

SEPTEMBER 1996

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# A CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT LIFE WORTH LIVING

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INTERVIEW WITH  
**JAVIER  
PÉREZ DE CUÉLLAR**

HERITAGE:  
**THE LAST DAYS OF  
CHAN CHÁN**

ENVIRONMENT:  
**SONORA, A LIVING DESERT**

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.



### **The Archangels and the Tarot**

1995, collage (chalk, coloured pencils and ink, 70 x 50 cm)  
by María-Luz Viaux

The Chilean artist María-Luz Viaux describes her work as follows: "In my collages, my fears and joys are mingled. My works feature Archangels, the perfect beings or heavenly spirits who in Judaeo-Christian culture are sent by God to solve the problems of humankind, and the Moon, an astrological symbol in the Tarot cards which originated in the Oriental tradition. Through fortune-telling using the Tarot, which may have begun in ancient Egypt 5,000 years ago, some people still try to find relief from their anxieties and a glimpse of the unknown future."



D. Aubert © Sigma, Paris

INTERVIEW

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CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

a life worth living



Chris Stowers © Panos Pictures, Londres

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© Charles Lénars, Paris

Cover: Colourfully decorated staircase in a traditional earth-built house in the Asir region of Saudi Arabia. © Thierry Mauger, Paris

interview

# Javier Pérez de Cuéllar

## Our creative diversity



Thierry Prat © Sygma, Paris

**Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, former Secretary-General of the United Nations, headed the independent World Commission on Culture and Development which spent three years (1993-1995) rethinking the notions of development and culture and the relationship between them. Here he outlines the Commission's approach to its task and sums up some of the conclusions it reached. Interview by Raj Isar.**

■ The World Commission on Culture and Development was the first group of distinguished development economists, social scientists, artists and policy-makers to reflect together so intensively on the relationships between culture and development. How does its work take us forward?

**Javier Pérez de Cuéllar:** First, it shows how we can and must broaden the notion of development itself. Development divorced from its human or cultural context is growth without a soul. And economic development in its full flowering is part of a people's culture. In these years of momentous change, which

offer people such unprecedented opportunities yet such unequal access to these opportunities, it is particularly timely, it seems to me, that this idea be asserted and promoted internationally.

Because material measurements of “progress” are no satisfactory index of human welfare, the search for other criteria has led, for example, to the notion of *human development*, that measures improvements in a broad array of capabilities, ranging from political, economic and social freedom to individual opportunities for being healthy, educated, and creative and for enjoying self-respect and human rights. Culture was implied in this notion but it was not explicitly introduced. We have shown why it must be introduced and how it can be. This is an important step forward in rethinking development.

The second advance, it seems to me, is to have transformed the way we look at the pairing of the terms “culture” and “development”. Is it simply culture *and* development? Or is it culture *in* development? Culture *for* development? Or development *for* culture? Once you define culture as we have—as “ways of living together”—and once development is seen as a process that enhances the freedom of people everywhere to pursue whatever goals they have reason to value, then culture must be far more than just an aspect or a means of development.

However important it may be as an instrument of development (or an obstacle to it), culture should not be reduced to being a mere promoter of (or impediment to) economic growth. Rather, it is the end and aim of development when the latter is seen as the flourishing of human existence as a whole. The converse, which is the purely instrumental view, was nicely characterized by one scholar as the “add culture and stir” school. I think many people expected the Commission to at least inventory all the ingredients that one might “add and stir” so as to improve development programmes as cur-

rently conceived, if not produce entirely new recipes of its own!

#### ■ Did you adopt that approach?

**J. P. de C.:** We took a different tack. Human beings value goods and services because of what they contribute to our freedom to live the way we value. And what we have reason to value must itself be a matter of culture. So while it has far-reaching instrumental functions in development, this cannot be all there is to it. There is also the role of culture as a desirable end in itself, as giving meaning to our existence. This dual role applies not only to the promotion of economic growth but to other objectives, such as sustaining the environment, enhancing social cohesion or fostering civil institutions in a society. Insofar as we have reason to value these objectives, naturally we would value the attitudes and behaviours that help us attain them. But when we turn to the more basic question—why concentrate on these objectives in the first place?—culture has to enter in a more fundamental way. Not as a servant of ends, but as the social basis of the ends themselves.

The third important step forward the Commission has made, in my opinion, has been to explore the myriad ways in which cultural diversity is a strength, not a weakness; why there can be as many different versions of development as there are cultures; why we must find ways of allowing peoples from every part of the planet to contribute to “modernity” in their own terms; and why it is vitally important to preserve our diverse heritages in an era so rich in the potential for

**...There is also the role of culture as a desirable end in itself, as giving meaning to our existence.**



**Javier Pérez de Cuéllar**

D. Aubert © Sygma, Paris

even deeper mutual enrichment yet so fraught with the menace of homogenization. This is the basic message we sought to put across in the title—*Our Creative Diversity*—we chose for our report.

Once again, we offer no recipes. To discuss culture today is to admit a multiplicity of readings. Hence instead of tailor-made solutions, we preferred to raise some of the hard questions that people face, particularly in the developing countries. How to deal with the paradoxes of globalization? How to find order and meaning in a world disorder full of uncertainty, incoherence and injustice? How to claim a space for locally rooted culture yet take part in shared, planetary processes? How, in a word, to elaborate their own models of development?

■ **We take your point that there can be no recipes. But what are your main messages?**

**J. P. de C.:** We decided to explore ten key areas in which the interactions between culture and development appeared particularly acute or especially pertinent. In each case, we focused on the challenges of diversity, and the potential of human creativity.

**Intolerance is particularly pernicious when it is the policy of intolerant governments, opening the door to discrimination, segregation and exclusion.**

As the globalization of markets, technology and information sweeps the planet, the fear of growing homogenization induces accelerating fragmentation. People are brought closer together; simultaneously, they are driven apart. Bridges must be built between them. What values can provide shared points of reference, the minimal moral guidance the world must heed? Many different sets of values could enrich such common ground. We for our part identified five principles: human rights and responsibilities; democracy; the protection of minorities; commitment to peaceful conflict resolution and fair negotiation and the promotion of equity.

■ **What was your position on pluralism?**

**J. P. de C.:** We could not avoid reaffirming a commitment to pluralism, as a basic tenet. Not only as an ideal for relations between nations but also within nations. How can each nation create a sense of itself as a civic community, freed from any connotations of ethnic exclusivity?

We asked the question haunted by the ethnic conflicts erupting across the world even as we deliberated—each one the bitter harvest of diversity mismanaged or cynically manipulated, with the terrible price innocent people have had to pay and the consequent rising tide of human despair and anger. Surely the lesson of our terrible century is clear by now: we must learn to rejoice at cultural differences and attempt to learn from them.

Governments can hardly prescribe such attitudes and behaviour as respect and rejoicing, but they can prohibit attacks on people from different cultures and their practices, and they can set the legal stage for mutual tolerance and accommodation. Intolerance is particularly pernicious when it is the policy of intolerant governments. Discrimination, segregation and exclusion based on cultural traits then deny people their basic cultural rights. In these cases strong

**No culture can invalidate another, though it may often be able to enrich it by new concepts, categories and insights.**

international pressures should be used to denounce such policies and practices, as the international community was able to do successfully in South Africa.

■ **What is the role of democracy in this context?**

**J. P. de C.:** The only way to achieve pluralism that delivers equity as well as political stability is to make society an inclusive whole, extending opportunities to all groups. This requires a democratic framework, considerable decentralization of power and equal access to institutions of justice. All of these in turn require real creativity in governance. The notion of creativity was a second leitmotiv for us, as the leaven of diversity. We urged therefore that the idea of creativity be more broadly applied to problem-solving in every field. In the arts and cultural expression, it is too often taken for granted in our world of commodified culture, and its collective and participatory forms remain undervalued. We noted also that scientific and technological knowledge, creatively adapted to local circumstances, can be strongly empowering.

■ **The Commission devoted specific attention to women and young people . . .**

**J. P. de C.:** Development is changing cultural perceptions of women's and men's life cycles as well as patterns of gender relations. It is time to develop agendas which would avoid the dual pitfalls of ethnocentrism and Western bias on the one hand, and unprincipled forms of cultural relativism which deny women their basic human rights in the name of "difference", on the other. Hence it is important, we think, to devise and apply policies with regard to women's rights as human rights; reproductive freedom; and to gender-aware planning and civic and cultural participation.

How can we construct a world in which the defences of peace are built in young minds? Young people today are better able

than their parents to appreciate the diversity of values and forms of expression and are generally more comfortable with technology. Yet they must be helped to realize that no culture can ever be thought to invalidate another—though it may often be able to enrich it by new concepts, categories, and insights. Our generation has a responsibility to encourage positive exposure to both diversity and complexity.

■ **Your recommendations are set forth in an "International Agenda" that some people appear to find over-ambitious.**

**J. P. de C.:** We designed our "International Agenda" to be selective and illustrative, not comprehensive. First and foremost, we wanted it to deepen the analysis of culture and development. We wanted it to focus energies around practical initiatives such as the international mobilization of Cultural Heritage Volunteers and an international plan for gender equality. We hoped it would lead to the emergence of an international consensus on the core issues we raised, particularly through the universal recognition of cultural rights, and of the need to balance these rights with responsibilities.

When we call for a reformed United Nations that really represents "We the peoples of the United Nations", with a two-chamber General Assembly, one with government representatives as at present, and the other representing national civil society organizations, we are perhaps even further away from our goal than the visionaries who first imagined a European union some seventy years ago and were considered hopelessly unrealistic at the time! But we have laboured not only for our peers, but also for our children and our children's children. On the eve of a new millennium, as my fellow Commissioner Celso Furtado has put it, "the challenge we face is to conceive a new Utopia without which the survival of humanity will not be possible." ■

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Fax: 42.73.24.29

Subscriptions: Marie-Thérèse Hardy (Tel.  
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Ngonekeo, Michel Ravassard, Mohamed Salah El Din  
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Tel.: 45.68.45.65

1 year: 211 French francs. 2 years: 396 FF.

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duced in microform (microfilm and/or microfiche) by: (1) Unesco, 7  
Place de Fontenay, 75700 Paris; (2) University Microfilms (Xerox), Ann  
Arbor, Michigan 48100 U.S.A.; (3) N.C.R. Microcard Edition, Indian  
Head Inc., 111 West 40th Street, New York, U.S.A.; (4) Seil and Howell  
Co., Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, Ohio 44691, U.S.A.

IMPRIMÉ EN FRANCE (Printed in France)

DÉPÔT LÉGAL: C1 - SEPTEMBER 1996

COMMISSION PARITAIRE N° 71844 - DIFFUSÉ PAR LES  
N.M.P.P.

Photocomposition, photogravure:

Le Courrier de l'Unesco.

Impression: MAURY IMPRIMEUR,

Z.I. Route d'Étampes, 45331 Malsherbes

ISSN 0041-5278

N° 9-1996-0PI-96-551 A

This issue comprises 52 pages and a 4-page insert  
between pages 2-3 and 50-51.

# What is development?

Is it a soulless process of economic growth dedicated exclusively to the creation of wealth and regarding everything, including culture, as a commodity? Or is it part of a broader endeavour to construct a society whose members are both participants and beneficiaries and whose goals are not limited to economics but shaped by the values to which these people subscribe?

These questions, which have long been asked, were recently re-examined in depth during a three-year enquiry (1993-1995) carried out by a distinguished World Commission on Culture and Development chaired by Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. The Commission's overall findings have recently been published by UNESCO in the form of an excellent report entitled *Our Creative Diversity*.

This issue of the *UNESCO Courier* is naturally more limited in scope than the Report. It is an attempt, via contributions from some of those who helped the World Commission in its deliberations, to present this complex issue to a wide public in simple terms. The conjunction of two such disparate terms as development and culture is in itself enough to give rise to misunderstandings, false problems and false solutions, and therefore invites caution.



The dominant economic system is being called to account. Its driving principle—rampant worldwide competition for profit in an open market—deploys a logic that is based on greed, inequality and pollution and in effect condemns the majority of the world's people to a grim fate. Today this system is being contested at various levels, ranging from root and branch opposition to piecemeal criticism of its specific effects. Culture often seems to be the spearhead of this challenge. But what, one might ask, is the true role and nature of culture?

Some, in the North, simply regard culture as an instrument—as one factor among others in the search for profit or as a corrective to certain excesses of the system of production. Others, in the South, use culture as an emblem of identity which can be brandished against Western ways of life. In so doing, they do not attack the dominant system's fundamental flaws, its propensity to create socio-economic inequalities and environmental damage, but the political and legal institutions that are its concomitants in democracies (individual freedoms, human rights and political pluralism). Here, support for cultural specificity masks the defence of conservative interests in patriarchal and despotic societies or the total rejection of Western society in the name of a programme which is to a greater or lesser extent fundamentalist.

Yet another way of looking at culture (in the broadest sense) is to regard it as a source of self-renewal and a lever of change—as the bearer of moral, aesthetic and spiritual values that can

endow economic activity with nobler purposes than the profit motive, help to liberate people from need and ignorance, stimulate their creative impulses, and establish new forms of solidarity between individuals, between peoples, and between humankind and nature.

The goal of culture regarded in this way is not to detach—and isolate—a given region or community from the rest of the world, but to enable it to play a part in the system of global exchange while enjoying full respect for its dignity, its originality and its essential interests.

Culture in this sense is not at odds with economics; it provides economics with a human face. It is the very core of a society's way of life, defining the purposes and standards which show it at its best.

But if culture is to play this role effectively, it must not be venerated as a sacrosanct immutable tradition but regarded as a malleable process capable of adapting to new situations while retaining a certain essential continuity. It must be able to sacrifice superstitions, habits and inclinations that have become oppressive, and—in the interests of self-renewal and free expression—to borrow from other societies criteria of efficiency that have proved their worth.

But surely there is nothing new in this. Are not today's living cultures those which refused to become fossilized and, instead of trying to make time stand still, took root in time, drew fertility from it and thus remained eternally youthful?

**BAHGAT ELNADI AND ADEL RIFAAT**



Gérard Busio, *Mémoire de la liberté, Déclaration universelle des droits de l'Homme*, Sipa, Paris

# A MATTER OF CHOICE

BY AMARTYA SEN

Is culture merely an adjunct to development?

***The tree of life***, a work by the French artist Niki de Saint Phalle.

**T**here are two ways of looking at development in the contemporary world. One, deeply influenced by growth economics and the values that underlie it, regards development as essentially a rapid and sustained expansion of gross national (or domestic) product per head, perhaps qualified by some requirement that the fruits of this expansion reach all sections of the community. I shall call this “the opulence view of development.” In this approach, values and culture have no foundational place.

A second, contrasting view sees development as a process that enhances the freedom of those involved to pursue whatever objectives they value. In this, which I shall call “the effective freedom view of development”, the importance of economic opulence is left to

the values of the people involved, and is thus culturally conditioned.

In line with this view of development, the expansion of human capability may be described as the central feature of development. The concept of a person’s “capability” can be traced back to Aristotle, for whom the life of a person could be seen as a sequence of things the person does, or states of being he or she achieves, and which constitute a collection of “functionings”. “Capability” refers to the alternative combinations of functionings from which a person can choose. Thus, the notion of capability is essentially one of freedom—the range of options a person has in deciding what kind of life to lead. Poverty, in this view, lies not merely in the impoverished state in which a person may actually live, but also in the lack of real opportunity—

imposed by social constraints as well as personal circumstances—to choose other types of living. Even low incomes, meagre possessions, and other aspects of what are standardly seen as economic poverty are relevant ultimately because of their role in curtailing capabilities (that is, in severely restricting people's opportunities to lead valuable and valued lives).

The application of this broader view of development thus involves specific hypotheses about the values people have reason to cherish. Economists who have studied this problem have been particularly attentive to indicators of quality of life such as longevity, good health, adequate nutrition, basic education, absence of gender-based inequality, and basic political and social freedoms.

This approach, which is based on people's

**E**ducation is important not just for the help that it might give to economic growth, but because it is an essential part of cultural development.”

Below, Thai schoolchildren enjoy a break from classwork.

values, differs from the radical *a priori* judgment implicit in the “opulence” view of development. If, given the choice, people would rather have longer and more disease-free lives with more autonomy rather than a higher level of GNP per head, then the “effective freedom” view of development can be applied to their case, but not the “opulence” view of development.

In the opulence view of development, the focus is uncompromisingly on the growth of incomes. However, while classical economic theorists from Adam Smith to John Stuart Mill did indeed write a great deal on the growth of real income per head, they saw income as one of several different means to important ends, and they discussed extensively the nature of these ends—very different as they are from income. ▶



© Sebastião Salgado/Magnum, Paris

► Smith, Mill and other classical authors were deeply concerned with the idea that we value many things other than income and wealth which relate to real opportunities to lead the kind of life we would value living. Their writings reveal great interest in the foundational importance of our ability to do the things we value, and have reason to value. They commented fairly extensively on the connection between these matters, on the one hand, and income, wealth, and other economic circumstances, on the other, and they had much to say on public policies that support and promote the more basic ends on which we may choose to concentrate.

## Evaluating economic growth

In the opulence view of development, the role of culture is purely *instrumental*, helping in particular to promote rapid economic growth. The question thus arises as to whether economic growth can be valued for its own sake, thus leading to the treasuring of those things (including culture) that promote growth? Or is economic growth itself an instrument, with less claim to a foundational role than cultural aspects of human life may have? It is hard to think that people have good reason to value goods and services irrespective of what they do to our freedom to live in a way we would value. It is also difficult to accept that culture can have a purely instrumental role. Surely, what we have reason to value must be itself a matter of culture, and in this sense we cannot reduce culture to a subsidiary position as a mere promoter of economic growth. How can we make our reasoned valuing completely valueless?

It is thus important to acknowledge the far-reaching instrumental functions of culture in development but also to recognize that culture cannot be reduced to these functions. Culture also plays, for example, an intrinsic role in evaluating the process of economic development, as well as in making room for less immediate objectives such as sustaining the environment and preserving the diversity of species.

Some cultural parameters can help, and others will hinder, the fulfilment of these objectives, and we have grounds for valuing those cultural attitudes and features that foster this fulfilment. But when we turn to the more basic question, namely, why concentrate on these objectives, culture must appear not as a servant of ends, but as the social basis of those ends themselves. We cannot begin to understand the so-called “cultural dimension of development”

without taking note of *each* of these two roles of culture.

## A foundational role

Since the language of “sustaining” has become common in the literature of development, it is not surprising that the phrase “culturally sustainable development” has made its appearance. Is this the right direction to take, in moving away from a purely instrumental view of culture in development?

There are two major drawbacks in using language of this kind. First, it ignores the *constitutive* role of culture. If culture is only to do the “sustaining”, we still have to ask what is to be sustained. Focusing on “culturally sustainable development” is to alienate culture from its foundational role in judging development, and to treat it just as a *means* of sustaining “development”—no matter how that is defined. This is, in other words, an

**N**ella Sancho, secretary-general of “Gabriela”, a women’s movement in the Philippines, takes the floor at a meeting.



Brenda Prince © Format, London

**I**n a view of development deeply influenced by growth economics, values and culture have no foundational place". Right, children in the mining centre of Jharia (India).



Raghu Rai © Magnum, Paris

ornamental debasement of culture to the status of a glorified instrument in sustaining "development", defined independently.

The second problem comes from a different direction. Culture admits of dynamism, evolution and refinement. Culture in every country in the world has changed over the centuries. The rhetoric of "sustaining"—as opposed to having the freedom to grow and develop—frames the cultural debate in prematurely conservationist terms. There is a dis-analogy with the environment, here. When it comes to the natural environment, we don't try to improve the best that nature gave us; we try to "conserve" what we have got, and perhaps return to what we had earlier. But culture is the fountain of our creativity and progress. Sustaining is too feeble a role for it to play in development. Once we shift our attention from the purely instrumental view of culture and accept its constructive and creative role, we have to see development in terms that include cultural development as well.

### The three roles of culture

Culture comes into development in three quite distinct—though interrelated—ways.

■ **Constitutive role:** Development in the broadest sense includes cultural development. Cultural development is a basic and inseparable component of development in general. If people are deprived of the opportunity to understand and cultivate their creativity, then that in itself is a hindrance to

development (not just because it may hurt economic growth, or some other externally specified objective). Basic education is thus important not just for the help that it might give to economic growth, but because it is an essential part of cultural development.

■ **Evaluative role:** What we value is, ultimately, influencable by culture. There is no externally sanctified importance to economic growth or any other such objective, and the things that we intrinsically value reflect the impact of our culture. Even if the same things are valued in many different societies (if, for example, longer and happier lives without ill-health are sought in many quite different societies), this does not make them independent of values or cultures, but only indicates the congruence of valuational reasons in distinct societies.

■ **Instrumental role:** No matter what objectives we value, their pursuit is to some extent influenced by the nature of our cultures and ethics. While there is more to culture than this, we must not ignore the fact that cultural parameters do *inter alia* have strong instrumental roles. This applies not merely to the promotion of economic growth, but also to the achievement of other objectives such as raising the quality of life.

Central to culture is freedom, and in particular, the freedom to decide what we have reason to value, and what lives we have reason to seek. The instrumental, the evaluative and the constructive roles of culture all relate, ultimately, to this freedom. ■

**AMARTYA SEN,**  
of India, is Professor of  
Economics and Philosophy and  
Lamont University Professor at  
Harvard University (U.S.A.).

# BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

BY LOURDES ARIZPE



© Jean-Pierre Cataláa, Paris

**P***arcours à la paix* ("Route to peace", 1989-1994) is the name of a 7,000-m<sup>2</sup> public square (above) created in the north Paris suburb of Blanc Mesnil by French architect and sculptor Françoise Cataláa. The leaning bronze shaft is decorated with 150 symbols from all over the world (detail, opposite page). The word "peace" is engraved on three "doors of peace" (at right of photo above) in many languages and in writing styles from different periods.

**F**or the first time in history, the global market and telecommunications have brought people of all the cultures of the world into permanent contact. While this is an astonishing historical achievement, it is bringing both benefits and liabilities. Better communications between cultures may bring greater understanding, or greater friction. Increased trade, conducted in a just and equitable manner, may provide more people with access to necessary products and services; yet it may also wipe out livelihoods and leave people destitute as information on the new markets eludes them. More technology increases our understanding and capacity for managing the environment and our own genetic processes: yet it may lead to the de-skilling of the cultures in a "brave new world". The manner in which these processes evolve will depend on how people react to such new possibilities.

This is the reason why culture needs to be made visible as the context in which societies evolve. Development thinking and policies

The shifting of cultural boundaries is an inevitable consequence of the globalization of communications

must, as a matter of urgency, take up the issues of co-operation, community, trust, ethnicity and identity since these make up the social fabric on which the polity and the economy are based. In many parts of the world, exclusive emphasis on competition and the market are altering these sensitive equilibrium factors and exacerbating cultural tensions and feelings of uncertainty.

The way to situate oneself in the world most readily is by enumerating the traits of one's culture, which are best defined by being set in contrast with those of other cultures. Human beings enjoy a feeling of political and psychological certainty by being enclosed within symbolically visible cultural boundaries, although these are contextualized in historically continuous cultural flows.

## Shifting boundaries

Now that these boundaries are shifting, people are having to rethink their place in a microglobal world. In the past, national borders circumscribed laws, state policies, economics, politics, education and, as a rule,

**LOURDES ARIZPE**

is UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Culture.

demography, as well as culturally expressive collective rituals and ceremonies. This highly centralized, mechanical scheme must now open up to more flexible participative arrangements in which the realities of economic interdependence and cultural identities may be incorporated.

## Complex identities

The great battle today is between a humanist, rational culture, which proposes respect for all cultures and religions, and manichean cultures, which posit the intolerant imposition of exclusive creeds.

The rational culture seeks political solutions to today's eruption of entitlements (human, national, bioethical, gender, ethnic and religious) which involves a new co-evolutionary vision that will lead to new agreements, reorganizing existing institutions and, in some cases, building new ones. At the individual level, it advocates multi-layered arrangements of identities that will allow a person to recognize his or her place in the world simultaneously as a planetary inhabitant, a citizen of a nation-state, a gendered being, an affiliate of a particular culture—or several, according to ancestry, geography or choice—and a holder of beliefs in a given religion.

The opposing cosmopolitical scheme entails the enforced imposition on other people of one's own cultural affiliation, political system or religious creed. Such a vision may lead to successive killings since each victory ensures that revenge will be sought by the defeated party within a few years.

What is new in today's shifting of cultural boundaries is that these are interwoven with the political reorganization of the role of nation-states on the global stage. Significantly, new legislation, institutions and participation mechanisms related to cultural pluralism constitute by their very nature proposals for new political schemes to organize public life.

However, while creativity has brought

about a revolution in technology, communications and the arts, it has barely touched institutions and procedures of governance. The transformation of institutions and the search for civic ties to allow different groups of people to live together are more urgent than ever. They must be based on recognition of the equal dignity of people and of their cultures. Experience has taught us that governance that denies cultural identities leads to barren tyranny, and culture without governance leads to unmanageable conflict. ■



# THE AGE OF THE MIGRANT ARTIST

BY MICHAEL HAERDTER

**O**ur globalizing world seems to be marked by rapidly increasing chaos, a profound crisis of the ideas of order, coherence and limitation that long prevailed and whose legend we are still addicted to. Linear systems in the sciences are slowly giving way to what has been labelled "chaos theory". A clear and calculable image of the world is fading, and the ideas of national integrity and coherence are increasingly revealed as an illusion.

The traditional concept of separate cultures based on ethnic homogeneity and national singularity has become untenable, whether we like it or not. Cultures today are in general characterized by hybridization. Our lives are defined by more than one culture of which our personalities are crossing points. We have hyphenated identities, and our century might be seen as a "hyphenated" period whose dramatic turning points and murderous climaxes reveal the death-throes of one world and the birth-pangs of another.

The ivory tower in which solitary artists strove for transcendental purity has been abandoned. Post-modern artists have left their lonely studios and returned to the marketplaces of the world. Instead of creating timeless works of museum art, they communicate ideas and emotions, often by provocative concepts or irritating objects and installations. The formalist master perfecting his style over a lifetime is a model which has been replaced by that of the artist capable of formally mastering an existential message or situation at any moment of his or her life. Art today is largely interventionist and temporary. It can happen anywhere. The studio of the postmodern artist is the world.

Migrating artists are among the many trans-cultural messengers of a world whose keywords are nomadism and globalism. The postmodern invention and worldwide spreading of residential arts centres are one response to the needs of artists and intellectuals to experience the world and its many environments and cultures, to be temporarily part of creative communities and to exchange ideas and knowhow. The networking of centres across national and cultural barriers is part of the post-modern game, as is the crossing of borders between arts and technologies that many of these centres are able to provide. ■

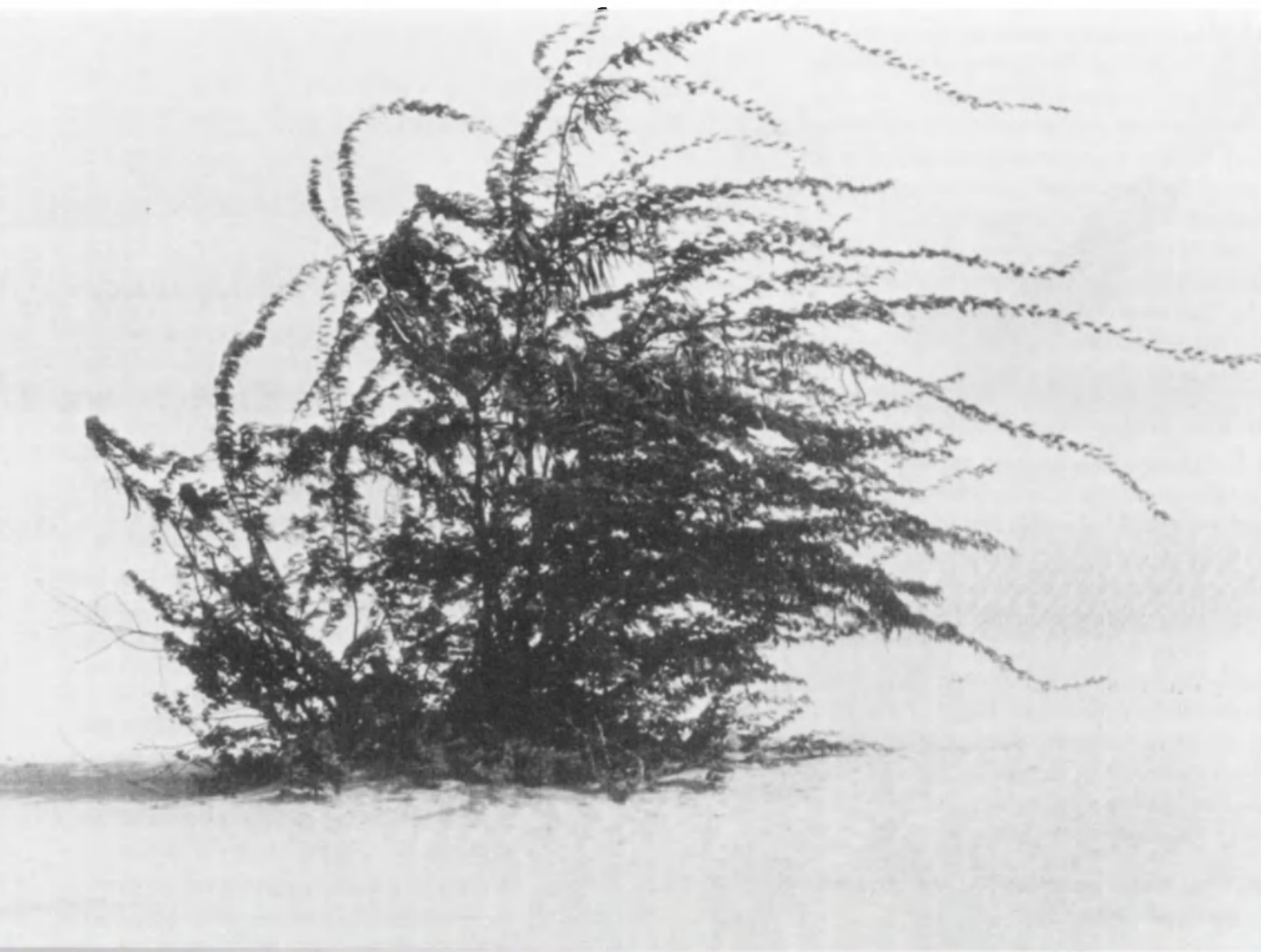
**MICHAEL HAERDTER,**

of Germany, is director of the Kunsthierhaus Bethanien, an institute for the promotion of contemporary art.



Religious revivalism often has political and social overtones. What is its role in modern pluralist societies?





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# THE RESURGENCE OF RELIGION

## INTERVIEW WITH JOHN L. ESPOSITO

■ **The resurgence of religion is one of the most powerful forces to have influenced culture and development in recent times.**

**When did it start? In what parts of the world is it prevalent?**

**John L. Esposito:** Iran's Islamic revolution in 1978-1979 threw light on a reassertion of Islam that had been going on for more than a decade in some Islamic countries. Since then Islam has re-emerged as a major force in political and social development. Certain movements have engaged in campaigns of terror in attempts to destabilize or overthrow governments. Moderate Islamists have emerged as social and political activists, espousing the re-islamization of society.

In Latin America, Catholic liberation theology has informed attempts at social and political reform. It emerged shortly after the Medellín conference of Catholic bishops in 1968, which reflected the spirit of the Second Vatican Council,

and its message was re-emphasized at the 1979 conference of Catholic bishops at Puebla, with its emphasis on Christianity's "preferential option for the poor". It has been accompanied by greater recognition of the role and participation of the laity in the Church, and a greater emphasis on the relationship of the Church to the world, in particular to issues of justice and equality. In Eastern Europe, Christian churches played a significant role in the fall of communism and the emergence of a democracy movement.

In Sri Lanka, conflict between Sinhalese (Buddhists) and Tamils (Hindus) has had devastating consequences during the past decade. India, an ostensibly secular state, has experienced multiple communal conflicts, often motivated by the challenge of religious nationalism. Clashes between Muslims and Hindus at Avodhya, where Hindus seized a mosque claiming it as an ancient Hindu religious site, and conflict over family law have ▶

► heightened tensions between the two communities. In the southern Philippines, militant Muslim factions have agitated for autonomy from the “Christian dominated” government. In the former Soviet Union, emergent religious nationalism in Central Asia is matched by new religio-political impulses of the Russian Orthodox Church.

All these events remind us of the potential force of religion in the developing world in particular. They reveal the fragility of many nation-states and the issues of identity and legitimacy that contribute to the vulnerability of many governments.

#### ■ What forms do these movements take?

**J. L. E.:** Revivalist movements are communities within communities. They view themselves as just societies established within broader unjust societies. They tend to be manifestations of popular religion, that is, organizations that are born from populist movements rather than from the official or institutional church or clergy. These organizations create a new religious consciousness and sense of identity and mission. Religious beliefs and rituals are reinterpreted to provide direction, as the faithful combine their quest for happiness in the next life with a determined effort to create a better life in the here and now.

#### ■ What are the causes of religious revivalism in the developing world?

**J. L. E.:** The new and better world promised by modernizing elites and development experts has not materialized for many. The modern nation-state with its secularism, consumerism and unfettered individualism has often produced societies in which the needs of the majority are subordinated to those of a minority. Maldistribution of wealth, corruption, unemployment and housing shortages have become endemic. Modernization and urbanization have resulted in overcrowded cities, social dislocation and culture shock, urban slums and barrios of shattered expectations, a breakdown of the family in the midst of the more “permissive and foreign” ways of the city.

The development of non-Western countries was based upon a theory of modernization that equated development with the progressive westernization and secularization of society. Religion tended to be regarded as a major hindrance to political and social change. Science and technology were seen as powerful handmaidens in this process of secular development. However, not only did modernization remain primarily the preserve of a small minority elite of society, but most importantly, the secularization of processes and institutions did not easily translate into the secularization of minds and culture.

**‘Injustice has driven many to their local place of worship where the scripture is read and experienced as a message to their hopeless or desperate situation.’**

#### ■ What is the basis of this religious revival?

**J. L. E.:** Generally speaking, its representatives claim to offer a more authentic and religiously-based society. They espouse themes of liberation, social justice and equality, and project themselves as champions of the poor and oppressed. Injustice has driven many to their local mosques or churches where the scripture is read and experienced as a message to their hopeless or desperate situation. In some countries, Islamic movements have provided an alternative set of social welfare services. Similarly, Catholic liberation theology has been essentially a response to the plight of the poor.

#### ■ So is this a kind of backlash by those who have lost out from development, who are turning their backs on the world and rejecting modern technology and the communications revolution?

**J. L. E.:** Most revivalists do not believe that they are retreating. Many see themselves as reclaiming the original message and guidance of their prophets and scriptures, a message obscured with the passage of time and the assault of modern secularism. They fault or incriminate the impact not only of colonialism but also of despotic governments that came later, entrenched elites, and a clergy that itself came to constitute an unresponsive religious establishment.

These movements have attracted educated professionals—teachers, engineers, lawyers, scientists and bureaucrats. Many of their leaders are graduates from faculties of medicine, science and engineering, who have harnessed modern technology—radio, television, audio and videocassettes, computers and fax machines—to organize and mobilize mass support and disseminate their religious and socio-political message.

Thus technology and communications have not simply been the purveyors of modern Western, secular culture, but also of a revitalized religious message. Villagers no longer live in relatively isolated worlds solely dependent upon their local religious leaders. Television, radio and audio-cassettes now expose them to a diversity of voices and interpretations of faith and belief. Modernization has provided, perhaps unwittingly, a major impetus for this global religious resurgence.

**JOHN L. ESPOSITO,**  
of the United States, is Professor  
of Religion and International  
Affairs at Georgetown University.



■ **What could be done to open up communication between secular modernists and religious reformers? Is there any common ground between them?**

**J. L. E.:** Underestimation of the continued presence and power of religion, and its role as a source of identity and solidarity, has led some modernists to reject the challenge of seeking a civilizational dialogue. For myself, I do not think there is a necessary incompatibility between religion and modern change, or democracy. History has revealed many examples of the flexibility or plasticity of religious traditions, as well as examples of intransigence. The transition in the West from divine right monarchies and feudalism to modern political and economic institutions took centuries, and so too did the religious response to the challenge of modernity.

We must realize that the modern transformation of politics, society and religion is an open-ended process, imperfect and incomplete. Just as the successes of the modern nation-state cannot be denied, so too its shortcomings must be identified and addressed.

The eradication of poverty and illiteracy might address some of the causes of religious and political extremism, but it would not fully respond to the deeper religio-cultural issues of identity, authenticity, culture and values that are of equal importance. Addressing the difficult issues of religion and modernity will require new theoretical and conceptual perspectives.

■ **How do you see the future?**

**J. L. E.:** Religion and culture will remain a significant force in development. The “either . . . or” dichotomies and allegiances of the past (secular and religious, sacred and profane, traditional and modern) will need to be transcended as governments, societies, development experts and religious leaders seek to identify areas for mutual understanding and co-operation.

■ **Aren't you forgetting that certain forms of religious fundamentalism based on intolerance and fanaticism pose a serious threat?**

**'History has revealed many examples of the flexibility or plasticity of religious traditions.'**

**W**ow (1990), a waxwork by the Japanese artist Toshi.

**J. L. E.:** There can be no doubt that religious extremism is a serious threat. But the global resurgence of religion and religious movements is a far broader phenomenon, whose existence challenges us to think about the specific forms that pluralism should take in the societies of the South.



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# A RECIPE FOR DISPOSSESSION

INTERVIEW WITH SMITU KOTHARI

Current development practice is a threat to both cultural pluralism and biological diversity

■ You believe that current patterns of development are inimical to cultural pluralism in the Third World. Why is this?

**Smitu Kothari:** In most Third World countries, the kind of development that has been pursued in the last five decades has widened the gap between those who have benefited from it and those who have become its victims. Structural inequity within and between nations, discriminatory and racist attitudes and the politics of natural resource use are at the core of this polarization.

Take the question of natural resources. The unsustainable extraction of natural resources is controlled by and benefits a privileged few, while the millions who depend on these natural resources, not



**A**bove, a ceremonial dance during a meeting between Zuni Indian communities at Gallup (New Mexico).

Right, Muscovites queue on Pushkin Square outside a newly-opened fast food restaurant.

only for their subsistence but also as a source of their identity, are marginalized. Global cultural and economic hegemony, supported by new communication technologies, is radically altering or threatening biological and cultural diversity. These issues are at the heart of the relationship between development and culture.

■ **Has nothing been done to halt these trends?**

**S. K.:** Significant efforts have been made to deal with these structural causes of inequity and there have been many plans to alleviate poverty, and yet the gap between rich and poor has grown wider. In India, my own country, for instance, in 1990, 20 per cent of the population controlled 60 per cent of the assets and the bottom 20 per cent only controlled 1 per cent. The polarization of wealth is even more striking in countries like Mexico, where the top twenty-four families in 1993 owned more assets than 150 million people at the bottom of society. It could be argued that despite a growth in national and global middle classes, most national and international development has reproduced and intensified powerlessness.

Inequality of access to productive resources and widespread lack (and loss) of control over decision-making among a majority of the world's population is one of the strongest threats to the diversity of cultures and the wisdom and knowledge enshrined in them. Market rationality and profit maximization are fundamentally incompatible with ecological sustainability, cultural plurality and social justice. And yet the fact that poverty and scarcity can be induced by development is not even grudgingly acknowledged, and there continues to be an almost spiritual belief that the market is a panacea.

■ **What effect are the emerging global alignments between multilateral banks, transnational corporations and economic and political elites having on cultural diversity?**

**S. K.:** Many people are arguing that these alignments are recolonizing much of the planet in order to sustain and widen their economic dominance. Newer, more sophisticated forms of colonialism, including the colonialism of the mind, may be a far greater threat than the colonizations that occurred in the past.

Current trends suggest that multilateral regimes like the World Trade Organization, though seemingly non-partisan, are bound to further capitalist accumulation by transnational corporations, industrialized countries and Third World elites.

Transnational corporations (TNCs) exercise phenomenal influence over the global economy. The top fifteen corporations now have gross incomes that are larger than the GDP of 120 countries. TNCs control 70 per cent of world trade and own or control 80 per cent of the land that grows crops for export. TNCs have been the main agencies that have aggressively pushed for deregulation and privatization not only in national economies but also in multilateral agreements and conventions in the world economy as a whole. Efforts to make TNCs accountable and to develop a regime of social control have floundered under the might of the TNC lobby.

If the marketplace is the arena where ethical and moral questions of our role on this planet are sorted out, then culture will be restricted to accepting the dominant trends and to displays of theatre and dance during national festivals and visits by foreign dignitaries.

■ **How do the governments of developing countries react to this?**

**S. K.:** They hope that the dynamism and impetus generated by "development" projects will lead to progress and prosperity from which all citizens will benefit through a trickle-down process and that the fruits of science and technology will spread to all. This presumption is proving difficult ▶



Brenda Prince © Format, London

► to justify. Experience from countries across the world suggests that the bitter medicine of structural adjustment favours the privileged and devalues or destroys those cultures, knowledge systems and ecologies that stand in the way of maximizing productivity and profit. At a time when the desire for democratic process and democratic institutions is growing, these countries continue to be largely dominated by processes and institutions which remain unaccountable and undemocratic.

Most Third World states operating under a dependent, capitalist mode of production have gradually dispensed with traditional institutions and spiritual ideologies, and seek legitimacy instead through economic growth and the doctrine of national security. In turn they endorse structures of economic development and hegemonic communications—both national and global—and privilege a corpus of dominant languages at the expense of a vast pluralism of “people’s languages”.

### ■ And how are people, rather than governments, responding?

**S. K.:** Faced with growing economic and cultural insecurity, communities are reverting back to primary or primordial loyalties. These are often redefined and manipulated by politicians to serve their own ends. Resurgent ethnicities do not necessarily become secular and egalitarian, still less do they promote a truly democratic framework of diversity and pluralism. States have, often successfully, tried to selectively involve members of these ethnic groups either to win their favour, to nurture dissension, to retain control or seek political concessions.

The past decade has also seen states absorb potentially “disruptive” associations, as well as other dissenting activity. Competing claimants have been absorbed into the machinery wherever possible. When routine controls have been ineffective, repressive measures have often been used. All this makes the task of nurturing political and cultural pluralism more difficult. Despite these trends, millions of people are involved in diverse forms of collective action—from linking the blocks of an ecologically and socially just society to mass mobilization in the form of social movements.

### ■ What role should the state play in cultural life?

**S. K.:** Serious problems arise when the state has responsibility to interfere in culture. But then, should this be better left to civil society? In this case, who will be involved and how can representation and participation in cultural life be ensured? Won’t the state always have to play some kind of non-partisan mediatory role? If not the state, then who will create the conditions that will nurture a plurality of languages and literature? Who will preserve and vitalize the folk heritage?

This is a highly delicate issue since the insensitive handling of cultural identities creates an atmosphere of mistrust resulting in clashes between different ethnic groups and fomenting or resuscitating recessive and hostile memories.

Paradoxically, there is a convergence between a majority of Marxist and liberal opinion which

**‘Most national and international development so far has reproduced and intensified powerlessness.’**

argues that culturally defined groups must be integrated into the “mainstream”, either to hasten the “proletarianization” of the rural areas or to achieve a more “integrated” and homogeneous national society. In fact, most development literature in both these traditions fails to adequately acknowledge and explain both the homogenizing steamroller effects of development and the persistent vitality of culturally based movements and their effects on people.

The situation becomes more complex when, over the years, elites emerge from cultures that have previously been subjugated and discriminated against and seek power or legitimacy by integrating themselves into the institutional mainstream. In some cases, these elites have abused their power and collaborated in the exploitation of the natural resource base that is the source of the identities and subsistence economies of their ethnic group.

It is a tragedy that, in most parts of the Third World, popular cultures, particularly those of indigenous peoples, have been marginalized and subjected to an unequal conflict with powerful external political, economic and cultural forces. Cultural symbols that give meaning to lives are being lost, and to compound this loss, the newer cultural experiences that people are exposed to, such as television, advertising and consumerism, give rise to a structure of meanings and values that further undermine social and cultural security.

### ■ What specific impact are these processes having on languages in developing countries?

**S. K.:** In countries like India there is still a phenomenal range of languages, but most ruling elites regard this diversity as pre-modern and inefficient, as leading to political instability and technical backwardness. Their attitude reflects an obsessive concern with standardizing societies and streamlining their activities, jeopardizing the maintenance of variation as a vital reality of everyday life.

### ■ Is there a connection between environmental and cultural issues?

**S. K.:** For many culturally and economically marginalized people whose lives are critically dependent on the natural resource base, the struggle to preserve biodiversity forms part of the struggle for cultural diversity. For them, nature is not merely a biological entity—a repository of forest, mineral and water—but a cultural entity. What they are defending is not pristine nature but “social nature.” Their position as defenders derives not so much from the concept of “nature under threat”, as from an integral and integrated relationship with the land, water and forest as the fundamental basis for their own elemental

**SMITU KOTHARI,**  
of India, is a co-founder of Lokayan, a centre promoting exchange between intellectuals from India and the rest of the world.



Steve Thomas © Panos Pictures, London

**A** traditional mutual aid group ploughs, sows and applies fertilizer in Zimbabwe.

struggle to survive. Nature, for a vast majority of them, is the basis of their cosmology.

Unfortunately, what is also being witnessed all over the world is a pervasive feeling among the middle class and those who defend a strong centralized state structure that politically and culturally “underdeveloped” people lack political maturity, rationality and efficiency to play a central role in modern times.

■ **What can be done to maintain cultural diversity?**

**S. K.:** There is a need to break the prevailing belief that national and global elites are the cultural vanguard, that knowledge defined by them is liberating. There are some signs that this may be starting to happen. The past two decades have seen a gradual build-up of popular initiatives on the part of those who have been marginalized and who seek the democratization of the state and the establishment of an egalitarian social order. These people articulate an ecologically-sensitive, locally-rooted system of governance. In India, for instance, the rise of the Dalit movement and the

growing self-confidence and assertiveness of the tribal people (of whom there are 60 million from over 200 different cultural groups) are evidence of fundamental shifts that are taking place in cultural and political life.

It is, in fact, becoming increasingly evident that, despite advances in urbanization and communications, there is little likelihood that culturally diverse ways of living can be homogenized, little chance that a single culture can be woven from such disparate strands. Nevertheless, there is no room for complacency, even though a diversity of subcultures will prevail. These subcultures will need understanding and committed representatives to contest the hegemony of the authoritarian (though increasingly sophisticated) state or reductionist economic development.

The fundamental challenge is that of creating the political space in which the diversity of cultures can evolve democratic processes of mutual understanding and tolerance. It is a formidable challenge since it calls on us to reverse the conquest of society by the economy, restore an ethic of self-discipline and recognize that positive values involve dignity as well as modest material security. We must commit ourselves to a struggle based on the belief that development is not feasible without restoring ethics to economics, without returning to a symbiotic relationship with nature, without taking into account in all we do every person on our fragile and beleaguered planet. ■

**‘There is a need to break away from the prevailing belief that knowledge defined by elites is necessarily liberating.’**

Modern  
technology and  
management  
techniques  
cannot begin  
to correct the  
problems they  
create until  
they question  
their own  
dominance



**S**urui Amerindian children watch a logging road being cut through their reservation.



# A VICIOUS CIRCLE

BY TERRENCE HEATH

**T**he accomplishments of technology have been the text of a hymn to progress that has been loudly sung for the past 200 years. It has been largely a hymn celebrating human control over Nature.

Recently, however, the celebration has become more muted as we have begun to realize some of the effects that technological change can have not only on natural systems but also on our social and political systems. The most obvious concerns are what we call "environmental problems". These include the impact of the automobile and the household refrigerator as well as the incalculable issues associated with the operation of nuclear power stations and the disposal of nuclear wastes. Many other problems are connected with heavy industry, raw material extraction, production processes, disposal methods, the use of non-degradable packaging and the overconsumption of renewable and non-renewable resources made possible through "improved" harvesting technology.

## Managing the environment

Solutions to these problems are almost always conceived of in terms of managing the environment. Through monitoring, regulation, better science and technology, and conservation, we hope to correct at least the worst aspects of what is wrong. This approach to controlling environmental degradation is largely what is understood by the term "sustainable development". Basically, we are saying that the instruments by which the situation has been created can also be used to correct it. But while we must applaud Western culture's concern to address the problems that it created in the first place, it is clear that this approach almost invariably precludes looking outside the boundaries of

Western culture when trying to define what sustainable means.

At the same time as technology is being used to attempt to correct the problems it has created, there is a growing awareness of the social and political consequences of technology. Examples could be drawn from indigenous cultures around the globe, but the Inuit of Arctic Canada are a particularly striking example of a people who live in a remote part of a highly industrialized nation and have had to cope with dramatic change in two generations.

The rifle, the powerboat and the skidoo have, for example, changed the Inuits' technological impact on their environment, and imported technologies have also changed social aspects of their culture. Inuit hunters can now travel to herds, make kills and bring the animals back to the settlement for processing. It is no longer necessary for them to live in camps close to the herds, and women and children no longer take part in the hunt itself as they did during the time of camp life. The women and children become increasingly settlement-minded, and this attitude is reinforced by schools, health care facilities, jobs, and permanent, independent homes.

Relationships within the family change; the use of language changes; the role of elders changes. In addition to its effects on the animals and the terrain, the use of rifle, powerboat and skidoo also leads to a shift in cultural relationships and in the relationships of the Inuit with what they call *nunavut* ("our land"). And, because the technology comes from Western culture, the Inuit's culture is also influenced by the methodologies and assumptions of Western culture.

The case of the Inuit is relevant because people of "civilized" cultures are becoming increasingly uneasy with the results of their activities and are turning to so-called "primitive" cultures for wisdom to guide them. The ►



Mark Edwards © Still Pictures, London

► wisdom they seek is largely what might be called selective spirituality, that is, sayings, prophecies and advice which can be separated from the traditional context in which they arise and which is often basic to understanding them. They are rarely attracted to the science, technology and sustainable development for subsistence of many of these cultures, even though these may be the only base for coping with environmental degradation.

Western technology and management techniques are not only an integral part of market- and commodity-based culture, they also change every culture they come into contact with. Because they are part of Western culture which has a global system of production, distribution and consumption, they absorb, change and destroy other cultures, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Even if local cultures wished to integrate this technology and these methods, they would have to be protected in order to have the time to absorb and adapt. But Western culture can only provide such protection by dismantling its own dominance.

## The failings of a dominant culture

Western technology and management techniques are successful in dealing with isolated parts of processes, but they are not only inadequate, but actually destructive when dealing with whole, integrated processes. If there is a market for wood products, Western technology and management can be applied to the selection, planting, fertilizing, harvesting and marketing of, say, Eucalyptus trees, but they are singularly incapable of dealing with the integrated system of land, trees, water, human subsistence, religion, art, memory, invention, feedback and inter-regional relationships which have to be modified or destroyed in order to satisfy market demand.

The shadow side of the development of Western culture has been a scramble to counter-balance, modify, explain away, and, on occasion, replace these methods which were initially overwhelmingly successful but eventually became terribly dangerous. Environmental degradation, which was accepted

**R**ight, children in Cameroon paint a mural as part of an environmental education project.

Below, a demonstration against the construction of a motorway across Twyford Down in the south of England.





Mark Edwards © Still Pictures, London

in the belief that the resources of the planet are limitless, now threatens the very economic base that sustains the consumption patterns of Western culture.

## When green is the dominant colour

Three strategic objectives have been proposed in order to cope with this degradation: maintenance of essential ecological processes and life-support systems, preservation of genetic diversity, and sustainable use of species and ecosystems.

There is a growing interest in attempting to include environmental costs in the economics of development. These costs are increasingly being referred to as “externalities”, which in itself is semantically interesting in assessing the mindset which is developing them. There is even talk of the “counterproductivities” of economic growth, such as the stress caused by what used to be called

### TERRENCE HEATH

is a Canadian consultant on the arts and the environment.

“labour saving devices”. The industrial world has moved from efficiency experts to stress management experts.

Governments in the industrialized world are attempting to adapt these solutions to their legislative and development policies. In Europe and North America, laws and regulations are slowly being put into place and popular awareness is growing, both formally through curricular development at all levels of the educational system, and informally through non-governmental organizations dedicated to environmentalism. There is also a growing awareness of the global responsibilities that some industrial enterprises should embrace. “Being green” is even seen as a competitive advantage for industrial firms of the future.

No one would wish to discourage efforts by Western culture to correct these problems. Many if not most of those seeking solutions to environmental degradation are motivated by genuine concern. It must be emphasized, however, that their solutions are dominant culture solutions, based on technological and managerial applications of the methods and mores of that culture. Taken to their ultimate stage, they envisage a planet which is totally managed and technologically controlled.

## Us and them

Let us imagine that these approaches are completely successful and then ask whether the resultant world is the world we want to live in. In the North America of the 1950s the answer might have been an enthusiastic “yes”; in the world of the 1990s I think I hear a resounding “no”. How can we act so that we all can enjoy some of the benefits of technology and management and not become their slaves? How can we limit the dominant culture before it destroys itself and everyone else along with it?

The most basic reason to be apprehensive about the ability of Western culture to solve the environmental problems it has created is its marked inability to include itself in the concept of nature. As someone once said in response to a request for a definition of “environment”, “it is everything except me”. The word “environment” itself explains that most clearly. The problems are “out there” and we will address them through technology and management expertise. Coupled to this attitude is the assumption that people, ▶

► usually others, are part of the problem and that the solution lies in technology and management, usually ours. A first step in looking at the entire problem that the planet faces might be simply to apply some of these solutions to Western culture.

Human cultures have adapted ideas, rituals, techniques and beliefs from one another, and it might be argued that the success of the human species has been based on this characteristic ability to learn, to adapt, and to be open to the experience of others (even when at times attempting to destroy them). One of the most problematic issues concerning the future of the planet is the seeming inability of Western culture to understand and take seriously the experience of other cultures which have developed very different solutions to the problem of survival.

Perhaps a first step might be to apply to human cultures some of the solutions being proposed for environmental problems. The destruction of human cultures is arguably more devastating in the long run than the environmental degradation of the planet, which can be seen as its symptom.

Biodiversity is one area of concern to environmentalists today. The loss of species is occurring at a potentially disastrous rate. The triumphant "survival of the fittest" of nineteenth-century science is suddenly sounding hollow as we begin to realize that no species survives by triumphing. Every survival is the result of a complex system of life which involves competition but also involves cooperation and dependence. And beyond that it

involves interdependence and enormous diversity of plant, animal and mineral presence to sustain the cycles within cycles of birth, growth and death. The huge agro-businesses are finding that the one-crop approach may be a short-term triumph for technology and management, but that the long-term results are land degradation, displacement of peoples with the accompanying problems of urbanization and poverty, loss of species, and eventually a curve of falling profits.

## A recipe for disaster

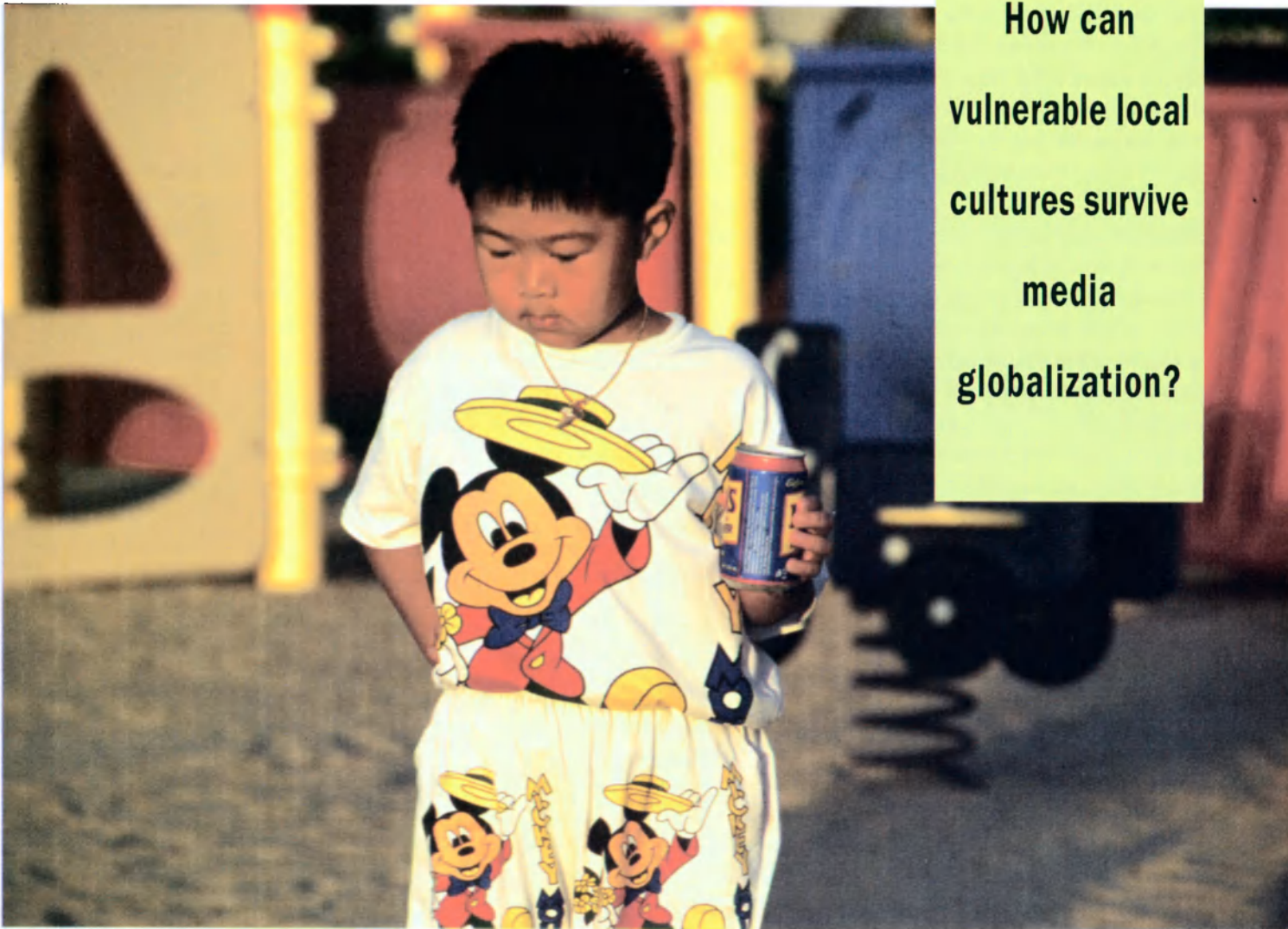
Monoculture in agriculture is a recipe for disaster, but what about monoculture in human culture? We talk volubly about the loss of species and the shrinking of the gene pool in the environment, but what of the loss of languages, words, thoughts, values, skills, rituals, relationships, knowledge, traditions, not to mention songs, dances, plays, adornments, paintings, sculpture and sounds? What of human diversity? It is possible that Western culture can through conservation, preservation and sustainable use partially manage the loss of species. Is it not even more important that the diversity of human cultures should be conserved, preserved and used sustainably? The agro-business, to use a much discussed example, destroys species through the introduction of monocultures; it also destroys human cultures through the concomitant monocultural technology and management. Diversity is as sure a sign of success in human affairs as it is in the environment "out there" and the two are intimately related.

It is difficult to imagine where the counter-balance to Western culture can come from if not from the cultures it has thus far either pushed aside or treated as curios. Without a counter-balance, it is difficult to see Western culture's "solutions" doing anything but furthering the monoculture based on technology and management which have shown themselves inadequate to deal with the situations they create. The most basic solution will have to include local consultation and decision-making and a cessation of mega-projects which destroy environment and human communities for the sake of export markets and foreign capital exigencies. But, beyond that level, we have to recognize that sustainable development is not primarily an economic/environment issue, but an issue of sustaining the interrelationship of human cultures and nature. ■

**A**n environmental education teacher in Cameroon describes the dangers of deforestation to his pupils.



How can  
vulnerable local  
cultures survive  
media  
globalization?



Chris Stowers © Panos Pictures, London

# UNEQUAL PARTNERS

BY NÉSTOR GARCÍA CANCLINI

**T**he far-reaching cultural changes brought about by communication technologies are becoming still more radical through their links with the globalization of production and consumption." Above, a young consumer from Brunei.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the industrialization of the production of material goods, closely linked to the industrialization of culture, gave rise to new concepts of development. The latest stages in this process have been the integration of the mass media into information superhighways and the integration of national cultural circuits into globalized systems.

The merger of computer science and telecommunications, especially direct broadcasting by satellite and fibre optic cables, is enabling the "old" communication media to

be used in new ways. Telephone, cinema, television and video are being brought together in interactive transnational systems which link up the networks possessed by these media in the most remote countries.

These information superhighways are transforming scientific communication, office automation, banking and intercompany services and no doubt also the distribution of cultural performances. Transnational companies programme the circulation of films, cartoons and news in many countries of the South and even in some European countries. Before the end of this century, U.S. films will ▶

► be broadcast by satellite to halls in hundreds of cities on every continent without the limitations imposed by customs tariffs on cinema and video films. What is more, access to video games, teleshopping, national and international news from television and personal computers is being widely extended. The arts are being incorporated into these mass media networks in order to expand their audience and obtain financing.

As a result, the communication industries are among the most dynamic agents of the modern economy and constitute one of the main sources of investment and employment opportunities. In the United States they rank second only to the aerospace industry as a source of export earnings.

### The media explosion

The far-reaching cultural changes brought about by communication technologies are becoming still more radical through their links with the internationalization and globalization of production and consumption, population migrations and tourism. This globalizing movement is throwing national cultures open to news, films, radio, theatre, television serials and other entertainment forms produced outside the country concerned.

Until twenty or thirty years ago, efforts were made to control the challenge of these communication flows between societies by imposing time quotas for the broadcasting of foreign programmes in each country. These controls are no longer feasible today for the following reasons:

the deterritorialization of artistic production

which loosens its ties with any particular country;

the existence of technological facilities which can circulate mass media messages throughout the world;

the increasing cost of film and record production, which makes it hard to recoup investment in a single country;

the monopolistic concentration of production and distribution in the hands of powerful multinational companies;

the transnational expansion of communications, which has weakened local traditions and given birth to a world folklore. Communities of consumers, especially young people, are defining their cultural practices on the basis of homogenized information and styles which seem acceptable to different societies, regardless of their own specific political, religious or national concepts.

### A system with built-in inequalities

Today, all these factors are leading to radical changes which go beyond internationalization or the opening of the geographical frontiers of each society to goods and messages from other cultures. The age of globalization is being accompanied by an interaction between disparate economic and cultural activities brought about by a multi-centred system in which the speed of world-wide transmission and strategies for winning over audiences completely outweigh local historic traditions. The fact remains, however, that this global reorganization of cultures does not eliminate inequalities or asymmetry between the metropolis and outlying regions.

In Latin America, the economic recession of the past decade has impoverished local artistic production and the capacity to play a competitive part in international integration. The contraction of public budgets and the weakness of private enterprise, except for a few big multinational businesses, confront us with the paradox that more intensive trade is being promoted between the receiving countries and the metropolises while these countries are producing fewer books, fewer films and fewer records. Integration is being promoted at the very time when there are few cultural goods to exchange, and falling wages inhibit consumption by the majority of the population.

**C**ent-titres (1996), a work by the French artists Martine Balata and René Jullien.



© Béatrice Soulié Gallery, Paris



Ignacio Gomez Pulido © Le Monde de l'Art, Paris

**A**lphabet (1992), a mixed-media work by the Colombian artist Gustavo Vejarano.

The situation is even more dramatic in the field of high technology and the information superhighways. The subordination of the Latin American countries is being accompanied by the elimination of customs tariffs on foreign products as a result of the conclusion of free trade agreements, while the few subsidies for local technological development are being further eroded.

Greater cultural and scientific dependence on advanced communication technologies which require heavy financial investment and at the same time generate faster innovation, will render the marginal societies more vulnerable to transnational capital and to cultural trends generated outside the region. That is why the multicultural system and its inherent inequalities are typified today not only by the coexistence of different historical traditions but also by the unequal access of different countries, and of the different sectors of each society, to advanced means of transnational communication.

These inequalities have given rise to new

social injustices. The broad masses are involved in the global culture to a limited extent because they only have access to the first stage of the audiovisual industries, i.e. to the entertainment and news programmes put out by radio and television services for which there is no charge.

Some (minority) groups of the middle and working classes have been able to gain access to a second, more up-to-date and sophisticated tier of the communication media in the shape of cable television networks providing environmental and health education, political information on videos, and so forth. Only small fringes of the entrepreneurial, political and academic elite are linked up to the more active forms of communication, i.e. to the third tier of the system, which includes the fax, electronic mail, satellite dishes, and information and game networks ranging from home videos to international electronic networks of the horizontal kind.

## World folklore and traditional culture

The development of policies to promote broad access to these second and third communication tiers is a necessary corollary to the development of modern democratic forms of citizenship which have the capacity to intervene significantly in the processes of global and regional integration. The multinational dimension of problems such as environmental pollution, drug trafficking, and technological and cultural innovation means that citizens need to possess information which transcends the local or national context.

We know that the process of globalization does not spell the end of ethnic, regional and national cultures. The deterritorialization of the arts is accompanied by effective reterritorialization in the form of social movements which place emphasis on local characteristics, and use mass media techniques such as regional radio and television and the creation of micromarkets for folk music and objects.

It is undeniable, however, that in many countries, national and ethnic symbols are ceasing to be the main references of social identity and cohesion. The time has come to think of ways of establishing equitable and creative ties between the homogeneous transnationalization of styles of information and entertainment and the aspiration of local and national cultures to survive. ■

**NÉSTOR GARCÍA CANCLINI**, an Argentine anthropologist, is a professor at the Autonomous Metropolitan University, Mexico City.

# CULTURE IN THE CITY

BY J. MARK SCHUSTER

Shaped for centuries by their cultural aspirations, cities are unique witnesses to the history of the arts

**T**he arts and culture have long been associated with cities. It was there that people congregated to exchange ideas and stimulate one another's creativity, that the economic surplus that could support the arts was centred, and that an appreciative and critical audience was available. The symbols of Greek city culture were the gymnasium, the sanatorium, and the theatre, which encouraged cultural interchange by travel and pilgrimage—a forerunner of today's cultural tourism.

## Good urban design

Cities are also cultural artifacts in themselves. Many of them commissioned artists, architects and designers to embellish them and transform them into generators of the good life. This tradition is still very much alive. The commissioning of large scale public sculpture has become common in the world's major cities, some of which have developed extensive outdoor collections, while others have used a single large-scale artwork to provide themselves with a strong image, much as Paris discovered it had done with the construction of the Eiffel Tower a century ago.

Another old idea that has lost none of its allure is that of building flagship cultural facilities as visible symbols of a city's cultural

commitment. The Sydney (Australia) Opera House, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D. C. (U.S.A.), the Ludwig Museum complex in Cologne (Germany) and the Guggenheim Museum under construction in Bilbao (Spain) are familiar examples. The French government has taken the idea of building flagship cultural facilities to great lengths, developing a number of great works in Paris, including the Pompidou Centre, the Bastille Opera House, the Grand Louvre project and the Grande Arche to the west of the city.

## Cultural Centres

In the late 1950s and 1960s, cultural centres were widely seen as a solution to the problems of housing the arts and of providing access to them. They would create a critical mass of activity and would facilitate cross-disciplinarity in the arts. In France, André Malraux had high hopes for his *Maisons de la*

**A** visitor eyes an exhibit at the Venice Biennale.



© Riccardo Polastro, Rome





© M. E. Newman/Woodfin Camps/Cosmos, Paris

**R**ockefeller Center,  
New York.

*Culture.* They would be "... a meeting place intended to bring cultural wealth of all types, past and present, and of the highest standards, to the widest possible public, with no one excluded."

Yet experience with cultural centres has been mixed. Many turned into retail outlets for cultural products produced in pre-existing cultural capitals. Many were built on a scale out of proportion to local demand. Above all, from an urbanistic point of view, there was a danger that they isolated cultural activities on an island. Other solutions to the

geographic distribution of cultural institutions and activities in the city came to be adopted.

**Mixed-use developments**

Mixed-use developments in which the arts combined with other uses have long existed in many European cities. As the British arts adviser David Pratley has pointed out: "In Paris the commercial development of the gardens of the Palais Royal in the 1780s to create the shopping centre of Europe presaged the 'culturally inclusive' urban shopping mall of ▶

► the twentieth century American city. In England theatres and assembly rooms commonly catered for performance, dances and dinners, and elaborate pleasure gardens combined nature and arts in the promenade, music and dinner. The peculiarly English combination of being ill and having a good time fueled the development of entire spa towns in Bath, Buxton and Cheltenham.”

In the United States, mixed-use developments were rediscovered both because they avoid the sterility of segregated uses and in the hope that they would improve the chronic financial problems of cultural institutions by providing internal cross-subsidization of cultural activities. Rockefeller Center in New York, begun in 1931, was originally intended to provide a home for the Metropolitan Opera and cross-subsidize its operation through revenues from the building that was supposed to be built over it. Though this never happened, Radio City Music Hall, art galleries and theatres were built as part of the Rockefeller Center complex.

Cultural districts include districts based on artistic resources and programmes, which

might be called “arts districts”, and districts based on historic resources, which might be called “heritage districts”. In the former the emphasis has been on integrating cultural development into the overall growth and development of the city rather than on isolating it in a cultural centre. In some cases, this has been done by preserving long-abandoned cultural facilities and developing the district around them. Occasionally, entire new cultural districts, such as the Dallas Arts District (U.S.A.) or the Antigone district in Montpellier (France), have been created as the result of large scale redevelopment plans. Frankfurt (Germany) pursued this idea with great vigour, building between the Museums Bank of the river Main and the Römerberg, twenty-two museums, eighty galleries, seventeen theatres and four concert buildings, an unprecedented concentration of cultural facilities.

### Cities of culture

A more recent idea is to expand the boundaries of the cultural district to those of the city itself. One proposition for halting the urban

**A** firework display at the Edinburgh Festival (U.K.).



K. Paterson © Still Moving, Edinburgh



Westlight © Ron Watts/Cosmos, Paris

decline of Venice for its year-round residents is to attract artists to live and work there, cultural industries to locate there and cultural institutions to develop around the cultural infrastructure already in place.

Another spin on the idea is the European Union's European City of Culture programme. Originally intended to recognize those European cities that had already developed an exemplary public cultural life, the programme has gradually been turned into one that provides an incentive for bidding cities to improve the quality of their cultural offerings. Glasgow's successful bid to become the European city of Culture in 1990 is widely regarded as a turning point in that city's urban revitalization.

## Festivals and celebrations

In addition to such well-established international arts festivals as the Edinburgh Festival (Scotland), the Avignon Festival (France) and

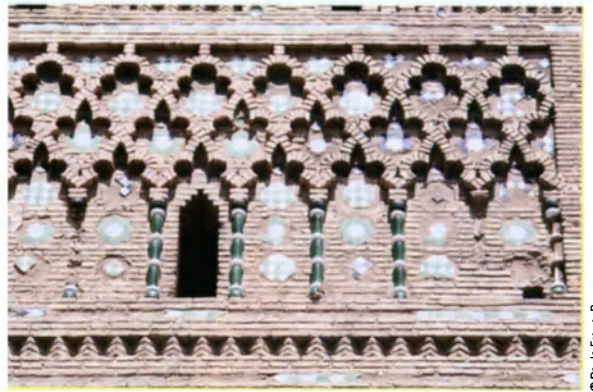
**T**he Sydney Opera House (Australia), designed by Jørn Utzon.

**J. MARK SCHUSTER**, of the United States, is Associate Professor of Urban Studies and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

the Spoleto Festival (Italy), which have long sought to move out of the normal performing venues into the city itself, a new generation of urban festivals is growing out of local arts communities to become part of the shared life of the city. Over twenty years, First Night, the New Year's Eve celebration in Boston, Massachusetts, has become a heavily attended cultural festival with performances by a thousand artists. The idea has been adopted in over 130 cities in North America, and the International Alliance of First Night Celebrations is working to spread the idea of a New Year's Eve celebration of the arts and culture to cities around the world.

Festivals need not be solely based on the performing arts. The Biennales in Bologna and Venice feature the visual arts, and trade fairs based on cultural industries bring another kind of cultural festival to cities, e.g., the Cannes Film Festival and the Frankfurt Book Fair. ■

# 3 flagship projects of the World Decade for Cultural Development



© Paulo Freire, Paris

## Pathways of Arab culture to Latin America

The goal of ACALAPI (Contribution of Arab Culture to Ibero-American Cultures via Spain and Portugal) is to highlight aspects of Arab civilization that have influenced Latin America and flourished there, and to promote exchanges between the Arab and Latin American peoples.

As well as studying mass migrations during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the project sets out to identify elements of Arab culture that survived on the Iberian Peninsula and moved to Latin America. More specifically, the ACALAPI project emphasizes the Arab influence on Latin American art, particularly through Mudejar art and architecture; on agriculture and irrigation techniques; on plants and crops such as sugar, rice, citrus fruit and industrial crops; on horse riding, e.g. introduction of the Barbary horse; on pharmacology and medicine; on literature (the Arab influence on Latin American literature and vice versa); on music and folklore; on language; on the mass media; and on education (again in both directions). The project aims to highlight the role of immigrants in the cultural dialogue between Latin America and the Arab world.

For further information, please contact:  
UNESCO CLT/CID, The ACALAPI Project,  
1, rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex 15, France  
Tel: (33-1) 45 68 43 50; fax: (33-1) 47 83 42 60



P. Higginson/UNESCO

## The Vaka Moana (Ocean Roads) Programme

This project seeks to develop the cultural wealth of the islands of the Pacific region. The Austronesian Pacific word *Vaka* means "canoe", the vessel developed for the explo-

ration and settlement of the region, and describes a social group linked by traditions of common descent and migration. *Moana* means "ocean".

The project aims to encourage close ties between the people of the region through increased knowledge and understanding of common historical links and dependence on the ocean; to promote and disseminate both traditional and scientific knowledge of the sea; to conserve, manage and make appropriate use of the sea's resources for the benefit of the entire region; and to promote all forms of art relating to the sea.

For further information, please contact:  
Mr. Mali Voi,  
Cultural Adviser,  
UNESCO Office for the Pacific States,  
P. O. Box 5766, Matautu-uta P. O.,  
Apia, Western Samoa.  
Tel: (685) 24276;  
fax: (685) 22253.

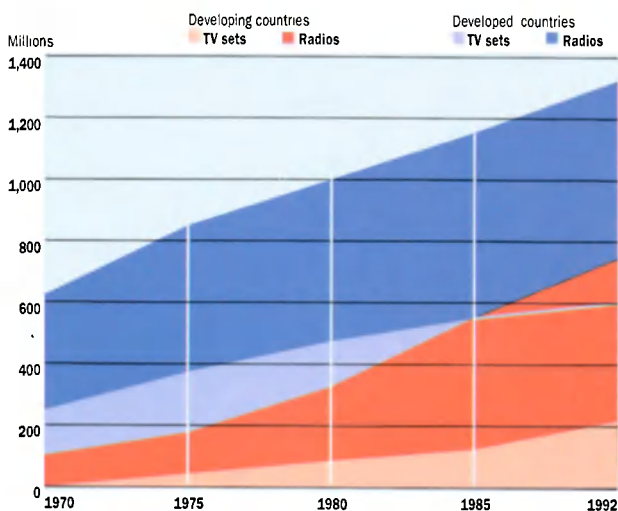


## Cultural production: the gap between developed and developing countries

### Evolution in the number of television and radio receivers in developed and developing countries

Despite persistent inequalities, it is in the audio-visual field that the North-South gap is shrinking the fastest. In 1970 figures show 259 television sets for 1,000 inhabitants in developed countries against 10 in developing countries, or a ratio approximating 1 to 26. The respective figures for radio receivers were 618 and 45, or a ratio of 1 to 13. Some twenty years later, in 1992, the ratio for radios had hardly changed while for television sets, it had narrowed to slightly more than 1 to 8.

Radio remains the privileged means of communication in rural areas. Its further growth is hampered by the cost of receivers and above all, of buying new batteries. The increase in the number of televisions has gone hand in hand with urbanization. But while the number of sets has shot up in the Third World, dependence on programmes produced in the North remains very strong.



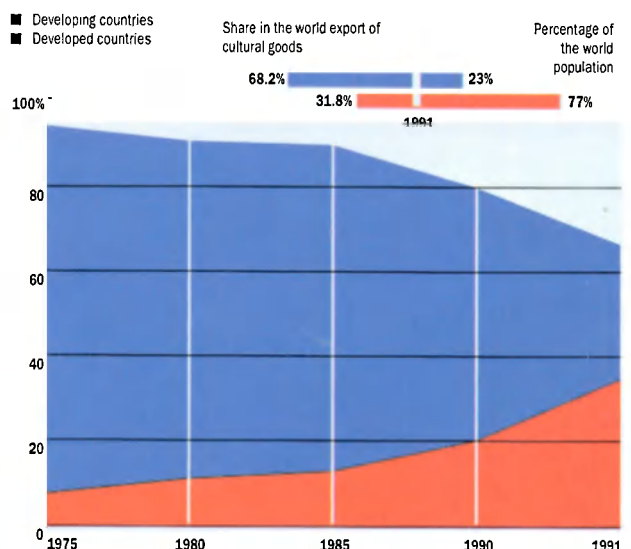
Source:  
UNESCO Sources  
no. 74 (Nov. 1995).  
Source for all data:  
UNESCO Division of  
Statistics.

### International trade in cultural goods

This graph indicates the shares held by developed and developing countries in the world export of cultural goods (printed materials, music, the fine and graphic arts, cinema, photography, the audiovisual field, sporting games and equipment).

The trend is encouraging: developing countries increased their share from less than 10% in 1975 to more than 30% in 1991. Nevertheless, compared with their population, developed countries exported about seven times more cultural goods than the developing countries.

### Share of developed and developing countries in the world export of cultural goods; in relation to population in 1991.



## The World Decade for Cultural Development (1988-1997)

The United Nations launched a World Decade for Cultural Development (1988-1997) with UNESCO as the lead agency, but covering the entire United Nations system.

The Decade has four aims:

- acknowledging the cultural dimension in development;
- asserting and enhancing cultural identities;
- broadening participation in cultural life;
- promoting international cultural co-operation.

The Decade's action plan is based on two definitions adopted by the World Conference on Cultural Policies which was held in Mexico City in 1982. The first of these states that "Culture comprises the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs." In other words, development is a cultural process that cannot be imposed from outside or presented as a gift from benevolent development agencies, but must be generated from within each society itself.

According to the second definition adopted in Mexico City, development is "a complex, comprehensive and multidimensional process which extends beyond mere economic growth to incorporate all dimensions of life and all the energies of a community, all of whose members are called upon to make a contribution and expect to share in the benefits."

Research, pilot projects and the design of appropriate methods and tools have been one part of the Decade's work. Another has been the sensitizing of decision-makers and world leaders to the importance of incorporating cultural considerations into development strategies. It is for this purpose that the World Commission on Culture and Development was set up under the chairmanship of Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, former Secretary-General of the United Nations. ■



### Integrated rural development in the Sahel

In the Sahel region of Africa the cycle of environmental deterioration is rapid, and is accompanied by human misery as traditional lifestyles disintegrate.

UNESCO and its regional counterpart, the Institut du Sahel, have launched two projects. One aims at improving methods of animal husbandry, and the other is designed to strengthen scientific capacity in agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry.

The projects involve the nine Member States of CILSS (Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel)—Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Chad—and have helped to promote an ecological approach to rural development in these countries, by stressing the need to adapt training and research programmes to local socio-economic and cultural conditions. ■

● **For further information, please contact:**

UNESCO, Division of Ecological Sciences,  
1, rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex 15, France  
Fax: (33-1) 40 65 98 97.

Web: <http://www.unesco.org:80/mab/theMabnet.html>



## The World Commission on Culture and Development (1993-1995)

### Its inception

UNESCO, in conjunction with the United Nations, established the World Commission on Culture and Development at the end of 1992. Composed of 12 leading figures from various backgrounds, including four Nobel Prize winners, and chaired by Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, former U. N. Secretary-General, this independent Commission was entrusted with preparing the first-ever action-oriented World Report on the close ties between culture and development. The main objective of this document, entitled *Our Creative Diversity*, is to shape the national cultural and development strategies of the twenty-first century.

### Its members

**President**

Javier Pérez de Cuéllar (Peru)

**Honorary Members**

Crown Prince El Hassan Bin Talal (Jordan), Aung San Suu Kyi (Myanmar), Claude Lévi-Strauss (France), Ilya Prigogine (Belgium), Derek Walcott (Saint Lucia), Elie Wiesel (United States)

**Members**

Lourdes Arizpe (Mexico), Yoro K. Fall (Senegal), Kurt Furgler (Switzerland), Celso Furtado (Brazil), Niki Goulandris (Greece), Keith Griffin (United Kingdom), Mahbub ul Haq (Pakistan), Elizabeth Jelin

(Argentina), Angeline Kamba (Zimbabwe), Ole-Henrik Magga (Norway), Nikita Mikhailov (Russian Federation), Chie Nakane (Japan), Leila Takla (Egypt)

**Observers**

Luis Bernardo Honwana (Mozambique), Mr. Sitakant Mahapatra (India)

### Its recommendations

The major recommendations adopted by the World Commission at the end of its three-year work are set forth in an International Agenda. They are as follows:

- Publication of an independent annual report on culture and development.
- Preparation of new culturally-sensitive development strategies to fully take into account the human factor of development.
- International mobilization of Cultural Heritage Volunteers.
- An International Plan for Gender Equality.
- Implementation of policies designed to enhance access to and diversity and competition within the international media system.
- Promotion of media rights and self-regulation.
- Protection of cultural rights as human rights.
- The implementation of global ethics in global governance.
- A people-centred United Nations.
- A Global Summit on Culture and Development.

# Federico Mayor

## Living in tomorrow's cities



Unesco/CI Jacques, Montreal

What will tomorrow's cities be like? Above all, will they be decent places to live in?

The city is a focus of far-reaching changes in our time: By the year 2025, an estimated 83 per cent of the population of the industrialized countries and 61 per cent of the population of the South will be living in urban areas. But while cities are focal points of progress and social change, they are also crucibles of crisis and social tensions.

Urbanization is taking place on three levels: in megacities, in medium-sized cities and in inter-urban areas.

Megacities, cities with more than 4 or 5 million inhabitants, are not specific to the industrialized countries. By 2025 18 of the world's 25 largest cities are likely to be situated in the South. As great centres of international communication and exchange, these "global cities" form part of an emerging new world map which increasingly ignores the North-South divide between industrialized and developing countries.

Medium-sized cities with a population ranging from 100,000 to 2 or 3 million are autonomous from and subordinate to the megacities. They give structure to rural areas and connect them with the urban world. Developments of this kind in Asia and Latin America are the world's fastest-growing urban areas, facing management problems comparable to those of large metropolises.

Thirdly, the networks of exchange that link these cities form a global urban framework within which the labour force is being redistributed and large-scale population movements are taking place.

While cities are places of dynamism, innovation and opportunity, they also harbour poverty, violence, pollution, unemployment, social exclusion, criminality, insecurity, drugs and squalor. The problem of urban poverty is today being discussed in terms (*exclusion* in France, *underclass* in the United States, *marginalidad* in Latin America) which reflect three different representations of urban space—inside/outside, high/low and centre/periphery.

### Cities for citizens

The city is thus a meeting-point of three crises: a crisis provoked by cleavages in society linked to social and economic injustice; a crisis affecting the types of social relations traditionally associated with the urban habitat; and a crisis of governance and political representation.

Although no two cities are alike, urban development must follow one common guideline. The city and the economy must be made to serve humankind, and not the reverse, as is the case at present.

The enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms presupposes the exercise of citizenship and participation in the life of the community. The right to housing, the right to a roof overhead for oneself and one's family, is a prerequisite for citizenship. UNESCO therefore has a duty to remind the international community that the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights requires that "appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right" be taken.

Natural resources should be effectively managed in big cities, but at present these are places where water and energy are squandered. Cities also swallow up increasing amounts of land as they continue to expand over arable areas and green spaces. The expansion of coastal cities even affects the marine environment. In the last quarter of a century the population of New York City has risen by 5 per cent, but the area it covers has increased by 61 per cent. Measures must be taken to ensure that activities to protect the urban environment become a source of income and enable the people who live in cities to take charge of running them.

In many cases the management structures of large cities are inconsistent with their demographic development. UNESCO supports the introduction of urban governance structures that clearly delineate the respective areas of jurisdiction and responsibility of central and local authorities. But it should not be forgotten that democratic and effective urban governance is based on the participation of city-dwellers and citizens' organizations in the life of their community.

### An open-ended heritage

Three main challenges face the cities of the twenty-first century. The first is the introduction of democracy and the creation of an urban community to which all citizens belong; the second is the control of urban development and hence the governance of cities; and the third is the development and control of urban engineering, especially during the current transition to a renewed sense of public interest and to flexible negotiating procedures between public bodies and private individuals.

Urban development has the potential to promote social progress, improved access to information, education and health, and the enrichment of ways of life and cultural exchanges. But this calls for equality of access to the city—to its physical infrastructure, to education facilities and employment. UNESCO intends to work towards this end on two fronts: knowledge generation and action in the field.

The city is an essential link between the individual and the state. Just as local democracy and citizenship are the cornerstones of the city as a moral edifice, social apartheid is a sign of its degeneracy. Citizenship must be rooted in a sense of solidarity arising from an urban culture that is neither a standardized international culture nor a patchwork of antagonistic cultures but the outgrowth of a sense of place and membership of a great urban community.

The city is an open-ended heritage and each city has its own cultural personality. Modern building materials,

which bring improvements in terms of space-saving, health and safety, are often at odds with aesthetic and climatic considerations in the countries where they are used. Science and the arts must be harnessed to serve the city via an interdisciplinary approach that encourages the emergence of a new generation of builders. The architecture of the twenty-first century will have to strike a difficult balance between modern energy-saving technology and aesthetic traditions which exist in their own right and which it would be wrong to ignore.

### Training for city-dwellers

This kind of strategic urbanism must be seen in terms of sustainable urban development. The use of durable materials that are consistent with sound management of the environment must be encouraged. Water, which is indispensable for hygiene, is being wasted at such a rate that it is bound to be a major international issue in the coming century, if it is not one already. Cities are heavy consumers of energy, and will have to find new renewable and less polluting energy sources. World energy demand, which is expected to double in the next thirty years, will have an incalculable effect on raw material reserves and on the environment.

As a place where people live and move and have their being, the city must provide equal access to the modern communications and information media. In this way everyone will have an opportunity to participate in the life of the community and of the world. If tomorrow's city dwellers are to be well adapted to their urban environment, they will have to learn as early as possible to consider the city as a living environment, to feel self-respect and respect for others.

UNESCO has developed an approach to these problems which has three complementary components—understanding, action, and information—and has created a number of programmes to implement this threefold strategy. The Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme, the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), and the International Geological Correlation Programme (IGCP) all aim to increase and disseminate knowledge. Secondly, a number of training schemes for those concerned with urban issues are built into the MAB and MOST programmes. They include schemes supported by non-governmental organizations in many parts of the world for restoring historic buildings, rehabilitating urban centres, and promoting vernacular architecture and environmental and population education. Finally, since knowledge and expertise are only useful if they are shared, UNESCO has developed a clearing house for information-exchange and a data bank as part of the MOST programme. UNESCO is also pursuing a communication policy designed to help town-planners, officials, educators, journalists and civic organizations to strengthen solidarity, tolerance, respect for cultural diversity and the culture of peace—in a word, everything that can form a common bond between men and women everywhere. ■

# The last days of Chan Chán



© Charles Lénars, Paris

by **Alfredo Pita**

Capital of the great Chimú empire in what is now Peru, Chan Chán was one of the great cities of pre-Columbian America

On the sandy reaches of Peru's northern coast, lost in the wilderness a few kilometres from the Pacific Ocean, lie the slumbering vestiges of Chan Chán, a huge and history-packed city built of adobe, which for centuries has withstood sea winds, earthquakes and rains, which are uncommon but destructive in this arid region of the subtropical zone.

But the greatest destruction of all has been wrought by people in search of building materials and treasures. Intruders and plunderers have gradually destroyed the temples, disfigured the houses and desecrated the tombs of the

former capital of the Chimú Empire, which after its decline fell into the hands of the Incas and the Spanish, before finally being abandoned. Nothing, then, remains of Chan Chán's past splendours, except a huge expanse of ruins covering almost 20 square kilometres.

The name Chan Chán apparently comes from the Mohica term *jang-jang* ("sun-sun"). Little is known of what life was like there in ancient times. But the modern visitor, after tarrying a while in the dead city, waiting for nightfall and forgetting the distant roar of the motorway, may feel the past spring to life and sense the throb of the thousands of people who lived, worked and dreamed there.

It is not hard to imagine them strolling through the city's well-organized network of narrow streets, entering little houses, palaces and temples, tilling the land, harvesting the produce of their orchards and kitchen gardens, and observing the stars in the hope of learning the truth about the future and getting an answer from the distant worlds they thought they had come from. Like the founder of their city, Tacaynamo (a mysterious figure who arrived there by sea in the eleventh or twelfth century), the inhabitants of Chan Chán thought they were descended from four stars of the "Pata" constellation, which is known to us as Orion.





Aerial view of the ruins of Chan Chán. The city was built in the form of a rectangle. The centre of the city consisted of 10 walled citadels or quadrangles linked by streets and passageways. At centre of photo is Tschudi citadel.

And the visitor who feels weary and falls asleep beneath a tamarind tree may dream of the people of ancient Chan Chán and see them looking up at the skies by torchlight—these two young men, for example, who have suddenly stopped walking along the sea shore and are scrutinizing the starry heavens to find out what the future holds in store and how much further they have to go to reach their destination, Chan Chán, the capital.

### Premonitory dreams

The two men are called Alentee and Malakán. One is a prince and administrator, the other a sculptor and potter. But they have both

come from Paramonga, a war-torn area on the furthest reaches of the kingdom. They bear bad tidings. The fortresses that were holding back the advancing Incas have been falling one after another. Disaster looms unless major reinforcements are sent immediately.

They know the city is not far away now, but they have been travelling along the shore for nearly three days with hardly any sleep. The following day they are to appear before their lord, Minchancamán (the Chimo-Cápa). In order to present him with a clear report of the situation, they first need some rest. They walk into the dunes and, covering themselves with their light coats, lie

down on a bed of warm sand.

They sleep fitfully. Their dreams are haunted by the same images—their approaching fate, the end of time, the collapse of everything that has made their lives what they are. They belong to different social classes but have been friends since childhood. Alentee is a nobleman, while Malakán is of humble origin, though he comes from a family of artists—which in a sense makes him a nobleman: no one has objected to the pledges of love he has exchanged with Tsel, his friend's young sister.

All this, and their whole world, is now in mortal danger. The terrifyingly efficient army of the Inca Pachacútec has been taking strongholds and cities in the south one after the other, and also threatens to swoop down on the kingdom from the east. These are the tidings they are bringing home: that the lords of Cuzco have enough troops and weapons to bring down for good the proud Chimú Empire, which has refused to hand over its riches and is preventing them from invading its vast and prosperous coastal lands.

The Great Chimú Empire had slowly grown up around the city in the Moche valley where Tacaynamo, founder of the city and the kingdom, had arrived centuries earlier. He did not arrive alone: noble warriors and other personages accompanied him on great rafts. They found a land devastated by war and the ruins of the dying Mochica kingdom, which had known greatness centuries earlier. Now the Quechua of Cuzco were about to seize the country, just as Tacaynamo had done in his time; and the Chimú, if they survived, would have to wait upon and pay tribute to a sovereign other than Minchancamán.

The great prince Minchancamán, a descendant of Tacaynamo and, like him, a son of the stars and the sea, has brought the kingdom to the height of its glory. A federative rather than a conquering

### ALFREDO PITA

is a Peruvian journalist who is currently working with Agence France-Presse in Paris.



► power, the Great Chimú Empire now stretches from Paramonga and Huarney in the south to Tumbes and Guayaquil in the north. The cities and minor lordships pay tribute to the great prince. Their finest children and artists live in the capital. Depending on their origins and the art they practise, they inhabit a district in the ten "citadels" (or palaces) which, clustering together like an enormous beehive, make up Chan Chán.

"It has always been so, and maybe it will always be so as long as time continues on its course, driving the clouds, the river waters and the sea," says Malakán. And his friend replies: "if Suarí, the old woman who sells delicious *chicha* (maize beer) at the market in the gardeners' quarter is to be believed, it has been prophesied that within one or two generations other founding fathers will arrive dressed in glittering garments. They will be the sons not of the stars, but of the sun or the volcano, for they will bech fire. They will arrive in huge ships; they will defeat and subjugate all the peoples in this part of the world, including the proud inhabitants of Cuzco." "If that is true," says the potter, "and if the Incas enter the great city and take control of it, then our descendants will ally themselves with these new gods and we shall again be free and masters of our land." "We shall help them

so we can take revenge," Alentec adds. "But the vanquished have no rights before the victors. They owe them submission."

### A world on the march

With alarm, Alentec and Malakán see in their dreams all the cities they have known, with their temples and their fortresses. They can feel themselves becoming children again, racing one sunny afternoon through Chan Chán's narrow streets and up and down its steps, beneath the city's trapezoid walls, which are as high as five or six tall men. They know every nook and cranny of its rectangular citadels, of the walls marking the dividing line between the fishermen in the north and the farmers in the south, between the potters and the brass-founders. The capital has only one entrance gate, giving straight onto its narrow streets. This makes it easier not only to control the population but to defend the city: even the most seasoned troops will find they have fallen inextricably into a trap if they try to invade Chan Chán. Alentec thinks: "This defence system should safeguard our future." But his friend, as though reading his thoughts, retorts: "Think again. We are already being devoured from within, just as the sweet, fleshy, snow-white fruit of the cherimoya tree is eaten by the worm."

Alentec knows what Malakán is

Above, decorated walls in the great courtyard of Tschudi citadel.

Above right, gold handle of a ceremonial knife or *tumi*, decorated with the effigy of the god Naymlap. This example of Chimú art (12th-15th centuries) is from the Lambayeque valley, Peru.

Plinth of a temple wall. It is adorned by a carved frieze of birds surmounted by small niches within which idols may have been placed.



referring to. When faced with their Inca invaders, the inhabitants of the southern cities have already been tempted to change sides. And certain generals in control of border fortresses are also beginning to wonder whether it is worthwhile resisting.

What, then, is going to happen to all those people in the bustling streets of Chan Chán, who squeeze their way past herds of llamas laden with maize to make *chicha* and other mountain produce, and men carrying huge baskets full of glistening fish back from Huanchaco. Alentec and Malakán walk in silence through squares surrounded by neatly aligned dwellings inhabited by humble folk. They go into the great market, wide-eyed with curiosity and wonderment at everything they see.

In the craftsmen's quarter, they admire the pottery made by Malakán's father. His jugs are the



same black colour as those of his fellow potters, but they bear the stamp of his personality and temperament. The neck of one of the jugs represents the head and headdress of a male figure solemnly making love to a woman. Children burst into laughter because they think the figures portray the potter's neighbours. His pots, on the other hand, are a natural reddish colour obtained by oxidization. Malakán also uses these techniques, but there is nothing light-hearted about his version of realism, and his sculptural compositions amaze both connoisseurs and laymen with the way they describe the joys and sorrows of Chimú men and women, not forgetting the animals that are their faithful companions.

The two men then enter a temple while a religious ceremony is being celebrated and look in amazement at the finery of the dignitaries as they file before the high priest. The highly sophisticated art of the Chimú goldsmiths is abundantly evident in the gold and silver used for worship, and in the masks, breastplates and bracelets worn by the nobility. The officiating priest raises above his head a huge gold *tumi* (ceremonial knife), with turquoise inlays and a handle representing the divine figure of the founding father. The knife is half as high as a man and so heavy that the priest finds it difficult to hold aloft. The Chimo-Cápac wears a gold mask and gauntlets, as well as a diadem with pendant figurines that probably tell a story. He is followed by a procession of men and women wearing head-

bands decorated with feathers. Their faces and clothes are covered with gold and precious stones: small discs, nose ornaments, earrings, rings, pearl necklaces and gold chains decorated with human or animal figurines.

Alentec and Malakán are excited by the brilliance of all this gold and jewelry—but in fact it is the fire of the rising sun that rouses them from their slumbers. The sun's rays will soon strike the bas-reliefs and stuccoed paintings in Munchancamán's Palace. The two men look for the waters of the huge canal which has enabled the engineers of the Great Chimú Empire to enlarge the Moche Valley and turn it into a vast orchard. After washing themselves and taking a few sips of water, they return to the road that will lead them to the palace. Their news is not good, but it is a magnificent day and what disturbed their sleep was perhaps no more than a bad dream. There might still be a way out, a road to salvation they do not know about, but which the Chimo-Cápac does. In an hour's time they will be before him. They shout out to announce their arrival, and sentries answer them from the top of the city walls. They can hear the sound of voices and dogs barking. As soon as they pass through the palace door, members of the sovereign's household will run up to welcome them in the main courtyard.

History is certainly waiting for them on the other side of the door—in that very courtyard where a modern visitor lies dreaming in the cool shade of a tamarind tree. ■

## CHAN CHÁN IN BRIEF

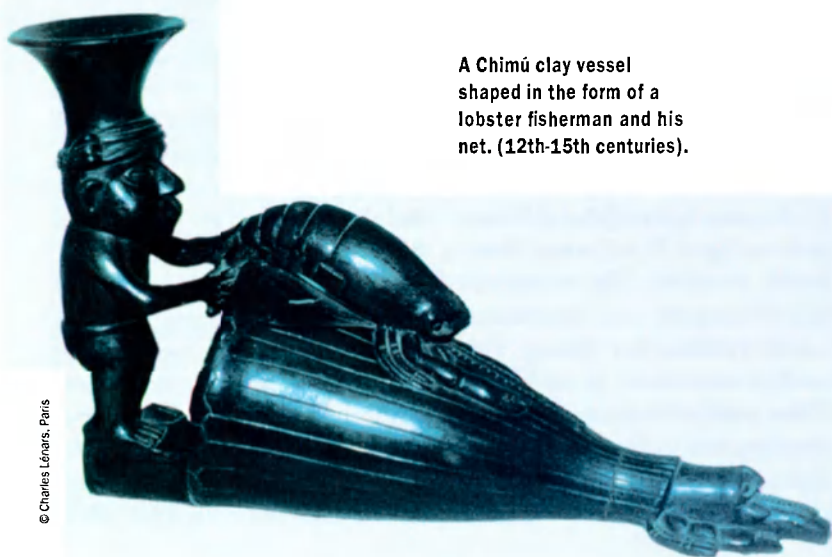
The great pre-Inca metropolis of Chan Chán is located on the right bank of the Moche 5 km from the town of Trujillo, on the road that leads to the port of Huanchaco in northern Peru (La Libertad department). It has been on UNESCO's World heritage List since 1986.

Chan Chán, which was the capital of the Great Chimú Empire, is the largest pre-Hispanic city in Latin America: it extends over an area of 20 km<sup>2</sup> and had about 35,000 inhabitants.

According to legend, the city was founded in the 11th or 12th century by a mysterious figure who arrived by sea—as in the case of other peoples and nations of Latin America.

The Spanish conquistadors and their chroniclers—Father Cabello de Balboa in about 1586, and Carlos Marcelo Corne between 1604 and 1610, collected legends that evoked its past splendour. Archaeological evidence suggests that the Chimú civilization succeeded the Mochica culture in about 1200, on the very spot where that culture had developed since the 4th century.

At the height of the Great Chimú Empire, the Moche Valley (or the Santa Catalina Valley) became the nerve centre of a vast empire. A highly sophisticated irrigation system diverted the river waters along a canal about 80 km long and watered the arid region around Chan Chán, rendering it fertile to a degree that is difficult to imagine today. ■



A Chimú clay vessel shaped in the form of a lobster fisherman and his net. (12th-15th centuries).



A Chimú feathered headdress. Chimú art (12th-15th centuries).

# greenwatch

## Sonora, a living desert

by France Bequette

Straddling the borderline between the United States and Mexico, the Sonoran Desert stretches on the American side from California to Arizona and on the Mexican from Baja California to the state of Sonora. It is home to the world's largest cactus, succulents and a profusion of bushes, not to mention numerous species of birds, insects and mammals. It can get so hot and it rains so little that the first missionaries to set foot in the area likened it to Hell. From the plant and wildlife point of view it is one of the richest deserts in the world and has been lived in by humans for more than 12,000 years.

On the northern side of the border, the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument (ORPI) was proclaimed a national monument in 1937, then a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1976. South of the border, several areas that had been protected for a number of years—El Pinacate, the Gran Desierto de Altar, the upper reaches of the Gulf of California and the Colorado River Delta—were joined in a single

Biosphere Reserve named Alto Golfo de California in 1995. Three years before saw the beginnings of a bold project for a Biosphere Reserve that would cover some 28,700 km<sup>2</sup> and encompass the entire Sonoran Desert, both its U.S. and Mexican sections. The idea emerged from a workshop attended by scientists and administrators from the two countries, who on the same occasion created the International Sonoran Desert Alliance (ISDA) in order to maintain an ongoing dialogue between Mexicans, Americans and Tohono O'odham Native Americans, and to integrate conservation, research, education and sustainable development.

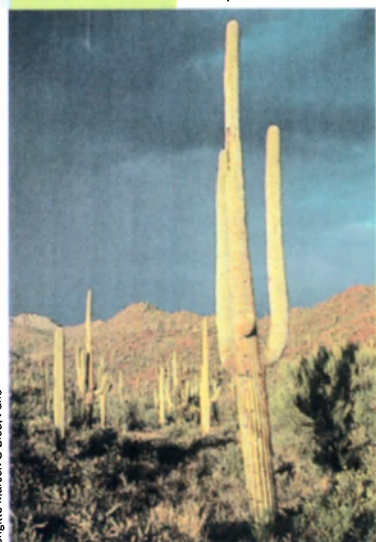
### Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument

The most spectacular part of the Sonoran Desert and the most typical of its ecosystem is probably the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, which covers 134,000 hectares on the American side of the border. Despite the aridity of the climate (an average of 23 cm of sporadic rain a year) and summer temperatures nudging 60° Celsius, 574 of the 730 vascular plant species (or tracheophyta) in the desert are found there; and more than 90 per cent of these are endemic. The most impressive plants are the giant saguaro (*Carnegiea gigantea*), which has become the symbol of the area, and the Organ Pipe Cactus (*Stenocereus thurberi*). The commonest tree is the palo verde (*Cercidium microphyllum*) that blooms with small yellow flowers in the spring. There is also an abundance of jojoba (*Simmondsia chinensis*), agave (*Agave deserti*) and one-seed juniper (*Juniperus monosperma*).

There is also a wide variety of wildlife: 55 species of mammals, four species of amphibians, 43 species of snakes, 260 bird species and even one species of fish, the desert pupfish (*Cyprinodon macularius eremus*), that is unique to the United States. It may well seem strange to talk of fish and the desert in the same breath, but ORPI contains 11 springs, three of which are perennial. The largest is Quitobaquito which discharges nearly 130 litres per minute and sustains a pond and a green oasis. It was a vital staging-post for travellers 400 years ago as they passed along the Camino del Diablo on their way from Mexico to California in search of gold and other minerals. It was already a cross-roads at the time of the Hohokam culture between 300 B.C. and 1400 A.D.

But intensive agricultural development and urbanization in the neighbouring Mexican state of Sonora, especially since the installation of a high-voltage powerline at Hermosillo, are posing serious problems for ORPI. Over 200 wells pump 5,300 litres of water per minute from the groundwater of the Sonoyta River basin, i.e. two and a half times its replenishment capacity. Aerial spraying of crops and the introduction of cultivated exotic plants are added threats to the park's natural resources. On the American side unchecked irrigation has already caused the salination of 200,000 hectares of land.

ORPI is bordered on the west by the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, which was created in 1939 to protect the Desert Bighorn Sheep (*Ovis canadensis mexicana*) and the Sonoran Pronghorn Antelope (*Antilocapra americana sonoriensis*). In 1942, how-



In foreground, a giant saguaro cactus plant (*Carnegiea gigantea*).



Galen Rowell/Mountainlight © Explorer, Paris

Aerial view of branches of the Colorado river delta, which flows from the Rocky Mountains to the Gulf of California. Below right, the desert pupfish (*Cyprinodon macularius*).

ever, its 348,000 hectares became the second largest artillery range in the United States, now called the Barry M. Goldwater Air Force Range. The U.S. Air Force and Navy carry out air-to-air target practice all year long, and the ground is littered with unexploded devices and debris. Low-altitude flying by supersonic jet fighters frightens the animals, but experts admit that the refuge's environment is generally in excellent shape because access to it is severely restricted.

A study by Jennifer Jenkins of the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies points up what she calls the "inconsistencies" of the refuge system. On the one hand refuges exist to protect biodiversity; on the other, they have to receive more and more tourists, hunters, and oil and mineral prospectors, and at the same time withstand the consequences of the intensive farming of neighbouring lands: pesticide run-off and abstraction of groundwater supplies. A reform that would resolve these contradictions is underway.

### The cinders of hell

The nature of Mexico's Pinacate and Gran Desierto Reserve is quite different. Essentially volcanic, the terrain in its northern sector resem-

bles the moon's surface so strongly that American astronauts have trained there. There are more than 400 cinder cones, ten giant craters (more like meteor impact areas than volcano craters), lava flows and gently sculpted sand dunes that contrast sharply with the jagged silhouette of the mountains. There are more than 560 vascular plant species, 56 species of mammals (including the pronghorn), 43 species of reptiles, 222 bird species and 4 species of fish. Temperatures range between -30°Celsius and +50°Celsius.

The reserve is managed by 26-year-old Isabel Granillo, a graduate in ecology. Unlike her American counterparts, Isabel does not pack a gun. And yet the reserve attracts drug traffickers who use the flatlands as a runway for their small planes whose cargo is intended for the United States, some 50 kilometres away. "I'm not here on a crime-prevention mission," she explains. "All I can do is call the police. I'm here to inform the public." With the help of eight young rangers, one of whom is an O'odham, she criss-crosses the reserve telling visitors not to leave the beaten track, hunt, light fires, leave litter or take anything away.

Anyone is liable to make a chance archaeological find, since vestiges of primitive tools, campsites near watering holes (*tinajas*) and huge figures etched into the volcanic soil provide evidence that the area has been inhabited by humans for more than 12,000 years.

The eastern section of the Alto Golfo Reserve is composed of two core areas: the Sierra del Pinacate (228,000 hectares) and the Sierra del Rosario (42,000 hectares), which are surrounded by a buffer zone of 445,000 hectares. Isabel's task is complicated by the fact that the larger of the two core areas is in the hands of small landowners (*ejideros*) whose herds compete with wild animals for the meagre grazing lands and for watering holes that are few and far between. The area's 200 inhabitants live in tiny hamlets, work on ▶

**FRANCE BEQUETTE**  
is a Franco-American  
journalist  
specializing in  
environmental  
matters.



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► the Reserve or in the cinder mines, and run roadside cafes or small garages.

### Shrinking wetlands

Further west, around the Sea of Cortez, another core area consists of 165,000 hectares that are part desert and part wetland formed by the delta of the Colorado River. But a huge dam on the United States side of the border siphons off so much river water for local agricultural needs that the wetlands, located in Mexico, are shrinking steadily. By the time the Colorado empties into the Sea of Cortez, it is a mere muddy, over-salted trickle.

José Campoy and his wife Martha Roman Rodriguez, two biologists who have recently been assigned to manage the reserve, have begun by building a reception centre, dwellings and research facilities. Their job will not be easy, for they will have to deal with the conflicts created by the facts of local economic life. Shrimp fishing, for example, has been banned from April to September, and fishing for certain species such as the totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*) and marine mammals such as the vaquita dolphin is prohibited in the Sea of Cortez. Talks are being held with Mexican shrimp fishermen in an attempt to persuade them to convert to the fledgling ecotourism industry. But dialogue is impossible with the drug traffickers who dump into the Colorado River crates of drugs marked with cyanide-based fluorescent paint that can be seen at night by their accomplices. Pollution of the Colorado River is a major problem, and some biologists believe that damage to the estuary is now irreversible.

### A grassroots movement

One question that arises, in addition to problems of legal definitions and administrative boundaries, is what conception do the locals have of a Biosphere Reserve? Joaquin Murrrieta Saldivar, a Mexican studying in Arizona, has written his doctoral thesis on this subject. The notion of development that benefits everyone seems hard to grasp by those who ask: "What's in it for me, right now?"



Isn't it depriving me of my meagre resources?"

To avoid friction, scientists, decision-makers and locals must see eye to eye so that no one group's interests take precedence over the others. With help from the International Sonoran Desert Alliance (ISDA), dialogue has already produced results and some population groups have reacted positively. The Tohono O'odham, for example, have built some small dikes to capture rainwater run-off and combat erosion. It should be said that Anthony Ramon, the President of the Alliance, is a Tohono O'odham chief.

The Alliance encounters many administrative roadblocks—not least the problem of crossing the border—but its monthly meetings (which are conducted in both English and Spanish) demonstrate its determination to include the Biospheres of Alto Golfo, ORPI and the Cabeza Prieta Refuge in one huge Biosphere Reserve. With the core areas already determined, the only things left to define are the buffer zones and the transition areas.

Harold Smith, an ORPI superintendent for the past fourteen years, is optimistic, "We've shaken up the general apathy," he says. "The Alliance now has good prospects. It is like a flower that is starting to blossom." ■

The tip of a giant saguaro.

w o r l d

### THE RISING URBAN TIDE

A report from the U. S.-based World Resources Institute predicts that by the year 2015 the world will contain 33 megacities with more than 8 million inhabitants and more than 500 cities with at least one million. The population of cities in developing countries is growing by more than 150,000 people per day, and by the year 2000 the area of these cities will have doubled since 1980. In the near future a majority of the world's population will be dwelling in cities, exerting phenomenal pressure on the planet's resources and equilibrium. The report, which contains many more statistics, is published by the World Bank in 7 languages and is available worldwide.

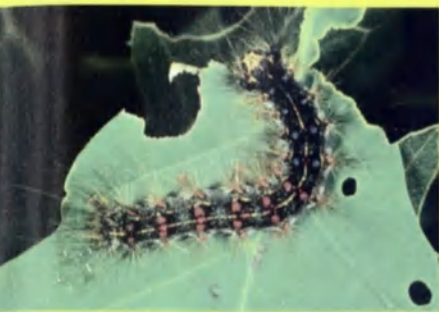
Further information: World Resources Institute. Tel: (1-410) 516-6963; fax: (1-410) 516-6998.

### VOTERS TARGETED IN HUNTING LAW POLL

Should bears, pumas and lynxes be hunted with dogs or bait? Is it right to hunt wolves from a helicopter? Should traps be allowed? Seven of the U.S.A.'s 50 states will go to the polls next November to vote for or against certain hunting practices. Supporters of hunting see these referenda as a way of prohibiting the use of a natural resource, whereas animal lovers see them as a way of halting cruelty to animals. Ecological or ethical questions apart, however, the stakes in the vote are also political. Is it a step towards replacing the legislator by referenda on certain issues?

### GREENFREEZE

When the role of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) became known as one of the agents depleting the ozone layer, scientists began looking for substitutes. Unfortunately none of the CFC substitutes developed proved completely inoffensive until two scientists in Germany developed a mix of propane and butane. Named "Greenfreeze" in a Greenpeace promotional campaign in 1992, the new blend caught on with



Burnley/PHR © Jacana, Paris



M. Trofimenko/P. © Bios, Paris

### WHEN MOTH STINGS BEAR

In some parts of North America, the voracious appetite of the gypsy moth (*Lymantria dispar*), is contributing to the decline of the black bear (*Ursus americanus*). The larvae of the moth, which was introduced into North America around 1869, devour the leaves of trees and can kill weaker, hollow specimens. To assess the impact of this moveable feast on the bear population of the Shenandoah National Park (Virginia), American researchers fitted out 54 bears with radio collars. Results of the study show that in this neck of the woods, deprived of the acorns they depend on and the hollow trees they use for dens, the black bear is on the decline.

German public opinion and came to be accepted by refrigerator manufacturers. It is by now being widely used, and since it involves no new technology or substances, it can be freely used by the whole world, whether rich or poor.

### ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN EUROPE

The Foundation for Environmental Education in Europe (FEEE) was set up in 1981 by a group of experts from the Council of Europe. Headquartered in Copenhagen (Denmark), with offices in each of the Council's member nations, FEEE sponsors education and

awareness-raising programmes. It has three major action programmes: "Young reporters for the Environment" gives high school students a chance to research topics connected with the environment, in their own countries and elsewhere, and to exchange their findings via e-mail; the "Eco-schools" programme encourages schools to reorganize their own management in order to save resources and go "green"; last but not least, the "European Blue Flag Campaign" is an award scheme targeting local governments and authorities managing coastal areas for recreation and tourism. Further information: FEEE, European Co-ordination, Friluftsrådet Olof Palmes Gade 10, DK-2100 København Ø, Denmark.



D. Donval © Explorer, Paris

### A LAKE THAT RUNNETH OVER

Lake Van (3,500 km<sup>2</sup>) in eastern Turkey, is the country's largest lake. In 1968 its water level suddenly rose by 1.2 metres, and again in 1988. A new rise in 1995 caused flooding at the local airport, railway station, school and military base. In the last 27 years the water level has risen by 2.7 metres. A 50-page report by geologists, cartographers and meteorological engineers suggests that heavy rains may have caused a drop in the average air temperature and a decrease in evaporation. Not everyone agrees with this explanation, however. Some have even gone so far as to suggest that a denizen of the lake may be a cousin of Nessie, the legendary Loch Ness monster.



E. Luvsuiti © Apparence, Paris

### THE PANTANAL: A WETLAND UNDER THREAT

The estuary of the Paragnay River ("Pantanal" in Portuguese, "swamp") in southwestern Brazil is the world's largest wetland. With 658 bird species, some 1,100 butterfly species, more than 400 species of fish and numerous mammals, it is also one of the planet's richest sanctuaries of biodiversity. But this exceptional area is being threatened with irreparable damage as a result of a proposal to straighten the course of the Paragnay to facilitate river transport of farm products and minerals to deep-water ports in Uruguay and Argentina. Dredging would cause erosion, and the river would flow faster, bringing the threat of disastrous seasonal flooding. Even so, river transport may be less harmful to the environment than a road or rail system.

Isabelle Leymarie  
talks to

# DOUDOU N'DIAYE ROSE

Praise-singer, musician, and living repository of oral history, the griot is an important figure in West Africa. Doudou N'Diaye Rose, chief drum major in Dakar, is the most famous living Senegalese griot. He has revolutionized the language of drums and spent many years touring the world with his talented troupe.

■ How did your parents react when they found out you loved music?

*Doudou N'Diaye Rose:* Very badly to start with. My great-grandfathers, whom I never knew, were musicians. But after them no one in my family had played music professionally. Several of my relations were intellectuals. My father worked as a chartered accountant and had been a builder. When I was about nine years old my urge to play drums became irresistible. I went all round Dakar in search of a suitable teacher. In the end I chose El Hadj Mada Seck, who was a drum major. I spent my whole childhood with him.

■ How did he teach you?

*D. N'D. R.:* He got us to come round to his house. He explained the meaning of rhythms and demonstrated them on the drums. He let us choose an instrument, then asked us why we had chosen it. In traditional Wolof music, you have to be able to play every kind of drum. First you learn how to play the *gorong*,

then after a few months you go on to another, then another. We did little jobs for our teacher in exchange for lessons. When he went to play at a baptism or a wedding, we pupils would take his drums along. He only turned up at the last minute. We also helped him make his musical instruments. Very early on I began to go to various kinds of ceremonies with more experienced musicians, and as they thought I was talented they let me play.

The study of percussion instruments involves a great deal of work, and I had to practise alone. The trouble was, my maternal uncle forbade me to practise. Whenever he found out I'd played truant in order to devote my time to music he gave me a good spanking. My teacher came to talk to him and put in a good word for me. My family also pleaded with him to be more indulgent, but for years he kept on beating me—and he was a big man! We finally came to a compromise. I attended school regularly and in return I was allowed to play at weekends. I ended up taking my school certificate, then I went to technical college. For some years I even worked as a plumber.



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■ Were you paid when you took part in ceremonies?

*D. N'D. R.:* Yes, and I took the money back to my family. Even then, they didn't want to know. It went on like that until one day, when I was nineteen, my uncle came to give me yet another spanking and I stuck up for myself. It has to be said that by then everyone was already talking about me as a musician. My teacher sometimes accepted two engagements and passed one of them on to me. I was invited all over the country. In the end, when my uncle realized how successful I was, he felt ashamed and apologized to me. By the time he died he had completely redeemed himself. He protected me with his lucky charms and became my bodyguard. I paid for him to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

■ How did you build up your international career?

*D. N'D. R.:* When I was twenty-five, my teacher went

to live in Côte d'Ivoire, leaving me his musicians and his instruments. I became a chief drum major and played with the group until I was thirty. Two years later, I decided I wanted to learn Senegal's various traditional rhythms and their meaning, so I travelled all over the country, spending about three months in each region. I would approach the elders, bringing them rice, sugar, candles and other gifts in exchange for their teaching. I learned how news had been announced with drums in Senegal's ancient kingdoms. The kings had their own percussion groups, and the leader of the *lamp* drums, who was known as the *fara lamp*, passed on the king's messages to the people. Each instrument had a well-defined role. A drum called *khin* was widely used at court. It is now used by a Murid sect for Muslim ceremonies. I also discovered a very old square drum mounted on a frame, the

ISABELLE LEYMARIE

is a Franco-American musicologist.



# When the drums dance: the marriage of hands and feet

*assiko*, which comes from the island of Gorée.

■ A similar drum has been found in some mountain communities in Jamaica, where it is called *gumbe*.

**D. N'D. R.:** The word *gumbe* is also used in Senegal. It is the name of a dance—which is also old—accompanied by singing, where women would delicately raise their voluminous boubous. At a concert we gave recently in Bahia the audience was very enthusiastic, because we were giving them an opportunity to listen to their musical roots. In 1960, when Senegal became independent, I joined the Senegal Ballet, and we went on tours to Europe—Czechoslovakia, Romania, Turkey. Then I decided to form my own group and taught music to my children. Now they work with me. In 1980 I set up the Rosettes, a female percussion group, then the Roseaux, a troupe of children aged between four and twelve. They performed in Japan last year.

■ How did you come to play with Miles Davis?

**D. N'D. R.:** Miles had heard me on tape and asked me if I'd like to play in the first half of his concert at the Parc des Expositions in Paris. When the concert was over, he came and improvised with us. I've also played in the first half of concerts by the Rolling Stones and several French singers.

■ How did you learn to dance?

**D. N'D. R.:** By watching other people. All drummers know how to dance. It's vital to dance well in order to play drums.

■ Do dancers depend on the drums or do they invent their own rhythms?

**D. N'D. R.:** They follow the

drums, but each dancer has his or her favourite rhythms and can ask the musicians to play them. It's the drum major who changes the rhythm, and he has to know what kind of instrument a particular musical genre should be played on. What's more, each dance has its own symbolism.

■ Are old dances still performed?

**D. N'D. R.:** Yes. The *yaba*, for instance, which is a particular favourite with older women in the regions of Saint-Louis, Dakar, Gorée and Rufisque. It can be danced for hours on end. It was originally a dance for courtesans. Only a few years ago, women would still put on their finest attire and jewelry, and do their hair in little plaits. They showed off their dresses and gems as they danced. Some of them undid their hair, then plaited it again as they continued to dance. During this dance the men would try to seduce the women. Many couples first met when dancing the *yaba*, and some have since been married for forty years! Another dance is the *wongue*, which is performed by initiates after circumcision, or danced to celebrate the end of the harvest. The *farevoudiare* is danced by boys who are trying to appeal to girls. If a girl finds a dancer to her liking, she lets him know by taking off her headscarf and throwing it down in front of him. Lebour women prefer the *niari gorong*, where the rhythm is provided by two drums. It is danced at baptisms and weddings, as well as at circumcision ceremonies. Griots may sometimes play for traditional Senegalese wrestling bouts. On these occasions they use a drum with a low sound, which has the same name as the

sport itself: *lamp*. Here again the drum major leads, with ten or so drummers behind him. Certain passages in pieces played on the *khalam* (a Wolof lute) may be accompanied by muffled drums.

■ Has the drums' repertoire changed down the years?

**D. N'D. R.:** Yes, enormously. The *mbalax*, for instance, is a basic rhythm which came into being in the 1970s and is played by one or more drums for festive dances performed during certain ceremonies such as baptisms and weddings. The younger generation has changed. They know how to dance to new rhythms, though some youngsters sometimes ask me to play them old ones. A very expressive dance that is all the rage with the Senegalese today is the *digente nit at nit* (understanding between human beings), in which the dancers put their hands on their hearts and pretend to sleep. Its message is that everyone should get on with everyone else and open up their hearts from dawn to dusk.

■ Since the griots' usual role is to keep traditions alive, were your compatriots surprised when you created new rhythms?

**D. N'D. R.:** No—and I've invented more than 500 of them. Actually, that's what helped me to become popular. I didn't think it was right that my predecessors created rhythms and I didn't. I've been inspired by events like football matches. Creating is something that is always uppermost in my mind. I have composed the signature tune of Senegal's television news, among other things. It came to me one night when I was in a hotel in Romania and couldn't get to sleep. I could hear windows banging, birds,

wind and rain, and I recorded all those natural sounds on a little tape recorder. When I got back to Dakar, I went to the beach and continued recording—the return of the pirogue boatmen, the roar of the sea and, during a football match, the cheering of supporters, the sound of the ball hitting the ground, and the shouting of players. I had a good think, then I translated all those impressions into the language of drums.

■ How do you compose?

**D. N'D. R.:** I hole up in a house I own near Dakar, so I can get some peace and quiet. I invent sequences of rhythms, which I then work together. As our music is passed on orally, I've created a code of gestures that enables me to tell the musicians when to increase their tempo or volume, or when to change rhythm. There are passages where I improvise, and where the other drummers have to follow me.

■ What plans do you have for the future?

**D. N'D. R.:** I would like to organize a concert in France in the year 2000 which would demonstrate the wealth of Africa's rhythmical and musical heritage. I'll shortly be touring Africa, from the Maghreb to South Africa, looking for musicians and dancers. The show should include rhythms, musical instruments and costumes from various African countries. ■

1 An ethnic group from the Cape Verde peninsula in Senegal.

DISCOGRAPHY:  
*Djabote*  
CD Virgin 869302

### THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

The Appeal by the Director-General of UNESCO for the continuation of the peace process in the Middle East, published in your April 1996 issue, raises a number of questions. No human being worthy of the name could fail to oppose terrorism. But terrorism does not arise spontaneously. It is fed by bullying, humiliations and constraints imposed on peoples whose condition is not far from slavery. If the many resolutions taken by the United Nations had been effectively implemented, would things be as they are today, in the Middle East and elsewhere? Is it not the case that many heads of state have no intention of translating their fine words into deeds? In which case, President Charles de Gaulle's description of the UN as a "thingummyjig" is very apt.

**Yves Bornac**  
St. Nazaire  
(France)

We share the conviction expressed by UNESCO's Director-General in his Appeal for the continuation of the peace process in the Middle East, and would like to express our support for it.

**M. and Mme. Berzin-Bisiaux**  
Lambersart  
(France)

### LYING BY OMISSION

The illustrated pages devoted to the Second World War in your December 1995 issue ("Troglodytes, a hidden

world") give a good picture of how the war developed. However, they do not show clearly enough how the "democratic" powers, which chose to appease Hitler in an effort to push him eastwards, encouraged the warmongers, and how their non-intervention—I'm thinking particularly of republican Spain and Czechoslovakia—ultimately cost the lives of more than 50 million people on the European, African and Asian fronts. I spent four years in Mauthausen concentration camp where 102,000 people died of overwork, hunger, beatings, rain, cold, wind and snow. I am the sole survivor of the 23 July 1941 shipment. It is not easy to tell the story of the Nazi era, but lying by omission condemns us to endure anew trials and tribulations for which we paid such a heavy price.

**José Borrás**  
Choisy-en-Brie  
(France)

### A PERSONAL OPINION

I read very carefully the articles on the complexity of world problems published in your February 1996 issue on complex thought. The conclusion drawn by Mr. Ivar Ekeland at the end of his article on complexity seems to me extremely simplistic, however. It strikes me as frivolous to compare the vicissitudes of weather and climate with the governance of the United States. Most industrialized countries are run by powerful financial groups, and unemployment in these countries is neither fortuitous nor

uncontrollable. Compared with these bastions of economic power, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights looks like a catalogue of pious hopes. Yet generous-minded people like the Abhé Pierre in France have a more humane and realistic view of things, and others such as Nelson Mandela have risked their lives and liberty to give substance to these rights. But such people are rare. Too many people in high places are too comfortably ensconced in the system to want to change it. A regular *Courier* reader for the past 10 years, I hand on your magazine to local youth clubs or reading rooms when I've finished reading it.

**André Pilet**  
Amfreville-sous-les-Monts  
(France)

### CLASSICAL BALLET IN OUR TIME

I was very interested to read your January 1996 issue entitled "Dance, the sacred fire". The articles on the aesthetic and social aspects of dance are of good quality and could be used for reference by anyone interested in our art. But what a pity that there were no articles on the extraordinary heritage of the classical ballet tradition. Safeguarding the enduring values of this tradition and making them more widely understood should be part of the agenda of our time.

**Alicia Alonso**  
President,  
Cuban Committee for Dance  
Havana (Cuba)

### The 10th Bordeaux Book Fair

The *UNESCO Courier* will be represented at the 10th Bordeaux (France) Book Fair ("Salon du Livre de Bordeaux"), which is to be held from 10 to 30 October 1996.

The Fair will include two exhibitions, one devoted to the Surrealists, the other to the French philosopher René Descartes, the 400th anniversary of whose birth is being celebrated this year.

The Fair will give a prominent place to literature for young people and to comic strips. Young readers will have an opportunity to meet their favourite authors and a jury of teenagers will award a prize for a first novel.

This year's annual foreign literature prize, which honours a non-Francophone writer and the quality of the translation of his/her work into French, will be awarded to the Italian novelist Pier Maria Pasinetti and his translator.

For further information, please contact:

Salon du Livre de Bordeaux,  
139 Cours Balguerie-Stuttenberg 33000 Bordeaux.  
Tel: (33) 56 43 04 35; Fax: (33) 56 50 34 85.

### CORRECTION

**Comic strip special issue**  
**of the *UNESCO Courier***

**There was an error in the copyright attribution indicated on the inside back cover page of the July-August issue. The comic strips may be reproduced on receipt of written authorization from the *UNESCO Courier*.**

# Le Salon du Livre de Bordeaux fête ses 10 ans

**Des expositions** ► *Les surréalistes* : 250 m<sup>2</sup> consacrés à une aventure intellectuelle et artistique sans pareil/reconstitution d'un « dictionnaire surréaliste » ► *Les Mariés de la Tour Eiffel* interprétés par Massin au travers de la typographie ► *Anges et Démons* : des images inattendues sur des thématiques jusqu'alors inexploitées par le monde de la B.D ► *La Petite oasis de Jojo et Paco* : l'humour et la poésie d'Isabelle Wilsdorf pour le plaisir des petits et des grands.

**Des prix littéraires** ► *Prix Écureuil de Littérature étrangère* décerné à Pier Maria Pasinetti, au centre d'une exposition « Les écrivains célèbrent Venise » ► *Prix Air Inter Europe* du premier roman.

**Des débats** ► Vingt cinq entretiens et tables rondes en quatre jours réunissant écrivains, sociologues, philosophes, critiques et journalistes autour de la rentrée littéraire et des thèmes majeurs de ce 10<sup>e</sup> Salon: le quadricentenaire de Descartes – l'héritage surréaliste...

**De nouveaux lieux de rencontres** ► Au cœur de la ville, animation de cafés littéraires et philosophiques: jeux surréalistes, lectures, débats d'idées.

du 10 au 13 octobre 1996 (hangar 5) Tél. 56 43 04 35

## Our creative diversity

Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development  
chaired by Javier Pérez de Cuéllar

by Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Lourdes Arizpe, Yoro K. Fall, Kurt Furgler, Celso Furtado, Niki Goulandris, Keith Griffin, Mahbub ul Haq, Elizabeth Jelin, Angeline Kamba, Ole-Henrik Magga, Nikita Mikhailov, Chie Nakane, Leila Takla

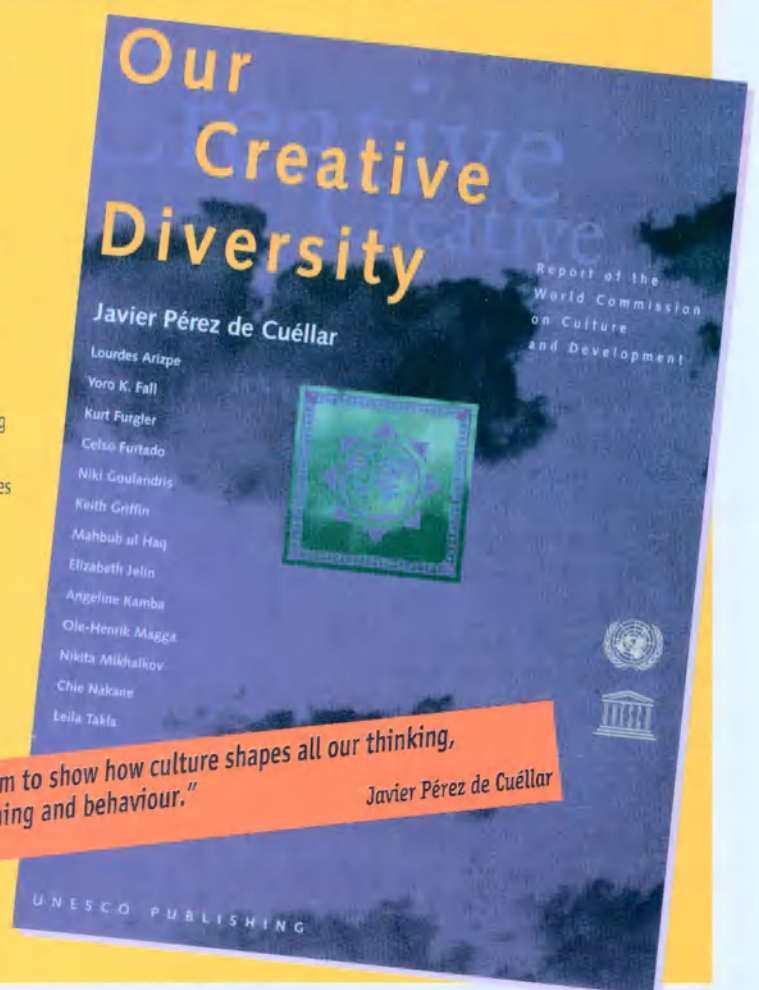
After three years of work and reflection, the World Commission on Culture and Development, comprised of 14 leading figures from a wide range of professional backgrounds, including four Nobel laureates, has unveiled its report, *Our Creative Diversity*.

By reflecting upon a series of themes, the report broadens our concept of creativity, offering new approaches that heighten awareness of the cultural underpinning of human development.

An International Agenda, intended to influence cultural strategies in the 21st century, makes ten recommendations, including the protection of cultural rights as human rights; the application of a new global ethics in global governance; the implementation of policies to enhance access to, and diversity and competition, in the international media system; and an international plan for gender equality.

309 pages  
ISBN: 92-3-103282-8  
150 French francs (+ postage)

UNESCO Publishing, Promotion and Sales Division,  
1 rue Miollis, 75732 Paris CEDEX 15  
Fax: (33-1) 42 73 30 07  
Internet: <http://www.unesco.org>



**THEME OF THE NEXT ISSUE:**

# **EXILE**



**INTERVIEW WITH**

**WERNER ARBER**

**NOBEL LAUREATE FOR MEDICINE**



**HERITAGE:**

**THE MEDINA OF FEZ**



**ENVIRONMENT:**

**THE LAST FRONTIER  
OF THE PHILIPPINES**