebbles.

He knows the incantations to the earth and the incantations to plants. Nature being regarded as living and as animated by forces, any act that

1 One of the great initiation schools of the Mande (Mali).

2 Interview in *Jeune Afrique* magazine, Paris (N° 1095, 30 December 1981).

### Word and gesture

The vast category of gestures that accompany the spoken word is based on a highly specific relationship between physical movement and language. People are strongly aware of this, less in themselves (since gestures are often made unconsciously) than in others. . . . We have all noticed how we make gestures while talking on the telephone, thus proving the depth of this association, which goes far beyond a simple speech-function.

The specificity of the relationship also appears, contrariwise, in the fact that to speak without gestures can only be the result of a deliberate and in a more general sense cultural refusal. Appropriate attitudes mark this refusal, as when the arms are held at the sides while certain ritual words are spoken, and, in societies in which it is not considered decent for women to make gestures while they tell stories, the hands are clasped between the thighs.

Although for most of the time the gestures of verbal communication are made in a virtually unconscious manner, the speakers feel that these gestures possess extremely specific functions. They accompany the words and add emphasis to them. They establish or maintain communication (the speech-function). In oral narration (both codified oral literature and stories told spontaneously during conversation), their function is to dramatize (in the etymological sense of the term) and this is highly appreciated by listeners. Sometimes they replace verbal expression totally, either because it is considered unnecessary because of the particularly expressive nature of the gesture, or because it is considered excessive or too dangerous.

Even more profoundly, one might say that gesture and speech are truly complementary; it is as if gestures were felt to be an essential ingredient of communication which could not take place without them.

**GENEVIÈVE CALAME GRIAULE**  
© Geste et Image, IV, 1985

disturbs it must be accompanied by a ritual behaviour designed to save and safeguard its sacred equilibrium, for everything is connected, everything echoes everything else, every action agitates the life-forces and sets up a chain of consequences the repercussions of which are felt by man.

The craft or the traditional function can be said to sculpt man's being. The whole difference between modern education and oral tradition lies there. What is learned at the Western school, useful as it may be, is not always *lived*; whereas the inherited knowledge of oral tradition is embodied in the entire being.

The instruments or tools of a craft give material form to the sacred word; the apprentice's contact with the craft obliges him to live the word with every gesture he makes.

That is why oral tradition taken as a whole cannot be summed up as transmission of stories or of certain kinds of knowledge. It *generates and forms a particular type of man*. One can say that there is the smiths' civilization, the weavers' civilization, the shepherds' civilization, and so on.

Thus the traditional artisan, imitating Maa Ngala, repeating the primal creation by his gestures, used to perform, not work, in the purely economic sense of the word, but a sacred function that brought the fundamental forces of life into play and engaged him in his entire being. In the secrecy of his workshop or his smithy he partook of the renewed mystery of eternal creation. ■

## AMADOU HAMPÂTÉ BÂ,

Malian writer, historian and philosopher, made an outstanding contribution, notably in UNESCO (of whose Executive Board he was a member between 1962 and 1970), to win international recognition for African oral cultures. While he revealed the wealth and values of these cultures, he also drew attention to their precariousness and played an active role in safeguarding them. His manuscript archives, the "Fonds Amadou Hampâté Bâ", is the product of half a century's research into African oral traditions.

He published many books and articles, saving for posterity some fine examples of Peul oral literature including *Koumen* (with Germaine Dieterlen, Mouton, Paris, 1955, out of print), *Kaidara* (co-edited with Lilyan Kesteloot, Belles-Lettres, Collection Classiques Africains, Paris, 1968) and *L'éclat de la Grande Etoile* (the sequel to *Kaidara*, same publishers, Paris, 1974). His story *L'étrange destin de Wangrin* (The Strange Fate of Wangrin; Presses de la Cité, Paris, 1973) was awarded the Grand Prix Littéraire de l'Afrique Noire. His book *Vie et enseignement de Tierno Bokar, le sage de Bandiagara* (The Life and Teaching of Tierno Bokar, the sage of Bandiagara; Seuil, Paris, 1980) is a tribute to his spiritual teacher. The first volume of his memoirs was published in 1991 under the title *Amkoullel l'enfant peul* (Actes-Sud publishers, Arles).

Almost half the documents in the manuscript archives, which cover almost every aspect of the traditional lore of Africa south of the Sahara (history, religions, myths, tales, legends, oral literature, sociology, etc.) have so far been catalogued and transferred to microfiche. When this task is completed, full sets of microfiches will be deposited with the main libraries in France and in Africa and made available to researchers, in accordance with the wishes of Amadou Hampâté Bâ. Meanwhile, those wishing to consult these documents may contact Mme Hélène Heckmann, 10-12 Villa Thoréton, 75015 Paris, France.

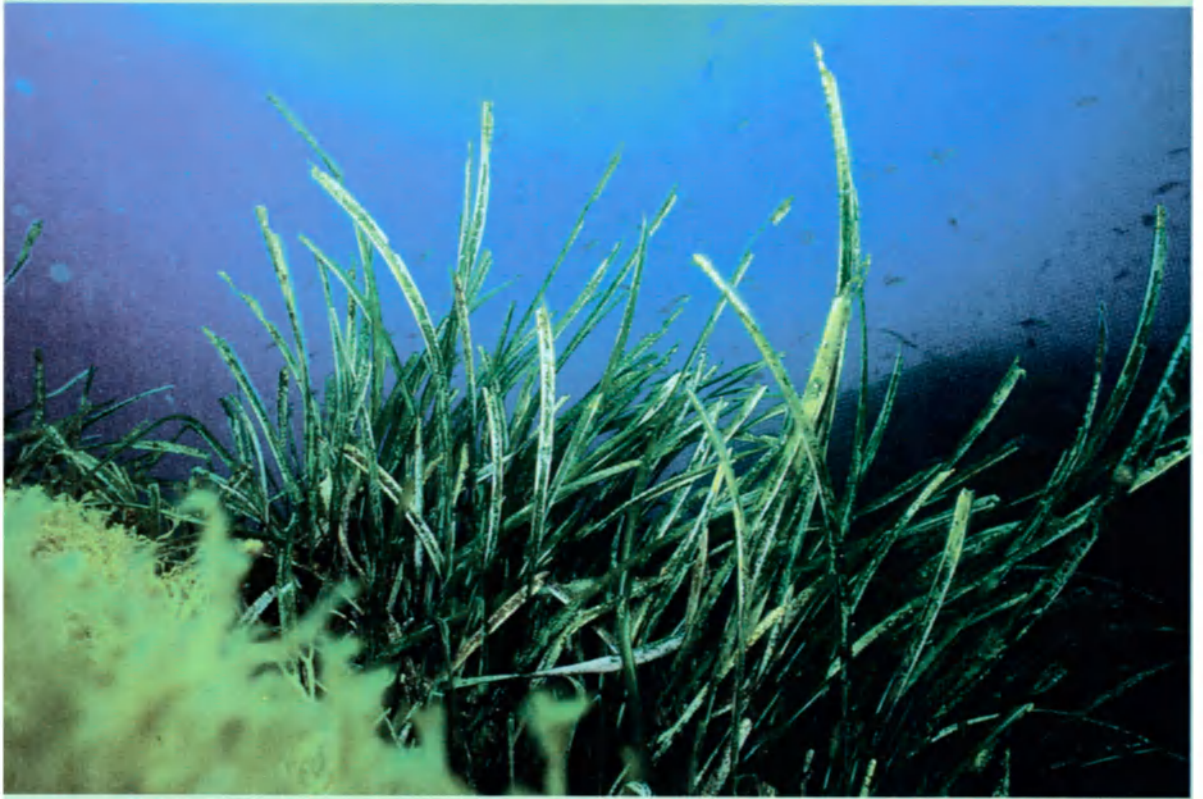
Fishermen on the banks of the River Bani (Mali).





# GREENWATCH

THE UNESCO COURIER — SEPTEMBER 1993



## SAVING THE MEDITERRANEAN

BY FRANCE BEQUETTE

**T**HE Mediterranean, which lies between southern Europe, western Asia and North Africa, is the world's largest inland sea. Created by the continental movements that forced up the Alps, the Mediterranean basin is one of our planet's most geologically unstable areas, subject to earthquakes and flanked by many volcanoes. The waters of the Mediterranean, fed by the Atlantic through the Straits of Gibraltar, are renewed every ninety years. Saltier and warmer than the ocean, the Mediterranean is almost tideless. Of all the world's seas, it has longest

been the scene of human activity. The great civilizations of Egypt, Greece and Rome grew up on its shores.

It has its own characteristic landscapes and vegetation. To the north, there are red rocks studded with agaves and prickly pears surrounding small harbours that shelter brightly-coloured fishing-boats, ancient olive groves, umbrella pines and tall black cypresses, steeply-sloping islands dotted with spotlessly white villages. To the south stretch endless sandy beaches where the Sahara meets the sea. The climate is similar to that of California,

**Posidonia, an aquatic plant that grows in the Mediterranean.**

# SAVING THE MEDITERRANEAN

offering a quality of life that has made the region popular with tourists. The northern shores are warm in summer and mild and damp in winter; to the south the climate is dry and hot.

But the hospitableness of its coastlands, its rich history and a beauty marred only by occasional storms have not been unmixed blessings for the Mediterranean. The cities on its shores have mushroomed, particularly to the south where there has been a population explosion. Cairo now has more than twelve million inhabitants; Alexandria has five million, Algiers 1.5 million and Tripoli 1.2 million. In all, 100 million people now live around the Mediterranean, and the figure is expected to double by the year 2025. In addition, 100 million local holidaymakers and foreign tourists visit the area annually, and that figure is expected to increase to 300 million over the same period.

This human tide brings with it an accumulation of refuse that the Mediterranean countries are unable to cope with. Further pollution is caused by the vehicles that bring in the tourists. There is also pressure on the area's limited water



**A**  
Mediterranean  
monk seal.

**A**  
loggerhead  
turtle.



resources, since most tourists come in summer—the dry season—reducing the amount available for local inhabitants. In Israel, Libya and Malta, intensive water use is threatening total exhaustion of supplies. Furthermore, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) estimates that about 70 per cent of the two billion cubic metres of often severely polluted water from the region's domestic and industrial outfalls is discharged into the sea entirely untreated.

## A TORRENT OF THREATS

The deluge of industrial and domestic waste, oil-tanker spillages, over-building and the tourist flood mean that the Mediterranean is now under serious threat. Its inshore waters are polluted, since, even if waste water is treated, billions of bacteria find their way continually into the sea, threatening bathers with infection. Its coastline is disfigured in many areas by uncontrolled urban sprawl. The advantages of siting factories on the coast so that raw materials can be delivered by sea have been only too well understood by industry; there are now thirty-seven refineries and tanker terminals, thirty-two industrial complexes and thirteen nuclear power stations located on its shores. Twenty per cent of the world's oil traffic passes through the Mediterranean, and the amount of waste oil flushed into it each year is seventeen times the size of the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill in Alaska in 1989. To that figure must be added the sizeable amounts of naturally-occurring bitumen that ooze into its

waters and the fourteen oil-tanker accidents that have occurred in the Mediterranean in the last fifteen years.

In addition to this substantial pollution by hydrocarbons, a great deal of damage is being done on shore in the Mediterranean lands, many of which were thickly forested within historical times. Deforestation, carried out to create farmland, extend cities or provide fuel or ship-building materials, has brought irreparable erosion in its wake. In addition to solids brought by rain, rivers carry down to the sea such pollutants as detergents, pesticides and heavy metals like mercury, zinc or chrome. The Po in Italy, the Ebro in Spain, the Egyptian Nile, the Rhône in France, and other rivers drain off agricultural and industrial waste, in the case of the Rhône alone from a catchment area of 94,604 square kilometres—and there are twenty-nine catchment areas around the Mediterranean!

One direct consequence of this pollution were the "red tides" which affected the Italian coastline from Venice to Ancona in July 1989, covering the beaches in a foul-smelling, glutinous sludge. This phenomenon is caused by eutrophication (a term derived from the Greek word *eutrophos*, literally "well-fed"), a process that occurs when decomposing waste matter uses up the dissolved oxygen in the water, suffocating the local flora and fauna except for invertebrates, plankton, bacteria and tiny fungal growths. The areas most threatened by the phenomenon include the Golfe du Lion, the Lake of Tunis, the bay of Izmir and the Venetian lagoon.



The flora of the Mediterranean faces many dangers, one of them being the destruction of the Posidonia sea-grass meadows that serve as the lungs, larder and nursery of the sea, and where hundreds of marine species reproduce. Jetties and marinas encroaching on their habitat can destroy them, as can pleasure boats, which tear the plants up with their anchors.

Recently another danger has appeared in the form of a "killer" alga, the almost fluorescent green *Caulerpa taxifolia*. Introduced accidentally off Monaco, it has now begun to spread on the sea-bed. It is toxic and has no known predators. No way of eliminating it has yet been found, and it has already spread too widely to be simply pulled up by hand.

The sea's fauna is equally threatened. In the course of an expedition on the *Calypso*, Yves Paccalet, a member of Captain Jacques-Yves Cousteau's team, noted the gradual disappearance of the monk seal, one of the world's twelve most threatened species. There were almost 1,000 monk seals in the Mediterranean in 1980, but their ranks have been decimated by hunters and fishermen and only about eighty are left. The loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*) now only lays its eggs on Greek and Turkish beaches, where they are often trodden underfoot by tourists. The turtles often get entangled in fishing-nets and end up on the menu in local restaurants. Other endangered species include the grouper, the mantis shrimp, the rough pen shell (*Pinna nobilis*) which can grow almost a metre

long, and the date mussel (*Lithophaga lithophaga*), which lives in clefts in the rocks.

#### A PLAN OF ACTION

To deal with this alarming situation, an Action Plan for the Mediterranean has been drawn up on the initiative and under the auspices of UNEP, and it was adopted at Barcelona in 1975. It commits the eighteen countries bordering on the Mediterranean, as well as the other members of the European Economic Community, not only to protect the sea from pollution but also to ensure that coastal development respects the environment. Ismail Sabri Abdalla, an Egyptian economist, and Serge Antoine of France's Ministry of the Environment were commissioned to carry out a forecast of future developments, and their work provided the basis for a "Blue Plan" on future prospects for the area that was published in 1988 under the direction of Michel Batisse, President of the Blue Plan Regional Activity Centre and a former Assistant Director-General (Science) of UNESCO. In 1990 the Mediterranean Environmental Technical Assistance Programme (METAP) was launched jointly by the EEC, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Investment Bank and the World Bank. In 1993 it was succeeded for a further three years by METAP II.

Will this be enough? Michel Batisse thinks that oceanographers have exaggerated the extent of marine pollution. "The sea is polluted, certainly, but only near the



A Mediterranean grouper.

Typical rugged scenery in the Cyclades group of islands (Greece).

coastline. Fifteen kilometres out it's perfectly clean. Oil spills disperse very quickly. It's true that heavy metals are carried in the atmosphere, that natural mercury wells up on the seabed in some places and that sedimentary pollution needs studying. But it is still not proven that the fish are poisonous, even if fishermen are recommended not to eat them at every meal.

"In my view, the fight against erosion, the preservation of water resources, which are too often wasted, and the protection of the coastal scenery are the priority tasks. Rapid population growth on the southern and eastern shores is the big problem. Countries have to support their populations, but how? They are not self-sufficient in food production, so they have to import, and they have neither industrial products nor services to sell in exchange. Algeria and Libya export oil, but it's starting to run out. Their only resource is tourism, but that depends on the coastline not being ruined by uncontrolled construction driven by the search for quick profits." ■

#### FRANCE BEQUETTE

is a Franco-American journalist specializing in environmental questions. Since 1985 she has been associated with the WANAD-UNESCO training programme for African news-agency journalists.





## WORM'S TURN

Could the earthworm *Eiseinia andrei* become modern man's best friend? It eats everything from organic waste to thick cardboard, though not plastic or metals. Its stomach works like a chemical factory in which bacteria manufacture enzymes that enrich its excreta. The result is that the soil it excretes contains twice as much potassium, three times as much magnesium and five times as much nitrogen and phosphoric acid as what it ingests. In other words, it makes a first-rate fertilizer. This has given rise to the idea that worms could be reared to regenerate poor soil, a tempting prospect for Third World countries. French scientists who have been trying it out in Africa and Peru have found that releasing worms into the fields has increased harvests by 130 per cent! ■

## CITIES OF THE FUTURE

According to the World Bank, two billion people will be living in Third World conurbations by the end of the century. The figure will rise to an estimated 2.7 billion by the year 2010 and to 3.5 billion by 2020. Every year, 12 to 15 million families flock to the cities. The populations of many cities in sub-Saharan Africa are doubling or tripling in the space of ten to twenty years. Most of the new city-dwellers will face privation. In 1988, a quarter of them were living in shanty-towns. To reverse the trend, development programmes must provide rural areas with some of the advantages of urban life, such as opportunities for casual work and access to health care. ■

## BEAR NECESSITIES

For a male brown bear, lack of female companionship can be a difficult but not a desperate situation. One bear which had led a bachelor life for seventeen years in the Austrian Alps responded so well to receiving a mate through the good graces of the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) that he is now the head of a family of ten. His example shows that there is still hope for the ten or so bears that remain in the Pyrenean mountain range on the Franco-Spanish border—as long as they are not wiped out by hunters and roadbuilders. ■



## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN GRANADA

An information campaign has been launched over the past school year in Granada (Spain) to teach pupils to know and respect their environment. Nature trails suitable for different age-groups have been set up through the city and its gardens. Each pupil also receives a comic-

strip leaflet and educational material explaining how to separate out different kinds of refuse such as paper, glass and batteries so that they can be recycled. Further information is available from: Aula de Educación ambiental, Granada, Spain (Tel: 22-20-96). ■







## YOUR WORLD IN PHOTOS

Between October 1990 and February 1991, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Canon Inc. held a photographic competition on the theme "Focus on Your World". In all, 32,000 entries were submitted from 144 countries. A selection of 100 of the photos was exhibited in Rio de Janeiro during the Earth Summit in June 1992. To bring these remarkable images of the beauties of nature and the destructive potential of humankind to a wider audience, a book entitled *Your World*, which reproduces 214 of the photos, has been published by Harvill (London, 1992), price \$28. *Hot spring* (left) by Jin Huei Luo (China) won the gold medal in the professional category. ■

## EGYPTIAN MONUMENTS AT RISK

The monuments of Cairo's old city are being threatened by the rising ground-water level. When water penetrates the foundations of a building, it is sucked up by capillary action to a height of four or five metres. The acids in the groundwater, which are increasingly concentrated because of leakage from the city's 100-year-old sewage system, interact with chemicals in the masonry and with the oxygen in the air to form salts which then attack the walls. According to Saïd Zulficar, Deputy Director of UNESCO's World Heritage Centre, the rising water level is partly due to the construction of the Aswan Dam. Before the dam was built, the River Nile received no water during nine months of the year and shrank accordingly. Groundwater levels also

fell. Now, however, the water table is so high that, in Mr. Zulficar's words, "you only have to scratch the ground to reach it." The other problem is that the sewage system was not built to cope with the provision of running water to the houses of the old city. It often overflows and is badly in need of modernization. Meanwhile the rising water table is threatening the 400 historic monuments in the Egyptian capital, as well as monuments as far away as the Temple of Luxor. Nearer to Cairo, the Sphinx has already lost a paw. ■

## RECYCLING PLASTIC BOTTLES

Sixteen hundred million plastic bottles, weighing some 40,000 tons, will be recycled in Europe this year, as a result of a scheme co-ordinated by the Association of European Plastic Manufacturers (AEPM). Launched in October 1992, the plan is gradually being implemented in each of the Association's member countries. The goal is to recycle as many as possible of the 35 billion plastic bottles (total weight 1.7 million tons) used in Europe annually. ■

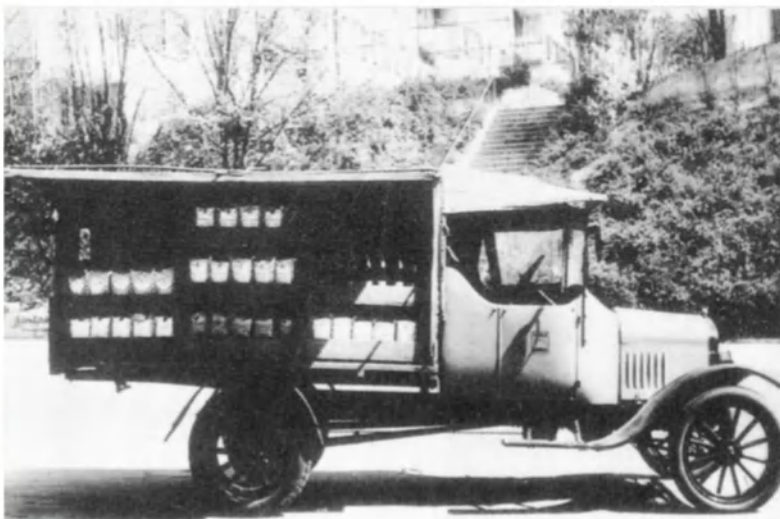


## INITIATIVES



A European kingfisher. Migros chose this endangered species as the emblem of its 1993 campaign for the safeguard of the environment.

Migros's first mobile store (1925).



"Initiatives" is a feature designed to highlight examples of environmental action in different parts of the world. We invite readers to send us details of their own experiences in this field for possible publication in the column.

## THE MIGROS ALTERNATIVE

GOTTLIEB Duttweiler had a dream. The son of a Swiss tradesman, he devoted his career to bypassing the middlemen who come between producers and consumers. In 1925 he bought a fleet of vans that plied the streets of Zurich selling six basic commodities—coffee, rice, sugar, pasta, cooking oil and soap—40 per cent cheaper than any other outlets. He opened his first shop the following year. Mr. Duttweiler died in 1962, but Migros, the operation he had begun, continued to expand. By 1990, there were about 550 shops with a total floor area of 900,000 square metres, a staff of 70,000 and annual sales of 15 billion Swiss francs.

Migros's growth has not been without its rough patches, including at one point a suppliers' boycott. Factories had to be bought or built to permit diversification and to supply consumers as cheaply as possible. Quite early on the firm turned into a chain of co-operatives owned by its members, who now number more than one and a half million households.

In 1974, Migros launched M-Sano, a programme designed to encourage farmers to adopt natural

methods of stock rearing and fruit and vegetable production, using the fewest possible chemical products. In 1985 environmental protection in various forms was made a priority goal. Migros started sending products by rail, saving enough diesel oil a year to send a truck 360 times around the world! It started selling mercury-free batteries and built the world's first plant for the recycling and disposal of used batteries. Reusable plastic containers have been introduced, taking the place of some 60,00 tons of cardboard packaging. Pump-operated aerosols have replaced those using chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which are harmful for the ozone layer, as a propellant. A 50-centime deposit is charged on biodegradable plastic bottles to encourage recycling. Coffee, spices, beauty products and detergents are all sold in refill form, saving customers money and making more than a thousand tons of packaging redundant. Tubes of toothpaste are no longer sold in unnecessary cardboard boxes. Migros's paper cat litter is biodegradable. Coffee filters are no longer bleached with chlorine. Yoghurt is sold in polystyrene pots, with a plastic lid instead of an aluminium cover. Glass pots were rejected on the grounds that washing them and replacing those that were not returned would be more harmful to the environment than using pots that can be burned along with other rubbish in central heating systems.

The environmental awareness campaign Migros has launched, which is aimed both at its own staff and at the general public, has as its mascot the kingfisher, the beautiful blue bird that lives on riverbanks and is now an endangered species.

Migros is a non-profit-making organization. All its income is reinvested in retailing as cheaply as possible healthy basic products that are produced according to decent standards. In accordance with the wishes of its founder, Migros sells neither alcohol nor tobacco in its shops, but retails a vast range of environment-friendly products. ■



A Tutsi dancer  
(Rwanda).



Rwanda's  
traditional body-  
language has  
cosmic  
significance



## Meaningful gestures

by Edouard Gasarabwe-Laroche

**R**WANDANS regard the human body as a whole. They believe that every gesture is part of a complex system of expression that draws on the resources of language, memory, tradition, the senses and intuition. Gestures are always full of meaning, and if Rwandans often strike rather statuesque attitudes when they gesticulate they know exactly what they are doing.

They look on their environment as a land-

scape which is alive with forces and symbols. Against this eloquent backdrop, they repeat again and again gestures that have remained unchanged since the time of Gihanga the Inventor, the mythical figure who is said to have taught them the "correct gestures" they should use in daily life, in rituals and in the practice of trades and crafts. Gihanga is also thought to have shown them the "correct shape", a combination of beauty and efficiency, for drums, tools and weapons.

From earliest childhood, the young Rwandan learns and gradually memorizes “correct gestures”, taking traditional behaviour as a model.

Anyone who wants to understand the meaning of these gestures must know about the axes and planes of reference that correspond to the architecture of the human body. Rwandans believe that the vital centre of the body, situated deep in the entrails, at the height of the navel, is the intersection point of three axes: the vertical axis, the left-right horizontal axis, and the front-back horizontal axis.

The vertical axis coincides with the axis of the World. It plunges downwards beneath the ground, whence lethal forces rise, and reaches upwards towards Heaven, whence life-giving forces descend. This is the axis of life and death.

People all over the world have noted that muscular strength and manual dexterity are much more highly developed on the right-hand side of the body than on the left, and modern anatomical and physiological studies have discovered and analysed the biological causes of this phenomenon. The right-left horizontal axis is that of strength and weakness.

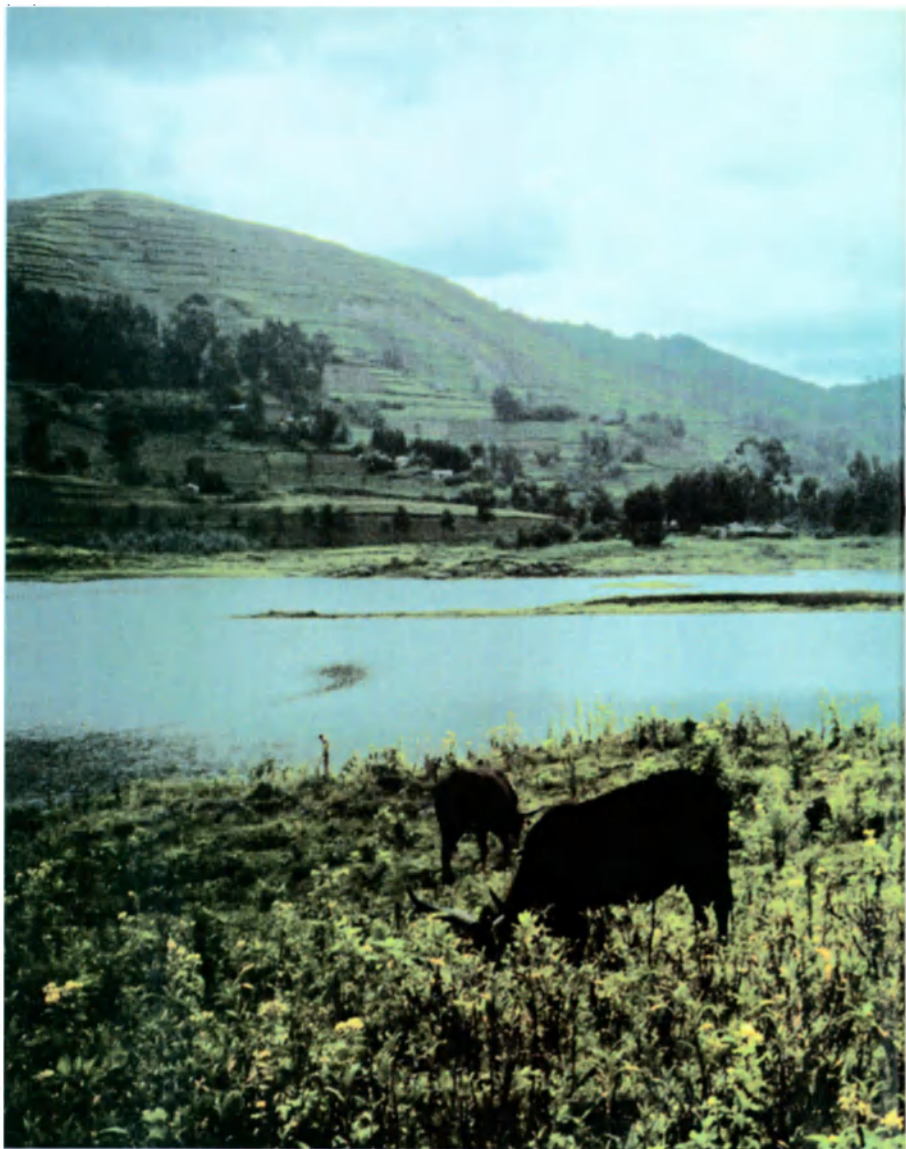
Observation of the gestures used by Rwandans shows that vision plays a decisive role in the conception of the front-back horizontal axis. A belief that evil creatures fear the human gaze and only attack from behind or under cover of darkness led to the custom whereby a symbolic “backward-looking eye” is opened by making a tonsure at the back of a baby’s head.

### ROOM TO MOVE

Taken in pairs, these horizontal and vertical axes define a volume of space in which there are three planes by reference to which body movements can be defined.

The vertical and lateral right-left axes describe the so-called “frontal plane”, in which the body is silhouetted face on and occupies a large area. On this plane, the only possible movements are those to right or left, leaps into the air, and a lateral rotation of the body around its “vital centre”.

The gestures accomplished in this plane are of little account in technical or social terms. In traditional choreography, the participants are grouped on each side of the principal dancer—famously referred to as the “navel”—and move successively to the right and to the left, violently stamping the ground and tinkling bells that are attached to their ankles, as if to crush the deadly forces lurking underfoot. Reaching upwards and jumping into the air, they appeal for the heaven-sent blessings of life, strength, joy and victory.



The vertical and front-back axes delimit a plane that divides the body into two symmetrical parts, a left-hand part and a right-hand part. This is the median plane, against which the body’s silhouette, projected in profile, occupies less space. The spinal column never moves out of this plane. It cannot sway to right or left, but can only curve forwards or backwards. Arms and legs may be bent. Feet and hands may be joined. The dancer can adopt a leaning position, drop into a crouch or roll into a ball—all attitudes of concentration or protection. He may also move forwards in the direction of advance, flight or attack. The median plane is that in which tools and weapons are manipulated, in which individuals come into their own as active agents.

The front-back and right-left axes define a transversal plane which divides the body at navel height and extends parallel to the earth’s surface. Here, the area of projection of the body’s silhouette is very small. The transversal plane cuts through all the successive frontiers of the world, which is organized in concentric cir-





cles, with the individual's dwelling-place as the centre. This is predominantly the plane in which social relations and communication with nature take place.

### EXPLORING SPACE AND TIME

The body is only alive insofar as it is quickened by biological rhythms and explores space and time by means of rhythmic gestures.

For the duration of several moons, attached to its mother's back, a baby remains in close physical contact with her and continues to feel the rhythms with which it became familiar during its gestation: the music of her respiration, her heartbeat and her speech, the swaying of her body as she walks and performs domestic tasks, the calming language of lullabies.

Later, and indeed at every age, rhythm will punctuate all the Rwandan's activities, at work and at play. "Technical" rhythms transform raw materials into goods or tools, while the rhythms of song and dance and musical instruments have a power which is exclusively symbolic. This rhythmic aura envelops and transfigures everyday life in Rwanda. ■

A lake in the Rwanda highlands.

#### EDOUARD

#### GASARABWE-LAROCHE

is a French anthropologist who has published many studies of the culture of Rwanda and two collections of traditional tales: *Soirées au pays des mille collines* (L'Harmattan, Paris, 1988) and *Kibiribiri—L'Oiseau de pluie* (L'Harmattan, 1991).

### The vibrant crowd

Rhythm is originally the rhythm of the feet. Every human being walks, and since he walks on two legs with which he strikes the ground in turn and since he only moves if he continues to do this, whether intentionally or not, a rhythmic sound ensues. . . .

The knowledge of the animals by which he was surrounded, which threatened him and which he hunted, was man's oldest knowledge. He learnt to know animals by the rhythm of their movement. The earliest writing he learnt to read was that of their tracks; it was a kind of rhythmic notation imprinted on the soft ground and, as he read it, he connected it with the sound of its formation.

. . . men, who themselves originally lived in small hordes, were made aware of the contrast between their own numbers and the enormous numbers of some animal herds. They were always hungry and on the watch for game; and the more there was of it, the better for them. But they also wanted to be more themselves. Man's feeling for his own increase was always strong and is certainly not to be understood only as his urge for self-propagation. Men wanted to be more, *then* and *there*; the large numbers of the herd which they hunted blended in their feelings with their own numbers which they *wished* to be large, and they expressed this in a specific state of communal excitement which I shall call the *rhythmic* or *throbbing* crowd.

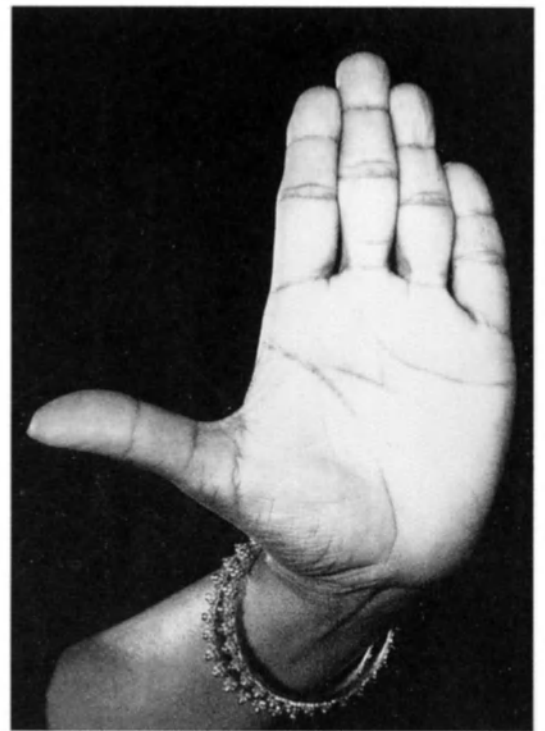
#### ELIAS CANETTI

*Crowds and Power,*

translated from the German by Carol Stewart  
English translation Copyright © 1962, 1973  
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# Hands that speak volumes

by Savitry Nair



Indian thought the human world is considered a replica of its divine counterpart, and the human body is the visible form of the divine.)

The analogy between the two worlds, human and divine, which are constantly in communication through different elements of which *mudras* are one, is fundamental to Indian thought. The unseen principle of divinity can only be approached through symbol and allegory. The interaction between the physical and the metaphysical lies at the roots of Indian philosophy.

In Hindu thinking, all life is one and every element is significant. This unity is stressed in religion, the arts and social life. Different ways of life, systems of philosophy, forms of artistic expression and ways of worshipping the innu-



**H**AND gestures play a fundamental role in Indian culture. In ancient times using one's hands in conversation was considered a sign of great accomplishment. One tale describes how a king met a beautiful girl and fell in love with her. Wanting to know whether she was free to marry him, he interrogated her by lifting up a closed fist with the thumb raised—the traditional gesture for “man” in sign language. When she replied by opening her hand, he knew the gesture meant there was no man in her life, and that she was unattached.

The word for hand gesture in Sanskrit is *mudra*, a term that also has several other meanings. It can be used to signify a seal or a signet ring, and by extension can also denote an impression, a stamped coin, a token or printer's type. The link between the first sense and the others is that *mudra* are regarded as seals between the three constituent parts of the human personality—spirit, mind and speech. *Mudra* illustrate the link between the internal and external life of man, as well as the parallels between the human and the divine worlds. (In





in Indian dance, sculpture and iconography. Sculptures were inspired by dance poses, while in return dancers borrowed gestures and attitudes liberally from the visual arts. Even now, the ways in which the gods are depicted in Indian dance reflect their treatment in temple sculpture.

This is particularly true of Siva Nataraja, the Lord of the Dance, who is represented with four arms. One hand holds a drum, symbolizing creation; another fire, representing destruction; a third is upturned, a sign of reassurance; and the fourth is open and pointing down, to indicate protection. In contemporary choreography, the god is often represented with other of his attributes, among them a deer, a trident, a skull, a third eye, a crescent moon or the River Ganges. He may be shown with a decoration of snakes, with sacred ash on his forehead, with a

merable avatars of the Divine all have the same goal: a coherent, all-inclusive and ever-evolving knowledge of the Divine. Such knowledge can only come through individual experience, and each seeker must find his or her own path.

God is worshipped in the form of innumerable divinities, the form of worship varying according to the characteristics of each one. According to the *Bhagavad Gita*, "Man becomes what he worships", and "Whenever a devotee wishes, with unwavering faith, to worship Me in a particular form, I take that form". When worship takes the form of a ritual or a prayer—the chanting of a text or secret formula—*mudra* serve to "seal" the power contained within the words and actions to the image of the divinity who is being worshipped.

### THE LORD OF THE DANCE

There is a close relationship between gesture and sound. When they accompany specially chosen *mantras*—sacred verbal formulae—or *nadas*—musical sounds—repeated in a prescribed manner, the appropriate *mudras* can set the body and the mind in a state of vibration. In this context, *mudras* possess magical properties that may be put to esoteric use, and become a secret gestural language known only to initiates. Buddhist priests took *mudras* of this kind over the land route to Nepal, Tibet, China and Japan and by sea to Indonesia, Cambodia and other lands. In those Asian countries where Buddhism took root, *mudras* influenced the iconography of the arts, and in particular sculpture, founding a tradition which remains alive to this day.

For a ritual to succeed, the accompanying *mudras* had to be correctly performed, so participants took care to execute them with precision. This principle of exact imitation was carried over to the arts, and became a crucial factor



Examples of Indian symbolic hand gestures or *mudras*.

Clockwise from left:  
a lion's head;  
the head of a deer;  
a hook;  
a clasp;  
the swan's wings;  
the bee.



A scene from a performance of the *Ramayana* epic in Java (Indonesia).



dwarf demon underfoot or else riding on a bull. *Mudras* suggesting any of these attributes can, depending on their context, be references to Nataraja.

In Hindu thought dance was created by God, but was codified and transmitted to humans by a sage called Bharata, author of the *Natya Sastra*, a treatise which dates from between the years 3 B.C. and 5 A.D. This text has remained ever since the principal sourcebook for all the dramatic arts. A wide range of movements for each part of the human body is enumerated and explained in the book. Later texts further expanded the list, creating a vast repertory of *mudras* that remains the basis of all the different styles of dance practised to this day.

There are currently seven classical styles of dance, as well as innumerable semi-classical and popular ones. Each developed in a different region, and reflects local particularities. They are, respectively, Bharata Natyam, from Tamil Nadu; Kathakali, from Kerala; Mohini Attam, also

from Kerala; Kuchipudi, from Andhra Pradesh; Odissi, from Orissa; Kathak, from northern India; and Manipuri, from Manipur.

Each of these styles has two distinct elements, one purely rhythmic and the other narrative or expressive. In dance sequences of the first type, *mudras* are simply decorative, complementing the dancer's movements. The feet mark the beat, and for each step there is a corresponding gesture. The accompaniment is instrumental and rhythmic.

Narrative sequences accompany mystical poems or texts sung by the musician, and here the *mudras* serve to illustrate the lyrics. The dancer's agile hands may evoke birdflight, rivers flowing down mountainsides, confrontations of gods and demons, seasons changing, lovers coming together or separating. In such cases, the performer has the opportunity to demonstrate her capacity as an actor or storyteller, miming with vivid gestures and expression all the different characters in the stories, which are often drawn from the great Hindu epics, the *Ramayana* or *Mahabharata*, or else from hymns, myths or legends.

Though grace of expression, beauty of movement and dynamic power are all evident in Indian dance, they are not the heart of the matter. The essence of the art lies in its vivid perception of the religious meaning of life.

### IMAGES EVOKED BY GESTURE

It is impossible to understand narrative dance without acquiring familiarity with the language of *mudras* from a recognized master, who serves as the representative of the oral tradition. It is up to the master to choose a disciple who will in her turn assure the continuity of that tradition. The master becomes a second parent to the pupil, who in return is expected to show absolute fidelity to the tradition as well as complete obedience to the teacher. This student-teacher relationship is basic to the transmission of the traditions of Indian dance.

Once a dancer has mastered the technique, her fingers become veritable antennae with which to communicate with the spectators. Through gesture alone, without the aid of either decor or accessories, she can call up vivid images, portraying in turn, say, a dangerous animal, a pretty girl with big eyes, an exotic garden and the playing of musical instruments. But to make the evocations come alive, each *mudra* must be accompanied by the right facial expressions. The eyes are particularly important, for:

*Where the hand goes, the eye must go,  
Where the eyes go, the mind goes,  
Where the mind, there the expression,  
Where there is expression, there is joy.*

The *mudras* used in dance are divided into two categories: single- and double-handed gestures. There are twenty-eight of the former, ranging from *pataka*, "the flag", for which forty-two different uses are listed, to *chandrakala*, "the crescent moon", with only two listed uses. *Pataka* is described as follows: "When the hand is open, with the fingers straight and the thumb

### Signs and signals

A gesture is any action that sends a visual signal to an onlooker. To become a gesture, an act has to be seen by someone else and has to communicate some piece of information to them. It can do this either because the gesturer deliberately sets out to send a signal—as when he waves his hand—or it can do it only incidentally—as when he sneezes. The hand-wave is a Primary Gesture, because it has no other existence or function. It is a piece of communication from start to finish. The sneeze, by contrast, is a secondary, or Incidental Gesture. Its primary function is mechanical and is concerned with the sneezer's personal breathing problem. In its secondary role, however, it cannot help but transmit a message to his companions, warning them that he may have caught a cold.

Most people tend to limit their use of the term "gesture" to the primary form—the hand-wave type—but this misses an important point. What matters with gesturing is not what signals we think we are sending out, but what signals are being received. The observers of our acts will make no distinction between our intentional Primary Gestures and our unintentional, incidental ones. In some ways, our Incidental Gestures are the more illuminating of the two, if only for the very fact that we do not think of them as gestures, and therefore do not censor and manipulate them so strictly.

DESMOND MORRIS

*Manwatching*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1977  
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An actor captured in mid-movement during the performance of a kabuki play. This form of Japanese theatre is a blend of music, dance, mime and dialogue.



folded at the side, this gesture is called *pataka* by the people conversant with dance gestures. With the flag *mudra* we can designate forty-two images. Some of these are: me, you, everyone, night, river, moonlight, a horse, grace, entering a street, ocean, forest, to sweep. . . .”

In combining *mudras* in the course of a narrative performance, a dancer may first interpret a phrase of the text literally, and then, when the singer repeats it, use her imagination to elaborate the theme. Take a typical refrain such as “What has happened to your heart?—it seems as heavy as stone”. The first time the words are sung, the performer will simply illustrate the words “heart”, “heavy” and “stone”. When the words

are repeated, however, she may choose to elaborate the story, showing how gentle and loving the hero once was, and how his heart was poisoned by another woman. In this example, the surface meaning of the story is obvious enough. The dancer’s skill will lie in bringing out its hidden, symbolic significance, which involves humankind’s mystic yearning for the divine.

It is the focus on divinity that gives Indian dance its unique harmony, which is achieved through discipline and concentration. Symbols are vehicles that carry one along a spiritual journey that began thousands of years ago and still continues as India’s dancers trace fleeting gestures—*mudras*—with untiring hands. ■

**SAVITRY NAIR,**

of India, teaches dancing and singing. She has written a study of *Marionettes and their role in Asian society*, published in Pondicherry in 1979.



*In Morocco, competition between the rhythms of traditional and modern life is blurring people's sense of time and distance*

# Testing times

*by Abdelhai Diouri*

**T**HE idea of rhythm relates to music, to poetry and to biology, but in all these fields mere regular repetition is not enough to produce rhythm: it simply divides time into identical units. Rhythm comes into being when a variation characterized by the recurrence of a constant feature at regular intervals arises within this group of units. By differentiation, alternation, symmetry, emphasis, changes of pace and other figures, this variation arouses an emotion, imparts a meaning, or induces people to do something.

In late-twentieth-century Morocco life is lived at two rhythms which are out of phase with each other: an old rhythm rooted in tradition, and a new Westernized rhythm which stems from Morocco's recent history. The two are experienced simultaneously, in an apparent confusion which deserves to be clarified.

Even today, traditional craftsmen wake up for the dawn prayer and at once start their working day, which is itself punctuated by prayers. Work stops for a frugal meal at the midday prayer, and is interrupted again between the mid-afternoon prayer and the sunset prayer, a time when craftsmen set about selling their products, stocking up with raw materials and doing the family shopping. After the evening prayer everybody goes home for the evening meal (this schedule changes during the month of Ramadan).

## **OLD AND NEW WAYS**

The religious component, which is crucial to the workings of the guilds, also plays an ethical role in craftsmen's lives, by strengthening their sense of integrity. Given the mechanism of







Above: the busy market on Place Djema'a el-Fna in the heart of old Marrakesh. Left, pilgrims gather for the *moussems* at Imilchil in the High Atlas. *Moussems* are annual festivals held on the occasion of pilgrimages to the tombs of marabouts, Muslim holy men.

checks and balances, operated mainly by the peer group, and the competitive pressure of life in the guilds, these craftsmen make it a point of honour to produce high-quality work, even using rudimentary tools. They feel personally involved in their work and their dignity is at stake. Their lives are governed by the rhythm of their own bodies, and their finished products bear the stamp of their energy and enthusiasm.

If you watch a coppersmith at work in Fez, or a slipper-maker, or a tanner, you will see that manual strength is needed—but strength allied with dexterity. Mastery is a matter of technique: working hours call for an ascetic's reverential concentration and a certain meditative tension—a far cry from the mere use of mechanical energy to turn out products.

Some time is also set aside for festivities, time spent in another, livelier world. People go off on pilgrimages lasting several days. They may visit a holy shrine, where they make sacrifices, eat, dance and play. They exchange gossip and word-play, devote themselves to pleasures and commerce of various kinds, and then disperse. The timing of these festivities is determined by the religious calendar and the cycle of the seasons (which draws on ancient astrological and mythological beliefs), and also by public events.

Access to modernity results not in what Roland Barthes called “the tame alternation of work and rest” but in various uneven types of rhythm—so uneven, indeed, that those who experience them often think they are victims of an enforced, dubious and perhaps even abortive form of change.

All the features of modernity exist in Morocco today: electricity, industrialization, electronics, the media, computerization, high-speed transport and communications, and big cities (but not research, particularly basic research). The so-called modern sector of production is in a ceaseless ferment of activity. As well as the traditional craftsmen and small businessmen, a mass of workers has come into being, together with factory managers, company directors and trade unions. Alongside the traditional power structure, the *Makhzen*, a government, a set of representative bodies and a tentacular civil service have been set up.

Social life is now governed by a quite different rhythm. With electric lighting people stay up later, but they get up much later too. They work two half-days, and measure time by the clock rather than by prayers. At their workplaces they have become familiar with the nervous tension caused by operating machines,





Fishermen repair nets at Essaouira (formerly Mogador), a seaport on Morocco's Atlantic coast.

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working to strict timetables and performing endlessly repeated movements. Their powers of endurance are put to the test. They have discovered the dullness and monotony of administrative tasks. They travel by car or public transport, which means that they use space in a new way and that much more time is bound up with work. Instead of the narrow alleyways of the medinas, they use wide roads, and hear motor horns and traffic noise instead of the sound of footsteps.

On leaving work people stop off at a café or bar for the "happy hour" (when they can get two drinks for the price of one) before going home, keyed up by the noise of the streets, which gets worse and worse each year. Back at home, they watch television, read the paper or talk on the telephone. They have weekends off and a month's annual holiday, and are paid by the month. They wonder how on earth previous generations managed to survive without today's technological amenities, but the fact is that the pace of modern life, dazzling though it may be, is relentless. Many people, disappointed by modernity, have decided

to return to the past, without feeling that they are yielding to a nostalgic illusion.

**A COMPOSITE SOCIETY**

In practice, however, the modern rhythm and the traditional rhythm succeed and interpenetrate each other. The transition from one to the other, made up of the many adjustments characteristic of what the sociologist Paul Pascon has called "composite societies", follows circuitous paths and produces unusual situations.

Unpunctuality, the accumulation of garbage in cities and sloppy work are three symptoms of this crisis of modernity.

Unintentional lateness—time apparently outside the employee's control—is especially revealing. A person was "caught by the clock", or there was a last-minute hitch, or he missed the train or the bus. The car wouldn't start. The lights stayed red too long. Often people don't even bother to give an excuse. Lateness reflects a real difficulty in mastering modern time. Instead of trying to save it ("time is money"), people spend time lavishly. Weekends are extended (unofficially) to





**An orange processing and packing plant near Marrakesh.**

a sign of the decline in the old organization of public services. The ubiquitous presence of refuse seems to be an evil inherent in modernity.

But perhaps the most unequivocal sign of the profound insecurity caused by the sudden loss of the old personalized relationships (with other members of society, and with space and time) is sloppy workmanship, which also reflects a strong resistance to the depersonalizing anonymity of the factory. The insidious advance of automation breeds a feeling in those with the old craftsman's mentality which comes close to resentment. Work ceases to be regarded as a leading factor in defining a person's identity, something that possesses a value associated with dignity and love and is practised with humility—as is still the case among craftsmen, despite their narrow profit margins. It is not yet an end in itself, as it is in the modern system. It engenders a kind of shame, rancour even, which may have a paralyzing effect.

How will the crisis of relationships with time and space, which afflicts so many societies, be resolved? At what rhythm ought we to live? ■



include Fridays. In addition to the many school holidays which prolong the parents' month of summer vacation, there are days off for the official events associated with public holidays. All these holidays, a new feature of Moroccan life, combine with religious festivities and extra days between a public holiday and a weekend to paralyze production—as during the month of Ramadan.

The reason for this poor timekeeping, which has become a symbol of underdevelopment, is that old habits still persist from the days when time was measured in a rough and ready fashion (for prayers), and the home and the workplace were not far away. People are still far from accustomed to commuting—evaluating distances and the time needed to travel them—and despite electricity they still maintain the habit of closing early, going home early and keeping themselves to themselves.

Piles of garbage in front of houses, especially in the streets of the old medinas now abandoned by the urban elite, have become a typical feature of the urban scene. This too is a structural relic of the traditional emphasis on life at home behind closed doors—plus, of course,



### SAVING CAMBODIA'S DANCE TRADITION

Em They, Head Teacher of Cambodia's National Dance Company in Phnom Penh, is one of the last surviving keepers of Cambodia's sacred dance traditions. These traditions, which she preserved during three and a half years of forced labour in the countryside between 1975 and 1979, may die out unless they are properly recorded. She and her pupil Sok Chea are the main characters in *The Tenth Dancer*, a documentary by the Australian filmmaker Sally Ingleton which shows the preparation for the Buong Suong, a sacred dance traditionally performed in Cambodia at the New Year. The film was made with assistance from UNESCO's International Fund for the Promotion of Culture and other international bodies.

### FAMILY PHOTOS

A total of 132 prizes were awarded in a photo contest on the theme of the family, organized by UNESCO and the Asian Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU), when the jury met in Tokyo in April. The prize-winning photos were selected from among 9,117 entries from 133 countries. The three Grand Prix went to: Chen Anding (China) for *Blood Relation* (Prize of the Director-General of UNESCO); Knud Nielsen (Denmark) for *Football* (Prize of the President of ACCU); and Miguel Cruz (Dominican Republic) for *Hope* (Prize of the World Decade for Cultural Development). Each of the three will receive \$5,000 and a Nikon F4 AF camera at a presentation ceremony to be held at UNESCO Headquarters in November.

### MAN AND THE BIOSPHERE

Two new volumes have been issued in English in UNESCO's "Man and the Biosphere" series. The first, *Decision support systems for the management of grazing lands*, describes applications of the software known as "decision support systems" (DSS), containing databases, ecological system simulators and economic analysis programmes, and shows how this software can be used in

technologically less advanced countries. The second volume, *The world's savannas—Economic driving forces, ecological constraints and policy options for sustainable land use*, examines the economic, ecological and political forces affecting tropical savannas and makes policy suggestions for the future. The two volumes are available by mail order from UNESCO Publications, Sales Division, 7 Place de Fontenay, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France. The price of 380 French francs per volume includes postage by surface mail.

### 'AN INDIA CALLED AMERICA'

"In what way did the Encounter of Two Worlds contribute to transforming my culture or that of my people?" This was the theme of an international literary contest organized by UNESCO in connection with the five-hundredth anniversary (1492-1992) of the Encounter of Two Worlds and co-sponsored by the municipal authorities of Saint-Malo (France) and the French association Etonnants Voyageurs. Over 150 works were submitted from some 40 countries. On 20 May a jury of internationally-known writers awarded the first prize, worth \$10,000, to a 42-year-old Portuguese writer, José Jorge Letria, for his essay *Uma Índia chamada América* ("An India called America"). A second prize, worth \$3,000, went to Andre Neumann from Germany, and five other prizes went to writers from Colombia, Gambia, France, Ecuador and Mexico.

### WOMEN AND SOCIETY

Four short documentary films on the theme of women and development show by means of authentic case-studies how Latin American peasant women have acquired knowledge and skills relevant to their environment and taken economic and commercial initiatives. The films, lasting five minutes each, were co-produced by UNESCO, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Secretariat of the Convenio Andrés Bello (SECAB). They are available from Alejandro Alfonzo, UNESCO, Foch 265, Apartado 17.07.8998, Quito, Ecuador; Tel. (593-2) 562 327; Fax. (593-2) 504 435.

### A NETWORK OF LIBRARIES

To counter the dearth of books and periodicals imposed by lack of funds on university libraries in the developing countries, UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) has begun to establish a network of depository libraries and documentation centres in those countries. The IIEP is targeting those resource centres particularly concerned with educational planning; more than a hundred have already been selected. It is hoped that 200 depository libraries will be in place by 1995, with the largest concentration in Africa, followed by Asia, Latin America and the Arab States.



## COMMENTARY by Federico Mayor

This article is one of a series in which the Director-General of UNESCO sets out his thinking on matters of current concern



# HUMAN RIGHTS ARE UNIVERSAL

**H**UMAN rights have established themselves as the ethical foundation of an emergent world civilization. I should like to underline the role played by the United Nations system in this process, from its initiation to current efforts to promote preventive measures of all kinds.

Yet so much more remains for all of us to do. The recent relaxation of ideological tensions within the world community aroused great expectations for the wider observance of human rights. However, the hatreds and brutal conflicts that have erupted in many parts of the world, particularly in the aftermath of the Cold War, have underscored how deep the roots of intolerance are. The recrudescence of racism and xenophobia and massive violations of human rights based on ethnic and cultural difference give a particular urgency to the continuing task of combating intolerance and promoting respect for fundamental human rights.

Article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates that "Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized". While we do not know the answer to the question "What weight of poverty can the wings of freedom bear?", we know the question to be most pertinent. Human rights and freedoms are indivisible, and individual freedom flourishes more readily where the servitudes of poverty and ignorance have been abolished. By the same token, respect for human rights and dignity is an essential leaven of authentic development.

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Education is one of the most powerful means available to us for promoting human rights. It is the firmest foundation for a human rights culture, rooted both in attitudes and values and in specific knowledge. UNESCO has already carried out a wide range of activities in this field, namely: the preparation of study programmes, textbooks and teaching aids; the training of educators, journalists and professional groups interested in human rights; dissemination of the corresponding information through the Associated Schools Project; implementation of the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; the award every two years of the UNESCO Prize for the Teaching of Human Rights; and more recently, the establishment of UNESCO chairs on human rights education. The ultimate aim is to establish a new and wide-ranging system for teaching these rights, extending from the earliest stages of education to university level, not forgetting non-formal education and catering for the whole population, especially children, minorities and the disabled, whose rights are still all too frequently left out of account and require greater protection.

The end of the Cold War has afforded fresh opportunities for broadening the scope of human rights education by adding

to it the essential dimension of democracy. Democracy is the only context in which human rights can be exercised and respected. Education for democracy is predicated on the premise that, although there cannot be one single model for democracy, there is a set of universally recognized values and principles without which true democracy cannot be built.

## AN ETHICAL TRUTH

In the matter of the protection and observance of human rights, we have a practical task to perform. We must secure more effective and more universal support for the international instruments adopted in this field by the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation, UNESCO and other institutions.

This practical, effective universality, which we are striving to achieve, will be merely the reflection and corollary of that other universality, which underpins it. I am talking about moral universality: in other words that of the values enshrined in that landmark text whose forty-fifth anniversary we celebrate this year. The universality of human rights: this says so much, and yet so little. Are we truly aware of the ethical truth expressed in this one phrase? That each and every human being has the same rights? Do we truly understand that each individual is both a unique being and the epitome of the species? Do we recognize in our way of life and behaviour the implications of the fact that human rights form part of the common heritage of humanity?

These rights are common to us all because they belong to each person. There is no group or country that can claim to be the sole custodian of a universal heritage. They are universal because they transcend cultural differences. It may, of course, be objected that they cannot be applied uniformly to all cultures, but it cannot be denied that the values in whose name these rights are invoked correspond to aspirations inherent in human nature and are therefore well and truly universal. Human rights are also universal because, although each person is unique, there is but one human species.

At the dawn of the third millennium, the concept of human rights—interactive, inseparable and indivisible—belongs in a context that encompasses economic, social and cultural rights, civil and political rights, the right to a wholesome environment, the right to human and sustainable development, and even the rights of future generations. We should welcome this continuing process of expansion.

These rights have a collective dimension in the sense that they may be claimed by individuals if the individual is a member of a group. In this connection, now more than ever before, since this year we are celebrating the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, the voice of those people must be able to be heard, to be heeded, and to be part of a democratic polyphony in which all the components respect one another. ■

In the aftermath of the First World War there was a widely-felt need for a supra-national institution that would put an end to war, that endemic sickness of human societies.

The League of Nations was founded in Geneva in 1920, and in the following year its member states agreed that there was a need for international intellectual co-operation.

The idea won support, and on 4 January 1922 an International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation was created. A consultative body that held an annual meeting lasting a week, the Committee consisted of twelve members elected on the grounds of their intellectual stature. Among these distinguished thinkers were two physicists, Marie Curie and Hendrik A. Lorentz; an astronomer, George E. Hale; a philosopher, Henri Bergson—who was the Committee's first president; and a classical scholar, Gilbert Murray. In 1924 Albert Einstein and the Argentine poet Leopoldo Lugones joined the Committee.

The extent of the tasks facing the Committee soon revealed its inadequacies, and in due course it was suggested that a permanent body should be created. The French government offered to host this organization and to provide it with a budget. In this way the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, UNESCO's forbear, came into being. The Institute was inaugurated on 16 January 1926, with headquarters in the Palais-Royal in Paris.

Between 1931 and 1939, the Institute was extremely active, and a distinguished body of thinkers took part in its work. A Permanent Committee on Arts and Letters, whose president was Paul Valéry, issued a number of publications, including a periodical, *Correspondance*; a series of booklets known as "Cahiers"; and the verbatim record of a series of "conversations" which in many cases are still as relevant today as when they took place.

In 1938, to extend the range of activities that had until then been carried out under the auspices of a single state, a diplomatic conference attended by representatives of forty-five countries met in Paris and set forth an "International act concerning intellectual co-operation". However the war prevented this plan from being put into effect.

# Paul Valéry

## A League of Minds<sup>1</sup>

**T**HE fundamental aim of the League of Nations appears to be to bring about a state of mutual understanding between the nations so that they may no longer have recourse to the brutal expedients and violent and short-lived settlements of disputes with which they have hitherto been content. The League is therefore based on a belief in humanity and on a certain faith in man's intelligence. This belief and this faith are of the same nature as the belief and faith which are essential to any scientific research and to any disinterested effort.

If that is true and if it is agreed that an increase in understanding and knowledge are the necessary conditions for the achievement of the League's aims, co-operation between minds specially concerned with things of the mind (as we may term intellectuals) is of all forms of international co-operation the most important to encourage; and the particular organs of that co-operation should be made a subject of special study and should be strengthened and improved as experience suggests.

... If we compare the results achieved with the essential aim set forth above—that is to say, the creation of a state of mind which will bring about and support a League of Minds—if it is agreed that a League of Minds is a sine qua non for a League of Nations and that each must rest on one and the same foundation, namely public opinion, and that neither can exist unless its value is generally recognized; and if lastly it is realized that the whole problem of their existence consists in making them needed and desired by every thinking being—in arousing an emotional

reaction to their existence—then our work of co-operation and the work of the Institute, which in themselves are admirable and may be of great utility, must be regarded as a response to demands that have not yet been made and as sustenance offered to those who do not yet feel the need for it.

... The Committee on Arts and Letters is therefore of the opinion that, for a sufficiently prolonged period, the principal aim of intellectual co-operation in general and of the Institute in particular, should be to convince the intellectual world that organized co-operation is possible, that it is a matter of individual and personal concern to every intellectual and that each should make it a habit to consult and utilize the organs of that co-operation. ...

... Unless the work of intellectual co-operation is dominated and inspired by regard for the highest things of the mind, it will never be understood by those for whom it is intended and will not have the slightest influence on education, production, public opinion and hence on the mind of modern man whose co-operation is so desirable and essential for the League of Nations. ■



Texts chosen and presented  
by Edgardo Canton



# Paul Valéry and Henri Focillon

## Reaching the general conscience<sup>2</sup>

**I**T thus appears that the Permanent Committee on Arts and Letters may be envisaged in two ways, that it has, in a sense, a twofold purpose; its activity is technical insofar as it seeks to establish and organize relations, where none exist and where the need makes itself felt, between the literary and artistic institutions of different countries, but it must be more general too; it seems difficult to prove to the intellectual world that it is directly concerned in the work of the League of Nations if it is not given the opportunity to discuss the problems which most profoundly affect intellectuals themselves; if a way of bringing them together is not found, in conditions that have yet to be defined, to carry out real intellectual work, to compare their ideas and make them known through the publication of booklets; if the research they are asked to carry out is solely concerned with formal and procedural matters and not with the substance of problems. . . .

The nature of the League of Nations is to respond to an emergency. In our case the emergency is the life of the mind. Let us not pretend to ignore that it is threatened, directly by anxiety about the future and the instability of political life, indirectly by the industrial system and the crisis through which it is passing. Perhaps it is possible to glimpse the future of intellectual life as taking place in select and closed circles, privileged retreats, in conditions of solitude that will to some extent guarantee its freedom. But the mind is only fully itself if it is not lateral, if it is involved in the world—even if this may be hazardous, if it tends towards a form of leadership that is not muted and debated but dazzling and accepted.



The French writer Paul Valéry  
in 1937.

Every great age has consciously and clearly set forth its definition of man, not as a sum of fortunate and unfortunate experiences, not as a collection of contingencies, but as a kind of ideal portrait set up as an example and capable of inspiring resemblance. History is thus a gallery of half-authentic, half-painted portraits which are all the more authentic because they have been so influential. In this art in reverse, the portrait is the model, and living people are the copies. It is thus possible for us to imagine ourselves, to the extent of their respective efficiency, as Renaissance man, the educated man of the seventeenth century, the eighteenth-century philosopher, and several other exemplary types closer to us in time. Some people will think that the definition of man appropriate to this historical period should be formulated by poets or philosophers who can think it out and derive it from the facts. But we see from the past that these vigorous sketches are not the product of solitary

dreaming but are due to the collaboration, conscious or otherwise, of a large number. Thus the French Encyclopaedists, at a moment in European life when man, transcending frontiers, was perhaps at his most self-possessed since the pax Romana, combined far less to compose a useful repertory of the knowledge of their time than to produce a certain doctrine and to revise the definition that classical genius had long given of itself.

No group at the present time could reasonably claim to undertake such a task. But men of goodwill certainly have the right and possibly the resources to establish consultations which could be useful, after drawing up a kind of emergency list. The essential question is that of education. Pedagogical programmes and methods only concern us indirectly, but the problem of the goal, from which all others proceed, presents itself to us on all sides. What do we wish man to be? On what type do we wish him to be modelled? What are the ministries of public instruction aiming towards, in all the countries of the world? . . .

We also see that Europe has extended to the universe, that it has made contact with profoundly original and solid forms of thought and life. To what extent is this collaboration between races leading to a revision of the old humanism? Can we discern the outline of a new humanism in which man in his diversity will find unanimous reasons for thinking and acting? In a world apparently governed by the spirit of quantity is it possible to maintain the spirit of quality? Is this a purely verbal antinomy or is it a distinction of a more decisive kind? And is this distinction reducible or will it continue to bring into

confrontation elites based on divergent mystiques?

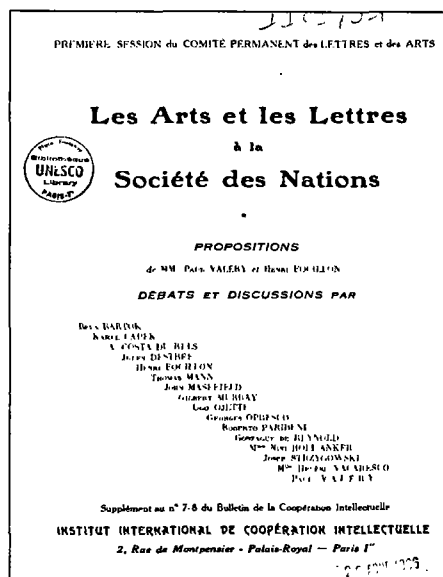
To all these problems—the aims of education, the new forms of humanism, quantity and quality—others may be added, which also preoccupy the intellectual world, which directly and individually interest its representatives and which they feel the need to discuss among themselves. It will be for the Committee to choose and formulate them.

All these problems stem from the activity and the competence of specialists. But these general concerns which are connected to the higher life of humanity, which are its very conscience, should first be evoked by men of mature reflection before being considered in discussions which they will organize, and being considered from a technical point of view. By following this method we have an opportunity to extend to a singular degree the audience of intellectual co-operation and reach the general conscience. ■

1 Report by Paul Valéry presented to the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, Geneva, 22 July 1930.

2 Suggestions from Paul Valéry and the art historian Henri Focillon, made at the first meeting of the Permanent Committee on Arts and Letters (6-9 July 1931). Entitled "Les bases de discussion", their text defines the role of the Committee in the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation.

Cover of a booklet containing the proceedings of the first meeting of the Permanent Committee on Arts and Letters (1931).



# BOOK

by Edgar Reichmann

## Central Asia—from earliest times to the present

Bukhara and Samarkand, the Khyber Pass and the Pamir mountains, Sinkiang and the Gobi desert, the Amu Darya and the Syr Darya—these evocative place-names bring to the mind's eye the vast geographical and cultural region in the heart of Asia that has long been a source of fascination for people in other parts of the world, especially in the West. Many works of ancient and modern literature testify to the influence and achievements of central Asian civilizations. The Cimmerians appear in Homer's *Odyssey*, and the Greek historian Herodotus described the way of life of the Scythians in the fifth century B.C. Since then travellers and writers from Marco Polo to Rudyard Kipling and Dino Buzzati (*The Tartar Steppe*) have portrayed this region where fantasy and reality are never far apart, and poets such as Hâfiz and Omar Khayyam have brought it to life in verses of lyrical splendour.

Our knowledge of central Asia has been extended by the recent publication of two important books, one a detailed work of historical scholarship that is nevertheless accessible to the general reader, the other specifically aimed at a very wide audience. Both books share the merit of shedding light on the region's major contribution to the history of civilizations.

The historical work is the outcome of a far-reaching project to study the civilizations of central Asia that was launched at UNESCO's nineteenth General Conference, held in Nairobi in 1976. It is the first volume in what will be a six-part *History of Civilizations of Central Asia* that will study the peoples of central Asia from the earliest times to the present day through archaeology, history, language and spiritual life. The second book is an anthropological atlas covering the regions extending from



central Asia to the Middle East and the Caucasus. It draws attention to the complexity of the situations today facing many ancient ethnic communities welded together by language, customs, religion and history. Its authors have devoted particular attention to the lesser-known peoples, those of Iranian, Turkish or Caucasian origin.

## Little-known treasures

The first volume of the UNESCO series is subtitled "The dawn of civilization: earliest times to 700 B.C." and takes us from palaeolithic times to the Iron Age. What are the frontiers of central Asia? As defined in the UNESCO *History*, they encompass the ancient civilizations of Afghanistan, north-eastern Iran, Pakistan, northern India, Mongolia, western China and the central Asian republics of the former U.S.S.R. These pages bring to our attention many little-known ancient objects and remains: the superb neolithic sites of Kashmir, finely



crafted ornaments discovered in Mongolia, exquisite bronzes from Iran and Afghanistan, and extraordinary female figurines dating from the fourth millennium that have been unearthed near the Caspian Sea. The volume also explains the origin of the Indo-Iranian languages and their irresistible journey westwards in the course of thousands of years, as well as the subtle phonetic changes which led to the development of certain languages spoken in Europe.

What strikes the reader most during this extraordinary journey from the earliest Stone Age vestiges through Scythian craftsmanship in precious metals to the remarkable accomplishments of urban planning in the Indus valley civilization is the presence of a spiritual dimension which is common to the peoples of central Asia and transcends their extraordinary diversity of expression. Attracted both by conquest and by sedentarization, these pastoral and nomadic peoples, who tamed the horse as an instrument of conquest but also discovered the benefits of agriculture, all shared the same admiration for authenticity and beauty. The study of archaeological remains proves that the cultural interactions of these peoples and those of China, the Fertile Crescent and eastern Europe go back to very ancient times.

## A historical fresco

Jean and André Sellier's *Atlas des peuples d'Orient* is more concerned with current events. It presents a vast fresco of current upheavals in the areas between the shores of the Mediterranean and the confines of China and Russia. Many conflicts in central Asia, old and new, intensified after the collapse of the U.S.S.R. What choice will these peoples make between the secular



■ *History of civilizations of Central Asia. Volume I. The dawn of civilization: earliest times to 700 B.C.*  
 Editors A.H. Dani and V.M. Masson. UNESCO Publishing, Paris, 1992.  
 ISBN 92-3-102719-0.  
 200 francs

■ *Atlas des peuples d'Orient. Moyen-Orient, Caucase, Asie Centrale,*  
 by Jean and André Sellier.  
 La Découverte publishers, Paris, 1993.  
 ISBN 2-7071-2222-X.  
 295 francs.

concept of the nation-state based on the Western model, that of now-vanished multinational empires (Ottoman, Persian, Russo-Soviet), and the clerical state (emirate, Islamic republic)? Within each form of government, what place will there be for ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities? Will these minorities simply have to rely on the spirit of tolerance shown by majorities or will they enjoy the legal rights which are their due? The outspoken and informative texts which accompany the hundred coloured maps in the Atlas ask questions rather than suggest solutions, but it is certainly more worthwhile to ask hard questions than to give answers tainted with ambiguity.



# RECENT RECORDS

by Isabelle Leymarie

## JAZZ

### TEDDY EDWARDS.

*Mississippi Lad*

Teddy Edwards (tenor sax), Nolan Smith (trumpet), Jimmy Cleveland (trombone), Art Hillery (piano), Leroy Vinnegar (bass), Billy Higgins (drums), Ray Armando (percussion), Tom Waits (vocals, guitar)  
CD Verve/Gitanes 511 111-2

Teddy Edwards, who was born in Mississippi and is steeped in Delta blues, is now a leading West Coast saxophonist, even if he is not as commercially successful as some of his white Californian colleagues. Since the 1940s he has played or recorded with many jazz celebrities including Howard McGhee, Benny Carter, Gerald Wilson, Hampton Hawes, Clifford Brown and Max Roach, but has only comparatively recently broken through to a wider audience. After a fallow period lasting several years,

he has come back with this strong new album, which features singer Tom Waits on a couple of tracks. Several attractive original compositions highlight Edwards' warm, classic style, honed by years of experience.

### ANTONIO HART.

*Don't You Know I Care*

Antonio Hart (alto sax), Aaron Grave (piano), Greg Hutchinson (drums), Darren Barrett (trumpet), Gary Bartz (alto sax), Jamal Haynes (trombone), Kimati Dinizulu (percussion)  
CD BMG Novus 01241 2

This is a first-rate offering from the talented young saxophonist Antonio Hart, a former pupil of Jimmy Heath who has been playing the international festival circuit in company with trumpeter Roy Hargrove. All the sidemen with the exception of Gary Bartz are youngsters; Jamal Haynes, for example, is only nineteen. This accomplished, sensitive, intelligent music

reveals the extraordinary maturity of Hart's work.

### BUSTER WILLIAMS TRIO.

*Tokudo*

Buster Williams (bass), Kenny Barron (piano), Ben Riley (drums)  
CD Denon 8549

This reissue of a disc originally recorded in Japan in 1978 shows the three musicians working together in an atmosphere of complete mutual understanding. It features two Buster Williams originals alongside standards that include "Someday My Prince Will Come", played with the same bass obligato as on later versions recorded by Williams and Barron. Williams proves himself to be a master of the sliding note, and like Ray Brown, the model for a whole generation of bass-players, he has a big, majestic tone, letting the notes resonate on the strings without cutting them off. Kenny Barron displays his customary elegance.

## MUSIC FROM AROUND THE WORLD

### SICILY.

*Music for the Holy Week*  
Anthology of Traditional Music

CD UNESCO/Audivis D8210

Few lands have a richer folklore than Sicily, where many different civilizations have left their mark. This disc is a collection of polyphonic chants for male voices, sung in dialect or in dog-Latin, and of mixed-voice choral music and brass-band pieces, some influenced by tunes from opera. The chants, which employ the technique known as faux-bourdon, draw their inspiration from Christian liturgy and also from very old pagan traditions, and in some cases reveal the influence of Arab music. This fine recording should win wider recognition for Sicilian popular culture which, like Neapolitan theatre, is among the most remarkable in Italy.

### MYRDHIN

AND POL HUELLOU.

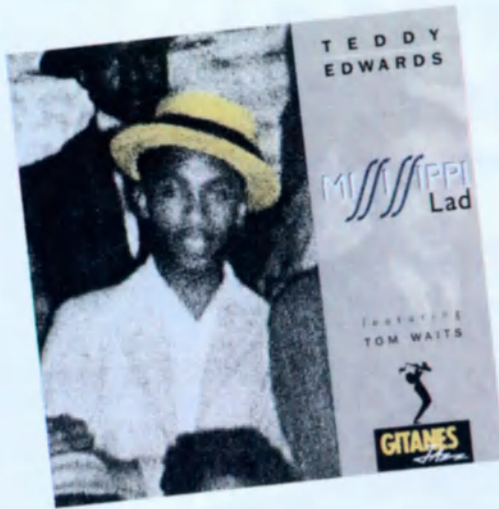
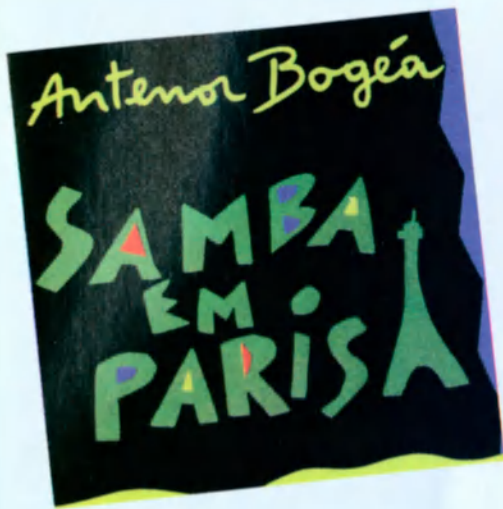
*Harp and Bamboo*

CD Excalibur 841

The harpist Myrdhin and the flautist Pol Huellou employ a variety of bamboo instruments including *shakuhachi* and *bansuri* flutes and a whistle to play Celtic or Celtic-influenced melodies such as "The Trees They Grow So High", "I Wonder What's Keeping My







‘True Love Tonight’ and ‘The Banks of Sullane’. Although the wind instruments are not themselves Celtic, they nonetheless succeed in capturing the dreamlike atmosphere of the moors of Ireland, Scotland and Brittany. The recording reveals the vitality of an ancient civilization whose artistic and musical wealth is only now being rediscovered.

**CÔTE D'IVOIRE:**  
**A Senufo-Fodonon Funerary Vigil**  
**Anthology of Traditional Musics.**  
**CD UNESCO/Audivis D8203**

Funerary vigils are important ceremonies among several West African peoples including the Dogon and the Senufo, just as they are for many of America's black communities. They provide an occasion for music and dancing that can go on for several days and nights. The Senufo-Fodonon, who are well-known for their sculptures as well as their musicianship, celebrate them with the aid of so-called *bolonyen*, ensembles of one-stringed, bow-shaped harps and gourd-rattles. The symbolism of the songs the musicians sing as they play is explained in the booklet that comes with this compact disc. The beat is regular, and the music swings to rhythms that recall Afro-Latin or Caribbeian music. Their

vigorous rituals serve as a reminder that in Africa the dead, promoted to the status of ancestors, are never cut off from the living.

**ANTENOR BOGÉA.**  
**Samba em Paris**  
**CD OBA 144**

Antenor Bogéa is cultural attaché at the Brazilian Embassy in Paris, but by vocation he is a singer. He has just brought out this attractive first record, on which he is accompanied by French and Brazilian musicians and sings in Portuguese, French and English. A self-confessed romantic, Bogéa pays tribute to Paris in the title song, which evokes different parts of the city. But his main subject is love, especially in the melancholy ‘Chant de l’Aube’ (‘Dawn Song’): ‘In the disorder of your heart/My blood got lost, found the

wrong vein. . . .’ Bogéa is a new voice and one that is bound to have an impact on Brazilian music. He already has the seal of Chico Buarque’s approval.

**CLASSICAL MUSIC**

**ARNOLD SCHOENBERG.**  
**Verklärte Nacht, Op. 4. Trio, Op. 45**  
**Juilliard String Quartet.**  
**Walter Trampler. Yo-Yo Ma**  
**CD Sony Classical SK 47 690**

The Juilliard String Quartet, which is probably the finest in the world at the moment, is joined on this disc by viola-player Walter Trampler and cellist Yo-Yo Ma for a moving version of Schoenberg’s early sextet

*Transfigured Night*, based on a poem by Richard Dehmel. Recorded many times before, the work is rendered here with all its subtlety and passion. Its lyricism, characteristic of early twentieth-century Vienna, contrasts with the harshness of the String Trio, one of Schoenberg’s later dodecaphonic works.

**MICHAEL PRAETORIUS.**  
**Magnificat. Aus tiefer Not. Der Tag vertreibt. Venite Exultemus. Maria Magdalena. Peccavi Fateor. Der CXVI Psalm Davids**  
**Huelgas Ensemble. Paul van Nevel**  
**Vivarte series. CD Sony Classical SK 48 039**

The Huelgas Ensemble, which specializes in polyphonic medieval and Renaissance music, here performs several religious pieces by the little-known composer Michael Praetorius (c.1571-1621), who studied philosophy and theology at Frankfurt an der Oder and was influenced by the music of Orlando di Lasso. Both voices and instruments (viola da gambas, sackbuts, recorders, cornet, chorist bassoon) are superb, and the recording is of a high technical quality.







# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## THE SCIENCE OF ECOLOGY

Interviewed in your April 1993 issue ("A time to love. . ."), Luc Ferry served up a hotchpotch of historical facts, lines of thought, political trends and purely personal interpretations which may be confusing for an uninformed reader.

He seems not to understand the scientific meaning of the word "ecology". Ecology is not about the supremacy of some over others but about a balance of ecosystems, of which man forms part.

Today this balance is threatened. Urgent measures are called for, but some people refuse to accept this.

B. BEYS  
BRUSSELS (BELGIUM)

## LIVING IN THE PRESENT

I agree with some of the points made by Luc Ferry, and especially with his view that environmental movements should remain democratic. But in general I feel that he goes too far, notably when he compares Romanticism with Fascism.

Above all I find that he, like all those who think about the meaning of human life, has an attitude that seems to me dangerous and ultimately suicidal. Under the pretext that he is a thinking creature, man feels obliged to give a meaning to life, instead of simply being content to exist, like animals. We chase will o' the wisps, we do not live!

Luc Ferry, like so many people in the Western world before him, seems not to realize that many peoples could not care less whether or not life has an abstract meaning. I feel extremely dubious about all the so-called "values" of the West, even if they improve conditions and provide solutions here and there. I even think that they are negative and ultimately suicidal. I shall

always be hostile to those who behave as if they are the owners and managers of the entire planet, greedy predators who spread ruin and death.

Our future lies on mother earth and nowhere else. Life has no particular meaning except that we should live for the moment, enjoy each day as best we can, and love, fully, gently and at every second, all creatures and things on earth.

BERNARD FORSSE  
COULGENS (FRANCE)

## FAIR EXCHANGE

As a reader of the Thai edition of the *UNESCO Courier*, I very much appreciate the dialogue between cultures which you present in each issue. This is a heartening and necessary task in the world today.

RINDHAMMA ASOKETRAKUL  
BANGKOK (THAILAND)

## FULL MARKS

Throughout my career as a geography teacher who in the last few years has specialized in environmental education, I have found the *UNESCO Courier* to be an extremely useful teaching aid. It is a mine of information and a powerful stimulus to reflection about cultural issues.

I should like to emphasize four aspects of the magazine which I think are particularly useful: the diversity of the viewpoints expressed in it, so that each month's theme is examined with exemplary open-mindedness; the commentary by UNESCO's Director-General, a wide-ranging and stimulating analysis; the interviews, which owe their interest to the choice of the interviewees and the relevance of the questions; and the range of information and shrewd analysis of the Greenwatch section. Congratulations!

MARIA SEVERINA NAVARRETE  
MONTEVIDEO (URUGUAY)

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**THEME OF  
THE NEXT ISSUE  
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# **DISARMAMENT TODAY**

**ALSO FEATURING AN INTERVIEW WITH  
THE AMERICAN BIOLOGIST**

## **JAMES D. WATSON**

**NOBEL LAUREATE  
IN PHYSIOLOGY AND MEDICINE**