The Unesco Courier

A window open on the world

Alexander The Great
A true likeness from his father’s tomb?
This monumental statue depicts Chief Pukaki embracing his two children. Shaped from a giant tree by craftsmen of the Arawa tribe of the North Island (New Zealand), it once formed the upper part of the gateway to a fortified village. This masterpiece of Maori art is today preserved in the Auckland Institute and Museum.
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Cover

Is the ivory miniature reproduced on our cover a portrait of Alexander the Great? The tomb in which it was found, possibly that of his father Philip II of Macedon, is one of several discovered recently at Vergina, northern Greece. As Professor Manolis Andronicos explains, they are believed to be part of the royal necropolis of the ancient kingdom of Macedonia. The preservation of mankind's constantly growing cultural heritage is one of Unesco's primary concerns. With Unesco aid, the Government of Thailand is restoring the Buddhist statues and temples of the ancient Thai kingdom of Sukhothai, whose splendours are described in an article by Thai historian Subhadradis Diskul. But our cultural heritage is more than just stones and artefacts. The sacred mystery play of Elche (see central colour pages) is an example of a tenacious tradition, spanning some seven centuries, that has recently been recorded on film for posterity.
A new dawn for Sukhothai

With Unesco aid Thailand is restoring an ancient metropolis to its former splendour

by M.C. Subhadradas Diskul

In northern Thailand, some five hundred kilometres from Bangkok, stand the ruins of Sukhothai, once the capital of a historic Thai kingdom.

The "Sukhothai kingdom" only lasted about two hundred years but it is regarded as the cradle of Thai civilization, and its art, considered to be the most sublime in Thailand's history, exercised a strong influence on later Thai art and on the arts of neighbouring countries such as Laos. Sukhothai should therefore be seen as belonging to all humanity and not to Thailand alone.

The city of Sukhothai (the word literally means "the dawn of happiness") was virtually abandoned in the late fourteenth century, but many monuments have survived as reminders of its glory, although they have suffered from the ravages of time and vandalism. The ruins rise against the backdrop of a mountain range some distance away to the west; to the east the land is flat. Two canals bring water to the city from the northeast and the southwest. Twelve kilometres away on the river Yom is the later town of Sukhothai, which was founded by King Rama I in 1786.

The Sukhothai kingdom was probably established in the middle of the thirteenth century AD, after the expulsion of Khmer overlords. According to the latest research there seem to have been nine kings of the Sukhothai dynasty, ruling from about 1240 to 1438. The most famous of these monarchs is probably King Ram Khamhaeng the Great, the third king of the dynasty, who reigned from 1279 to 1298 and extended Sukhothai territory to its furthest limits. He invented the Thai alphabet in 1293 and as "Pra Ruang" features in many Thai legends as the possessor of great magical powers.

His successor, King Loetthai, seems to have lost much of the territory he inherited. Ram Khamhaeng's grandson, King Lithai, who reigned from 1347 to about 1368, restored the kingdom's unity though without recovering all the lost lands. A zealous adherent of Theravada Buddhism which had reached Thailand from Sri Lanka, King Lithai was the first monarch in Thai history to spend part of his life as a monk. He resisted the power of the Ayudhya kingdom which was set up in the south in 1350 and according to one stone inscription was forced to abandon Sukhothai and settle at Pisnulok, an important town in the east of the kingdom.

From that time onwards, although there were three more kings of the Sukhothai dynasty, the city of Sukhothai was overshadowed by Pisnulok and by Chakangrao or Kampaengpet in the south. The last king of the Sukhothai dynasty probably died in 1438, and from then on the kingdom formed part of the Ayudhya empire.

A contemporary stone inscription gives a detailed picture of the paternal administration of King Ram Khamhaeng: "In the lifetime of King Ram Khamhaeng, this Muang (town) Sukhothai is good. In the water there are fish, in the fields there is rice. The ruler does not levy a tax on the people who travel along the road together, leading their
When two Thai chieftains, Pha Muang and Bang Klang Thao, revolted against their Khmer overlords and proclaimed the first independent Thai kingdom of Sukhothai in the 13th century A.D., they not only laid the foundations of present-day Thailand, they also opened the way to a flowering of Thai sculptural and architectural art whose influence remained long after the kingdom they founded had sunk back into oblivion. The Buddha images created by Thai sculptors were the most original contribution of the Sukhothai period. They portrayed a new, supernatural, more idealized conception of the Higher Being. These images were cast in bronze or fashioned in stucco on a core of laterite, a reddish-coloured weathered rock. Above, still imposing in their serenity despite the ravages of time, these laterite cores of stucco Buddha images guard the remains of Wat (temple) Pra Kaew, at Kamphaeng Phet, some fifty kilometres south-west of Sukhothai.
Located at Wat Sri Chum in the north-western outskirts of Sukhothai, this imposing Buddha, in the cross-legged "victory over Mara" attitude, measures over 11 metres from knee to knee. The sanctuary in which it is housed is surrounded by a moat and has walls 3 metres thick and 15 metres high.

As for Buddhism, King Ram Khamhaeng's stone inscription tells us: "The people in this Muang Sukhothai are charitable, pious and devoted to almsgiving. King Ram Khamhaeng, the ruler of this Muang Sukhothai, as well as princes and princesses, gentlemen and ladies of the nobility and men and women, one and all, have faith in the Buddhist religion, everyone observing the precepts during Buddhist Lent [rainy season], at the end of which Kathin offerings [presentation of a monastic robe] take place for a whole month. In the Kathin offerings there are heaps of cowries, heaps of areca-nut, heaps of flowers, cushions and pillows. The Kathin accessories presented each year amount to two million. For the recital of the Kathin resolution people go even as far as Aranyak [forest monastery] yonder. On their return to the city, they line up from Aranyak yonder to the border of the open ground, joining together in striking up the sound of musical instruments and lutes, carolling and singing. Whoever wants to play, plays. Whoever wants to laugh, laughs. Whoever wants to sing, sings. This Muang Sukhothai has four main gateways. People would flock in to see the King light the candles and play with fireworks. This Muang Sukhothai is noisy as if it would burst."

The old town of Sukhothai is rectangular, 1,810 metres long and 1,400 metres wide, surrounded by three rings of earthen ramparts. There are three gates at each of the four cardinal points; in front of each inner gate traces of a semi-circular earthen and brick fort can be seen. A moat about twenty metres wide lies between each rampart.

Inside the town stand the ruins of sixteen Buddhist monasteries, four Hindu shrines and two Buddhist wat (monasteries). There are also four large ponds inside the town. Among later constructions are a statue-monument of King Ram Khamhaeng and...
Left, stone inscription from the old city of Sukhothai dating from the time of Ram Khamhaeng, greatest of the Sukhothai kings, who reigned during the latter part of the 13th century. "In my father's time", runs part of the inscription, "I served my father, I served my mother... When I conquered a town and captured elephants, men or women, silver or gold, I gave them all to my father. When my father died, then came my elder brother's time. I served my brother just as I served my father. My brother died and I received the whole kingdom for myself". Below, view of part of the old city of Sukhothai which is situated in central Thailand some 500 kilometres north-west of Bangkok. At centre, the chedi (a solid round monument with a tall finial or spire) of Wat Sra-Sri. The old city has been designated as an historical park. Work on preservation and restoration of its priceless monuments is being undertaken by the Government of Thailand in co-operation with Unesco.
This impressive 12.5-metre-high stucco figure of Pra Attharot, a standing Buddha figure, at Wat Sapan Hin, looks down on Sukhothai from the summit of a hill to the west of the city in an area known as Aranyik. The right hand is held out in the attitude of dispelling fear.

Outside the town are about seventy monuments: some have been restored; others await restoration.

The most important monument in old Sukhothai is Wat Mahathat, situated in the middle of the town. At the centre of the wat is a lotus-bud stupā (a solid monument built to enshrine the relics of the Buddha) typical of the Sukhothai period. The royal palace may have stood to the northeast of the wat, but the buildings were constructed in wood and so far no traces of it have been found.

In the southern part of the town, Wat Si Sawai, with its three imposing towers, was probably built as a Hindu shrine and later became a Buddhist monastery. To the north stand two important monuments: Wat Trakuan, whose round chedi (a commemorative shrine of the Buddha with a base and a tall finial) derived from Sri Lanka, and San Ta Pha Daeng, a laterite Hindu shrine which may have been built in the early twelfth century.

Wat Chetupon, south of Sukhothai, is noted for its four stucco images of the Buddha, each in a different attitude: walking, standing, reclining, and seated (at the centre of the wat).

About one kilometre north of Sukhothai stands an important monument called Wat Pra Pai Luang, which may have been the original centre of a settlement which existed before the Thai constructed the old town of Sukhothai. Three laterite prang (towers like those of Khmer sanctuaries), dating from the late twelfth or early thirteenth century used to form part of the main structure of the wat, but only one of
them is still standing. On the eastern side of the wat are many Buddhist ruins of the Sukhothai period.

Traces of forty-nine ceramic kilns have also been discovered in this area. These kilns produced Sukhothai ware at the same time as Sawankhalok ware was being made at Sisatchanalai, a twin city of Sukhothai in the north. These glazed ceramics were the chief exports of the Sukhothai kingdom and were sent far and wide. According to one hypothesis, production may have continued until the middle of the fifteenth century, when it came to an end because of the wars between the kingdoms of Ayudhya and Chiengmai (in the far north of Thailand). However, archaeological evidence from sunken cargo ships along the eastern coast of Thailand suggests it may have gone on until a century later, when it was ended by the wars between Burma and Thailand.

Outside the town to the northwest stands another important Buddhist monastery, Wat Si Chum, which has a huge seated stucco Buddha image under a mondop, a square structure with a pointed roof. The mondop, which may have been constructed later than the Buddha image, has a double wall in which there is a tunnel leading to the top of the building.

In the hilly area known as Aranyik, west of the town, are many ruins of Buddhist monasteries, the most important of which is probably Wat Sapan Hin. There, on a hill some 200 metres high, stands Pra Atharot, a standing Buddha figure over twelve metres high.

An outstanding monument to the east of the town is Wat Trapang Tong Lang, noted
for its beautiful stucco scene representing the Buddha descending from Tavatimsa Heaven after preaching to his mother.

Professor Silpa Bhirasri, an Italian-born artist who devoted his life to the study of Thai art, has paid a striking tribute to the art of Sukhothai in his comments on a superb Sukhothai statue of the Buddha after His Enlightenment. "The features are serene", Bhirasri wrote, "and a faint smile reflects a state of total inward contentment. After His Enlightenment, the Buddha attained Nirvana and to express this condition the Thai conceived an almost ethereal form of statuary. Sitting, walking or reclining, their images of the Buddha convey an impression of soaring, undulating movement which renders the bronze immaterial. Yet such spirituality does not detract from the sculptural qualities of the statues, for although they are highly simplified and idealized, the human forms are exquisitely modelled. In the Sukhothai statues there is always a harmony between the abstract idea and its material realization..."

"Exceptional artistic skills are not enough where representing the image of the Buddha is concerned, because the idealized forms also have to convey the essence of Buddhist doctrine. Indeed, it is the doctrine which inspires the image, not the actual physical form of the Teacher. Did the sculptors of old Sukhothai solve this complex problem? Perhaps it would not be excessive to say that they solved it in an incomparable way. The expression of these statues is such as to give us strength to master the tumult of our passions, whereas the faint smile tells us how hap-

prominence may be achieved by mastering our animal instincts."

Professor Silpa Bhirasri has also analysed the bronze walking Buddha, portrayed in the round, a form of depicting the Buddha which is the major innovation of Sukhothai art. "The representation of the walking Buddha had a special appeal for the artists of Sukhothai", he noted, "and truly they succeeded in creating masterpieces. When we look at these beautiful statues, they seem to move gently forward: with a gesture of the fingers symbolizing the circle of the Law, the Teacher advances to announce the Doctrine. The body seems to undulate gracefully as a result of the harmonious movement of legs, trunk and downstretched arm. The head is shaped like a lotus bud and the neck spreading at its base is elegantly attached to the shoulder. The delicately shaped lobes of the ears turn slightly outwards. This and every other detail serves to emphasize the harmony of the whole composition. The hands look more divine than human, so exquisite is their modelling."

The Thai Government has now decided to create a national historical park in Sukhothai and the surrounding area. The monuments will be restored and everything possible will be done to recreate the splendour of Sukhothai as it is described in King Ram Khamhaeng's inscription. Agriculture will be developed, water supplies will be improved, and plants mentioned in the inscription will be regrown. The promotion of tourism also forms part of the project, which aims not only to safeguard the site and its monuments but also to develop the whole region for the benefit of the local population.

To bring the Park Development Project to fruition Thailand needs approximately $11 million. Financial aid and equipment are being sought from other countries and from foundations. Working in close collaboration with the Thai Government, Unesco is playing an active part in this programme of international co-operation.

Work has already begun on the restoration of the town of Sukhothai and the monuments nearby. Many young specialists from Thai universities have carried out surveys of the local topography and are engaged in research on possibilities for development, urban settlement and irrigation systems. Archaeologists are excavating sites in search of traces of monuments and dwellings. Anthropologists and ethnologists are studying the oral traditions and folk-tales of the local population, together with their customs and the tools and utensils they use in everyday life. Two festivals based on the description of life in Sukhothai given in the Ram Khamhaeng inscription have been performed. Illustrated books in Thai and other languages have been published to help arouse public interest in the Historical Park. With adequate funds and specialist aid, this vast project sponsored by Unesco should be successfully realized.

M.C. Subhadradis Diskul
Not only did the sculptors of the Sukhothai school bring a new spirituality to their representations of the Buddha, they also were the first to introduce the walking Buddha beneath whose footsteps “the ground became level and the lotus blossomed”. Buddha was depicted in four postures, reclining, seated, standing and walking. The typical Sukhothai Buddha has hair curls which come to a point in the middle of the forehead and a prominent ushnisha, or cranial protuberance, surmounted by a rasmi, or flame-like motif symbolizing power and glory. Photos: above, walking Buddha on a four-sided mondop, or pavilion, at Wat Chetupon; each of the other three sides has a Buddha image in a different posture. Top right, walking Buddha, now preserved in the Bangkok National Museum, reflects the serene, meditative spirituality the Sukhothai sculptors sought to convey through deliberate stylization of both facial features and the body. Left, wall decoration from a mondop at Wat Trapang Tong Lang, perhaps the finest example of Sukhothai stucco-work, depicts the Buddha descending from the heaven of the Tavatimsa (thirty-three gods), flanked by Indra, Brahma and other gods. Right, 47-centimetre-high bronze from Chiang Mai, now in the Bangkok National Museum, depicts Buddha making the imprint of his foot after descending from the heaven of the thirty-three gods.
Common heritage or licence to exploit?

A new world economic order: a hard look at its meaning for international law

by Mohammed Bedjaoui

WHAT should be done about the resources of our planet? The whole development of modern international law seems to hinge on this crucial issue, which brings into play a contest between two principles, that of the sovereignty of the State and that of the common heritage of mankind.

Work on the codification of the law of the sea has shown the price to be paid before the idea of a common heritage of mankind can come into its own. One-third of the surface of the world ocean has been allocated to thirty-five States in the form of an "economic zone", extended to 200 miles by the Conference on the Law of the Sea and by national jurisdictions; thus the application of the principle of the common heritage of mankind is excluded from vast areas of the planet. What is more, this heritage is so constituted as to afford the State, at least the technologically and financially powerful State, many opportunities to prosper.

The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 12 December 1974, can also be seen to crystallize a number of contradictions.

Sovereignty is made much of in this document as being particularly desirable to the poor countries, favouring their attainment of international dignity and respect for their rights.

In the Charter the idea of sovereignty is refracted into myriad facets which reflect above all the new-found economic sovereignty of the developing countries. It stresses that each State has a sovereign right to choose its own economic, political,

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sovereignty, expressed in such terms, regarded as being designed for Third World States alone. But it is no secret that the rich countries have held sway not only within their own frontiers but in other countries too. Recognition of the right of sovereignty was not being solemnly enjoined and re-expressed with the rich countries in mind but for the other, less developed States whose enjoyment of sovereignty had hitherto been frustrated.

At the same time, however, the Charter seems to outline a theory of "responsibility" or "responsibilities" which devolve on States as a counterpart to this sovereign right. In particular, it declares that States have a duty to respect the legitimate interests of other States when exploiting natural resources which they share. This is clearly an allusion to commodities which may be affected, now or in the future, by the application of the concept of a common heritage of mankind. The duty of States to contribute to the development of world trade and to encourage the progress of other peoples as well as their own, also evoked in the Charter, suggests a theory of "solidarity" based on possible developments of the concept of a common heritage.

And so these two approaches, which are leaving their imprint on international law as it is now taking shape, appear to be utterly irreconcilable.

The first approach boils down to the claim that all States possess permanent sovereignty over their natural wealth and resources. Certain jurists consider this claim to be scandalous. Dubbed "intoxication with sovereignty" by some, and as a thoroughly "retrograde" sovereignty by others, it is not seen by everyone in its historical perspective as the driving force behind a great change towards a more equitable world.

The second approach looks to the notions of "collective economic security" and the common heritage of humanity for its inspiration. As voiced by some these ideas have emerged strongly as demands which run counter to the sovereign rights of States. As a result this approach is regarded with suspicion in Third World countries.

It is, in fact, perfectly clear that certain current trends of thought in the West reflect a belated discovery of the virtues of collective economic security. But these virtues are presented more as a justification for maintaining access to the vital or important resources of a Third World which is determined to claim full sovereignty over them than as part of a desire to make this new economic and juridical order progressively more equitable.

Any attempt to impress on Third World countries that they bear certain responsibilities, arising from their legal authority as nations for managing natural resources which are theirs yet are needed by the whole world, must be preceded by a recognition that their claim for effective control over these resources is a legitimate one. It is clear that the organization of world interdependence and solidarity on bases that are at once fair and rational presupposes the economic independence and sovereignty of the developing countries, as well as the preparation of all States for the individual and collective responsibilities which they must assume in the international community, for the benefit of all.

Secondly, if Third World States are perfectly justified in voicing some suspicion of the "unilateral pooling" of their resources in the name of an innovating concept such as "collective economic sovereignty" or "the common heritage of humanity", they are nonetheless still in favour of the concept as long as it is applied impartially to everything and everyone.

It has been pointed out that the basins of...
In a world that has shrunk to the dimensions of a “global village”, isolated solutions to problems of the protection of the environment and the use of natural resources are no longer possible. The planet itself has become the microcosm suggested by this image of the creation of the world portrayed by Hieronymus Bosch on the back of the wing panels of his famous triptych The Garden of Earthly Delights.

Photo © Mas, Barcelona, Prado Museum, Madrid

The Amazon and the Congo, the world’s most abundant source of oxygen, could be taken as typical examples of the common heritage of humanity. On these grounds, and because oxygen is absolutely vital to the life of the whole planet, the States which control these basins should be accountable to the whole international community for their management of this vital resource.

There is nothing intrinsically shocking in this idea. But it must be seen in the context of a pooling of the earth’s resources and wealth founded on solidarity and excluding all selfish considerations of national self-interest. The behaviour of the nations, not to mention the tacit assumptions on which it is based, gives the impression that it is up to the Third World to shoulder the obligations inherent in the application of the concept of the common heritage of humanity, while the industrialized countries enjoy the corresponding rights and benefits.

In other words, a kind of international division of labour would perpetuate and exacerbate the mechanism of domination, obliging Brazil and the Congo, for example, to preserve oxygen so that the industrialized powers could use as much of it as they pleased. Thus no account is taken of the obligation incumbent on the rich countries not to destroy the thin layer of the earth’s atmosphere by the extravagant and anarchic use of the internal combustion engine.

The notion of a “common heritage of humanity” therefore only achieves a significant degree of credibility insofar as it embodies an equitable sharing of the rights and duties of States, or incorporates inequality only as a means of compensating the developing countries. If oil is part of the common heritage of humanity, then it should be considered as such wherever it is found, regardless of its geographical location.

American, British, Norwegian or Soviet oil should belong to everyone just as much as oil from the Middle East. And before oil is even considered, agricultural foodstuffs, of which the North American continent is still by far the biggest source of supply, should be declared part of the common heritage, with food producers being answerable to the international community in general and, in particular, to the hungry multitudes of Asia and Africa.

It has been pointed out that if such conditions are not met, and if the concept of a common heritage is promoted before its time, “instead of facilitating the coming of
a new and equitable system of relationships, it could well establish a basis for a return to relationships of dependence between the strong nations, on the one hand, which would like to remain in a predominant position and continue to exercise the prerogatives of strength, and, on the other, the weak countries which would continue to hanker vainly after real equality of opportunity which would continue to elude them.

But the fact is that the two approaches examined above, reflecting on the one hand the sovereignty of the State over its natural resources and on the other collective economic security and the common heritage of humanity, only appear to be irreconcilable. Transcending their points of conflict, they both contribute to the evolution of international law in the direction of more elaborate forms of collective welfare and above all to the establishment of a new law for all mankind.

Were we rash enough to lift a corner of the veil which conceals from us the future of humanity on this planet, we might see that mankind is today at a turning-point and that international law is on the brink of drastic changes.

Any reference to the principle of a common heritage as an idea which has a continuing validity necessarily means that present generations are answerable to future generations for their stewardship of this heritage. This holds unprecedented implications for international law, which transcends the self-interest of individual men and States and, in a truly global approach, relates to all humanity. For the first time man can reflect on his ultimate goals, not only as an individual but as a species.
Constructive thought along these lines, concerning the common interests of mankind in the vast unexploited areas of the planet such as the ocean floor, the polar regions and the world’s rivers as well as the atmosphere and outer space, would only be a beginning and would by no means exhaust the juridical and political possibilities of the concept of a common heritage.

The idea of a common heritage of humanity has already been suggested with regard to cultural property. Its progressive extension into many other fields would be nothing less than revolutionary in its impact and would effect a complete transformation of international law, corresponding to profound changes in the way of life and the quality of life of all mankind.

But only a utopian dreamer could imagine that the time is yet ripe for the abrupt framing of laws in this spirit. At the present stage of human development, the widest possible application of the notion of the common heritage of humanity in international law is simply not a practical possibility. However, the day may come when its scope will be extended to all spheres of the “international law of land, water and sky”, and this would constitute a tremendous revolution. Through this concept, the new international law could not only apply to inert matter and manufactured goods but directly to peoples and to man himself, for whom the standards of international law are primarily intended.

Work has yet to begin on the standards and institutions that would enshrine the concept of a common heritage of humanity. States and international organizations will be faced with enormous, totally new problems, by no means the least of which are those of human rights and the conservation of the environment. Each of these problems is of the highest importance to the idea of a common heritage, for what would be the point of exploiting the tremendous riches of the ocean floor for the benefit of humanity if human dignity or integrity are threatened or if the environment is despoiled to the point where human life is imperilled.

On 4 July 1976, on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the United States by the representatives of the thirteen English colonies of North America, a Universal Declaration of the Rights of Peoples was adopted in Algiers under the auspices of the Lelio Basso Foundation. Article 17 of the Declaration extols “the right of every people to use the common heritage of humanity, such as the high seas, the ocean floor, and outer space”.

The notion of a common heritage of humanity seems to be of fundamental importance to the establishment of a new international economic order. Science and technology offer a vast potential as a source of rational solutions to the problems that plague humanity. The misguided use of this potential to promote the kind of development which would only benefit a minority must one day come to an end. The fundamental irrationality of the kind of development imposed on man throughout history cannot be perpetuated or reinforced to challenge and negate technological, scientific and human progress.

To allow new forms of energy and new human resources to become the prerogative of a minority of nations and social classes will be to invite nuclear apocalypse. A perverted use of the concept of the common heritage of mankind would be the worst and most precarious solution to the problems of the future of our planet. As for the idea of “collective economic security”, it is all-encompassing, or it is nothing: it must apply to all States and to the totality of their resources. The possibilities this concept has to offer will only become credible when its all-encompassing nature is fully accepted. With the fulfillment of this condition, which today seems a very distant prospect, the time will have come for a real and beneficial change from a world of division to a world of sharing.

Mohammed Bedjaoui
Disarmament, ecological problems and the exploitation of natural resources are issues that involve the interests of all mankind and call for a growing spirit of solidarity. Yet, though men are becoming increasingly aware that this solidarity is a necessary pre-condition of their development as equals (symbolized by this remarkable ninth-century Irish cross, left, depicting the twelve apostles), communities throughout the world are today striving to preserve their identity with a tenacious fidelity to their cultural traditions that is a vital source of enrichment for the world's cultural heritage. Right, three images of this cultural diversity (from top): a fragment of Coptic cloth (Ethiopia) bearing a design representing the Nile, with men, birds, fish and other animals; majestic figures on the façade of the small temple of Abu Simbel (Egypt); aerial view of pattern of fields and dwellings (Mali).
The royal tombs of Macedon

A surprising archaeological find that may be the tomb of Philip, father of Alexander the Great

by Manolis Andronicos

VERGINA, a small village located twelve kilometres south-east of Veroia, Macedonia, (northern Greece), is the site of one of the most spectacular archaeological discoveries in recent years.

Close by lies another larger village, Palatitsia, whose name, "the small palaces", derives from the Hellenistic ruins located in the vicinity. These remains were first spotted in 1855 by the French archaeologist Léon Heuzey. He began excavations at the site which were continued in 1938 by K.A. Rhomaios of the University of Thessaloniki and completed between 1958 and 1975 by G. Bakalakis of the University of Thessaloniki and the author. Two Macedonian tombs were discovered in this area and it seemed likely that similar burials might also be located nearby.

My long personal acquaintance with Vergina began in 1937 when I took part in excavations carried out by my teacher Rhomaios with whom I worked until 1940. In 1949 I entered the Greek Archaeological Service and by good fortune I was given a position in Veroia which included responsibility for Vergina.

I first explored the Megali Toumba, or Great Tumulus, whose height dominated an extensive cemetery of other smaller tumuli, or mounds. My initial attempt proved fruitless, yet I was convinced that the Megali Toumba, which has a diameter of approximately 110 metres and an elevation of 12.5 metres, was indeed constructed in Hellenistic times and covered a large Macedonian tomb.

In the following years, I investigated the surrounding tumulus cemetery which dated mostly from the Early Iron Age (1000-700 BC) although it was used until the end of the Hellenistic Period. The excavated tombs belonged to its first period (1000-700 BC) and they were rich in pottery, bronze, jewelry and iron weapons.

After this excavation I tried again in 1962 and 1963 to resolve the secret of the Great Tumulus. After reaching a depth of 11.5 metres without coming across any finds, I became convinced that the actual tomb was to be found below the fill of the tumulus in virgin soil. Several fragmented grave stelae, including a painted one of fine workmanship, were discovered in the fill. The latest of these stelae dated from the beginning of the third century BC.

Only in 1976, after an interruption to excavate the palace with my colleague George Bakalakis, did I return to resume my efforts. I knew that it would take more than one season to reach the depth of 12.5 metres and begin the actual search for the tomb.

I was lucky, however, from another point of view; the 1976 finds and the destruction observed in the cemetery lent support to the identification of Vergina with the ancient city of Aegae, the reputed burial place of the Macedonian kings, proposed by the British scholar Nicholas Hammond of Bristol University. The remains unearthed in the filling of the Great Tumulus could be associated with the looting of the royal tombs by the Galatian mercenaries left at Aegae in 274/3 BC as garrisons by Pyrrhus, the king of Epirus, who invaded Macedonia, defeated Antigonus Gonatas, the king of Macedon, and captured many towns.

If this hypothesis was correct, a logical conclusion would be that the Great Tumulus was built by Antigonus Gonatas (320-239 BC), who regained Aegae the next year, in order to cover the looted tombs and protect his own royal tomb from similar vandalism in the future.

With high hopes I began excavating in 30 August 1977 with my assistants Stella Drougou and Chrysoula Paliadeli. After working thirty-five days and removing 18,000 cubic metres of earth, we reached the natural ground level in the centre of the tumulus. Five trial trenches were dug 2.5 to 3 metres deeper so that we reached a total depth of fifteen metres from the top of the tumulus.

The result was a great disappointment: there was no sign of construction or human activity. But during the final days of the 1977 season, while preparing an access ramp for work to be carried out in 1978, I noticed an older, smaller tumulus hidden under the south-east perimeter of the Great Tumulus. Digging into this barrow we came upon an odd piece of wall which was coated with lime on the top and on one of its sides.

A few days later another piece of masonry appeared near a massive well-constructed wall. The next day, between these two

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A mere two centimetres in height, these astonishingly powerful ivory miniatures, above, may well be the most authentic known portraits of Philip of Macedon (right) and his queen Olympias, the father and mother of Alexander the Great. Along with the portrait reproduced on our cover, they were discovered lying in the dust of ages on the floor of the main chamber (No. 3 in drawing page 20) of a Macedonian tomb uncovered by Professor Manolis Andronicos at Vergina, northern Greece, in November 1977. Their presence, coupled with that of certain other intriguing objects, lends weight to the Professor's hypothesis that the tomb is that of King Philip II of Macedon (382-336 BC). The sculptor—perhaps the great Leochares himself—has captured the king's imperious mien, made even more sinister by his injured eye. The resemblance between the portrait of the woman, above left, and the features of Alexander the Great (see page 27) are striking—the same mouth, the same way of carrying the head, the same piercing look. Surely this is Olympias, Alexander's mother, later cast aside by Philip. Left, bearded Silenus, the constant companion of Dionysius the god of wine, adorns a silver pitcher found in the main chamber of the tomb. Far left, a silver vase from the same tomb bears the face of Heracles from whom, legend has it, Alexander was descended. According to the Greek author Plutarch, thirty-eight generations separated Heracles from Alexander.
Revealed to the light of day after 2,000 years of interment, this vast fresco (5.5 by 1.2 metres) spanned the full width of the facade of the great tomb at Vergina (No. 2 in drawing). An unsurpassed example of 4th-century BC art, the painting depicts a hunt for lion and wild boar. Hunters on horseback and on foot pursue their prey across a winter landscape, the season being indicated by a number of leafless trees.

Photo © Spyros Tsavdaroglou, Athens

Left, this cutaway drawing of the great tomb gives a clear idea of the layout of the first unplundered royal Macedonian tomb ever found. It indicates the exact positions of some of Professor Andronicos’ major finds in what was, perhaps, the last resting-place of Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great: (1) the main entrance to the tomb; (2) the hunting-scene fresco; (3) the main chamber; (4) the first sarcophagus and gold casket holding bones that may have been those of Philip of Macedon (photo page 21); (5) shield cover and various bronze vases; (6) connecting door; (7) opening to antechamber made by the archaeologists; (8) antechamber; (9) second sarcophagus and smaller funerary casket; (10) golden quiver and a pair of greaves, or leg-shields, of unequal length (photo page 21).

Colour page

The rich treasure trove of objects discovered in what Professor Manolis Andronicos believes to be the tomb of Philip of Macedon provides a number of indications that support his theory. Bottom photo, this magnificent gold quiver, with a decoration in relief depicting the sack of Troy, found in the antechamber (No. 10 in drawing) beside the connecting door to the main chamber, must surely have belonged to a king. Beside it lay a pair of gilded bronze greaves, or leg-shields. The left one is 3.5 centimetres shorter than the right—a significant detail when it is recalled that Philip was lame. Top photo, found inside the marble sarcophagus in the main chamber (No. 4 in drawing), this solid gold larnax, or funerary casket, weighing nearly 11 kilograms, contained burned bones that may have been those of Philip himself. The cover is embossed with the Macedonian sunburst emblem.

Photos © Spyros Tsavdaroglou, Athens
Continued from page 18

walls, we uncovered the roof of a rectangular tomb which had been opened in the past and had seemingly been plundered. We had found three structures next to one another. Two of them were underground, the third had been built on the surface.

The structure on the surface had been totally destroyed and only its foundations were preserved. Yet a number of marble pieces had been carefully placed next to the foundations; they belonged to the superstructure of the building and displayed extremely fine workmanship. The Galatian destruction of 274/3 BC no longer seemed an abstract speculation but was confirmed by our findings.

The interior of the “small” tomb measured 3.5 by 2.09 by 3 metres. It had obviously been violently plundered and little remained of its contents. The contents had no doubt been valuable, probably consisting of gold, silver and bronze jewelry and utensils.

It was obvious that the tomb must have been unusually luxurious because the upper parts of three of the walls were decorated with frescoes of excellent quality. On the long north wall there was a magnificent painting of “The Abduction of Persephone by Pluto”. This is the first fourth-century BC fresco to be found in Greece. The confidence and the ease of the painter’s hand, the inspiration of the design and the subtleties of the colour scale, the power of the expression and the mastery of perspective indicate that this is the work of a great master.

I consider that this fresco may well have been painted by Nicomachos, the well-known Greek painter of the mid-fourth century BC, who had portrayed this rare theme and was famous not only for the perfection of his work but also for the rapidity with which he executed it. The frescoes on the other two walls depict female figures, excellently delineated but less elaborately coloured.

When we began clearing the neighbouring wall we came upon a pile of sherds, ashes and burnt bones of small animals. The sherds belonged to pots which had been made around 340-330 BC, certainly before 320 BC. The masonry of the wall led to a similar conclusion, and this was particularly interesting. As we dug, the peculiar façade of the tomb began to appear; it was topped by a cornice with splendidly painted palmettes.

Underneath we expected to see triglyphs and metopes of the Doric style; instead we encountered a flat surface which seemed painted. The figure of a standing youth with a spear soon appeared; close by were a roebuck and a horseman. The entire painting, 5.5 metres long and 1.2 metres high, was a unique composition from a period of Greek painting whose beauty had only been guessed at from later Roman copies and imitations, like those in Pompeii, Herculanum and Boscoreale.

The main subject was a boar and a lion hunt (no. 2 in drawing page 20). Three horsemen and seven men on foot, with spears, dogs and beasts, make their way across a winter landscape which is indicated by two leafless trees. The rendering of the figures, the understanding of perspective, the mastery of composition, the subtlety and alternations of the colour reveal the hand of a great painter. I think that this fresco could be the work of the painter who made the original depiction of the battle of Issos, on which the famous mosaic in Naples is based. This unique work by “The Painter of Vergina” gives us the first opportunity to appreciate the art of Greek painting in one of its highest periods; and it constituted the first major discovery of the excavation.

Further excavations revealed the entablature of the building, the metopes and the triglyphs as well as the epistyle and the capitals of the columns and antacapitels. They were all well preserved with their original colours intact. Naturally our attention turned to the middle of the façade where one would expect to find the door.

Realizing that it was impossible to complete the cleaning of the entrance during this season, we decided to remove the earth from the top part of the door so that we could see inside and eventually enter the tomb. This plan was based on the assumption that the tomb had been plundered and that as a result the door was broken and had fallen into the tomb. When we reached the lintel, however, we experienced a great and very pleasant surprise: the door was intact, a good indication that the tomb had not been looted (no. 1 in drawing page 20). I had never expected such luck. Here at Vergina was one of the largest Macedonian tombs, the oldest and most important, with a unique painting on its front, and it had not been plundered—it was the only intact Macedonian tomb yet discovered! From that moment, the excitement on the excavation grew even more intense.

Centre colour pages

Performed annually for some seven centuries, the medieval Mystery of Elche retains today all its ancient vitality and splendour (see article page 32). Left, the principal members of the cast are gathered in the Church of Santa Maria for the climax of the play. The apostles and the people look towards the Virgin Mary, after her death, is elevated, soul and body, and crowned Queen of Heaven. She is accompanied heavenwards by two angels, singing and playing a guitar and a harp. Above waits God the Father, flanked by the Angels of the Coronation. All the roles are played by the people of Elche, except that after her death the Virgin Mary is represented by a statue. Top right, detail from the previous scene shows the Virgin Mary rising to heaven with the two accompanying angels. Below, the living Mary is portrayed, in accordance with ancient tradition, by a young boy from Elche.

Photos James Wedge © Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C.

Colour page, left

Photo top left. Although Buddhism was the dominant religion of the Sukhothai period (see article page 4), Brahmanism co-existed with it and the Sukhothai school produced a series of bronze Brahman statues remarkable for their attention to detail and their beauty. Photo shows detail from a full-length (156 cm), 14th-century bronze statue from Sukhothai which represents Uma, wife of the Brahman god Siva.

Photo top right. Sukhothai sculptors usually portrayed the seated Buddha cross-legged with the left hand lying palm upwards on the lap and the right hand resting on the right knee with the fingers pointing downwards. This is known as the “victory over Mara” or the “calling the earth to witness” attitude. It represents an important moment in the life of Buddha when Mara, the evil one, the tempter who is the lord of the world of passion, attempted to defeat him and prevent him from attaining enlightenment. Unmoved by Mara’s army of demons, however, Buddha sat in meditation until Mara and his armies fled vanquished. With his hand Buddha touched the ground to call the earth-goddess to witness his victory over evil.

Bottom photo. This bronze-gilt reclining image of the Mahaparinirvana (Buddha who has attained the final nirvana) dates from the 14th or 15th century and was taken to Bangkok from Wat Pra Luang, Sukhothai, at the beginning of the 19th century. The couch-pedestal, the statues of the two discipies and the background painting of the faithful assembled to hear the Buddha’s last words all date from the 19th century.

Photos Hans Hinz © Le Sculpture en Thaïlande, by Jean Boisselier and Jean-Michel Beaudouley, Editions Office du Livre, Fribourg, Switzerland

Photo Alexis Vorontzoff, Unesco.
The exquisite beauty of Greek 4th-century wall-painting had only been guessed at, from descriptions in ancient Greek literature and from Roman copies such as those found at Pompeii, before the discovery of the Vergina tombs. Left, detail from the dramatic fresco depicting Pluto abducting Persephone that embellished the northern inside wall of the plundered small tomb.

The problem was now how to enter the tomb. It would be impossible to open the door; this could be done only from the inside and after the entrance to the floor had been cleared. Behind the façade we had so far uncovered only a small portion of the roof. We knew that the tomb was vaulted, like all known Macedonian tombs, and so there was only one way to enter: by uncovering the vault and removing the keystone, as the ancient grave robbers had done.

When the earth, which at that point was six metres deep, was removed, another unexpected situation arose. In the rear part of the roof there was a mudbrick structure which had collapsed under the weight of the earth fill. In this rubble we found two iron swords, the point of a sarissa (a long pike used by Macedonian soldiers) and many fragments of iron harnesses, all of which showed signs of burning. They had probably been placed in the funerary pyre and then on top of the tomb, bringing to mind the famous Homeric scene of Patroklos’ burial where Achilles burned four horses along with his dead friend.

On 8 November 1977 we finally removed the keystone of the vault. With the help of a flashlight I looked through the opening into the chamber, 4.46 metres square. Across the room was a marble door leading into the antechamber (nos. 6 and 8 in drawing page 20). The coating of the walls, where one might have expected painted decoration, was very poor, as if it had been hurriedly applied. Yet in the chamber there were two groups of objects; bronze vessels and weapons in one corner, silver vessels in the other. On the floor there was a pile of decomposed materials interspersed with sheets of gold. Directly below the opening I could discern a rectangular marble slab which covered a marble sarcophagus (no. 4 in drawing page 20). The spectacle was fascinating. We were supplied with a ladder and descended into the chamber which was at a depth of 5.3 metres.

It is impossible to mention everything that was found. The group of bronze vessels and weapons included two tripods, three large vessels and some small ones, as well as many iron points of spears and javelins and two greaves, or leg armour. A remarkable find in one of the vessels was a sponge which was still soft and elastic. The group of silver objects included many silver vessels of high quality. Both their shape and decoration displayed excellent craftsmanship and unique sensitivity. Nearly all had handles ending in small heads representing such figures as Herakles, Silenus and Pan. These small heads constitute a real treasure for the study of the Greek art of working metal in relief.

There were some other unique pieces. The bronze group was dominated by a large round object resembling a shield (no. 5 in drawing page 20). When we moved it, however, we realized that it could not have been a shield because it had neither a handle nor any other fitting characteristic of a shield. Neither could it have been a vessel such as a cauldron. Behind the object lay a pile of gold and silver bands, a round ivory plaque and the fragments of two small ivory statuettes.

Careful examination convinced me that all these pieces belonged to a shield, which originally had a wood and leather frame with ivory and gold decorations, and handles adorned with beautiful relief figures in gilded silver. Such a precious shield was undoubtedly not used in battle and was probably ceremonial. It would have needed protection; and the bronze object could thus be its cover.

Next to the shield we found the iron helmet of the deceased, with the crest typical of the Macedonian helmet and a figure of Athena in relief on the front. This is the first Macedonian helmet ever discovered. Some distance away we found a cuirass made of
iron sheets covered with leather and cloth. It was adorned with three golden bands, six gold lions' heads and a rectangular gold plaque with the figure of Athena in relief; on a fringe at the bottom were more than fifty gold strips. A sword lay between the cuirass and the helmet. Its sheath, made of wood with semicircular ivory end-imaginings, was bound with a series of golden bands and was decorated with gold palmettes.

The outstanding craftsmanship displayed by this wonderfully decorated armour testifies that the deceased could not have been a commoner. Moreover, there was another unique find; a ring-shaped gold and silver object with its ends inserted into a small cylinder. It was decorated all over with lozenges and, on the small end-piece, there was a relief design depicting the knot of a ribbon and the ends of a band. In all probability this is a diadem, or head-band. It is similar to those seen in the portraits of such Hellenistic rulers as Attalos III of Pergamon, Antiochos III of Syria and Antigonus Gonatas of Macedon. Even Alexander the Great was depicted with such a diadem, for example, in the portraits at Rossie Priory in England and in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

This interpretation then leads us to the inevitable conclusion that a king had been buried in the tomb. All our finds dated from between 350 BC and 325 BC. From 359 to 336 BC, however, there was only one king in Macedon, Philip II, remembered not only as the father of Alexander the Great but also for consolidating the Macedonian kingdom and establishing its hegemony over Greece in 338 BC. Alexander, who succeeded Philip in 336 BC and reigned until 323 BC, died and was buried outside Macedonia. Thus, we are forced to the startling conclusion that if the deceased had been a king, he was Philip!

If the standard burial practices had been followed, the cremated bones of the deceased ought to have been contained in an urn placed in the marble sarcophagus. We expected to find a richly decorated amphora, perhaps gilded. When we removed the cover of the sarcophagus, however, we made an unprecedented find; a gold larnax, or casket. Not counting the feet on which it stood, it measured approximately forty centimetres in length, 33.5 centimetres in width, and 17 centimetres in height. With the bones it contained, it weighed 10.8 kilograms. It was decorated with palmettes, rosettes, vines and, on the cover, with a star.

Inside were the cremated bones, in a remarkable state of cleanliness and, on top of them, a gold wreath with acorns and oak leaves. Some of the leaves and the bottom of the larnax were coloured with a bluish-purple tint. Specialists later confirmed that this came from the purple cloth with which the bones had once been wrapped, reminiscent of Homer's descriptions of the funerals of Patroklos, Hector and Achilles, the great heroes of the Trojan War.

We thought that this find must surely be the climax of a remarkable excavation. Yet even more surprises were in store, unexpected finds which further supported the tomb's association with Philip. On the floor in front of the marble sarcophagus we found remains of what may have been a wooden bed or piece of furniture decorated with gold and ivory figurines. The ivory heads, hands and legs lying on the floor, were left where they were, to be removed later by specialists.

One day, however, as I was studying the interior of the tomb, I decided to pick up one of the pieces. To my great surprise, I discovered that it was a gold diadem, above all resembling the royal diadem often depicted in portraits of sovereigns of the Hellenistic period and strikingly similar to the diadem, above left, found in the main chamber of the great tomb at Vergina. This piece, wrought in gold and silver, bears a diamond-shaped motif in relief. Yet none of these portraits exudes from the portrait, thought to be of Alexander, discovered at Vergina and reproduced on our cover.

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Face of a conqueror

"Mine is the earth; thou, O Zeus, content thyself with Olympus." The arrogant boldness of these words implies a clear divergence from the portraits of Alexander that have come down to us, such as this bronze statue, left, in the style of the 4th-century BC Greek sculptor Lysippus. Now in the Louvre Museum, Paris, it originally depicted Alexander holding a lance. Although, according to Plutarch, Alexander ordained that only Lysippus should portray him, several more or less idealised portraits of the great conqueror by other artists exist. Far left, preserved in the Acropolis Museum, Athens, this head of Alexander with his lion's mane of hair, sensual mouth and intelligent expression is the work of another great Greek sculptor, Leochares. Centre left, with head inclined and eyes turned heavenwards, this statue from the Hellenistic period, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, reproduces the characteristics traditionally ascribed to Alexander in literature. Just visible is part of the royal diadem often seen in portraits of sovereigns of the Hellenistic period and strikingly similar to the diadem, above left, found in the main chamber of the great tomb at Vergina. Thought to be of gold and silver, it bears a diamond-shaped pattern completed by a knotted ribbon motif in relief. Yet none of these portraits conveys the same sense of stark realism that exudes from the portrait, thought to be of Alexander, discovered at Vergina and reproduced on our cover.

Photo © Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
The Alexander legend

The fame of Alexander spread throughout both the eastern and the western world, reaching incredible proportions after his death. As well as being the incarnation of the supreme victor, the conqueror of Greece and of Asia became a quasi-mythical hero, endowed with all the virtues and capable of all kinds of miraculous exploits. Illustrations and legendary accounts of his feats abounded. A life of Alexander written in the second century AD by a Greek author, the so-called “pseudo-Callisthenes”, was translated into Latin during the fourth century; during the eleventh and twelfth centuries it was taken up again by a number of French poets, some of whom, to honour Alexander, wrote in a verse form with lines containing six iambic feet which became known as Alexandrines. He is also immortalized as one of the four kings in a pack of cards. Many and varied were his legendary exploits. Photos: (1) Space-traveller. Under the astonished gaze of his soldiers, Alexander explores the heavens in a special cage borne up by two “hideous and grotesque” griffins. (2) Explorer of the ocean depths. In this miniature from a 14th-century French romance, La Vraie Ystoire dou bon Roi Alexandre (The True History of the Good King Alexander), the intrepid hero descends in a glass barrel to the strange world of the ocean bed, with its curious whales, fish and mermen. The conqueror of the world was the pupil of Aristotle and was viewed also as the conqueror of the world of knowledge. (3) The model son. Pictured here in a medieval Byzantine manuscript, Alexander leads his mother Olympias into the presence of his father king Philip II of Macedon in the hopes of effecting a reconciliation between the estranged couple. This must be considered one of his rare failures; indeed, historians are generally agreed that Olympias later engineered Philip’s assassination. (4) Prophet. An illustration from a 15th century French manuscript shows Alexander telling the tree of the sun and the tree of the moon of his forthcoming death.
Death of a hero. This fine 10th-century Persian miniature, from Ferdousi's famous *Shah-Nama* (Book of Kings) evokes the tragic character of the "Great Iskandar's" death. His body rests on an elaborate bier, in the customary style of the Emperors of China. In the foreground, the mourners wring their hands in grief. Olympias, in the centre, half lies across his bier, the epitome of maternal distress, while from behind the bier the great Aristotle looks for the last time at his former pupil.
The ancient Indian province of Gandhara marked the most easterly point reached by Alexander's conquering armies. During the 2nd century BC, Gandhara came under the domination of Indo-Greek rulers and the distinctive Greco-Buddhist art style that developed there was a unique amalgam of Hellenistic, Roman, Syrian and Persian influences. This Apollo-like head of Buddha is a detail from the Boddhisattva of Shabhaz-garhi, now in the Guimet Museum, Paris.

(see front cover). Nearby, a third portrait resembled that of Alexander, but it was that of a woman. I decided later that it represented Olympias, Alexander's mother.

Further away were two more portraits, one of a male and the other of a female, both with vigorous features which, however, I could not identify. I remembered how, after the Battle of Chaeronea in 338 BC, which had established Macedon's hegemony over all Greece, Philip had commissioned statues of his family from the great sculptor Leochares. The statues, to be dedicated at Olympia, represented Philip, his parents, Alexander, who had fought alongside Philip at Chaeronea, and Olympias.

It is very probable that at the same time the king commissioned various pieces of furniture decorated with figures of his family. If this were so, these small portraits may have been executed by Leochares himself or in his workshop. Their exceptional quality indicates that they were made by a great master. There can be little doubt that these are the best and most authoritative portraits not only of Philip but of Alexander as well. The archaeological evidence discovered so far therefore leads to the hypothesis that the tomb belonged to King Philip. I emphasize the fact that this is not a conclusion, but a hypothesis, which must be further confirmed by epigraphical evidence.

The tomb, like all large Macedonian tombs, consisted of a chamber and an antechamber, divided by a two-leaved marble door. Opening this sealed portal would not be an easy task. Instead of forcing the heavy door, therefore, a block was removed from the partition wall to enable us to enter the antechamber (no. 7 in drawing page 20). We had hoped that the walls or the vault of the antechamber would be decorated with frescoes but we did not expect to find more objects. Once again we were taken by surprise.

First of all, the wall plaster was of high quality, white on the lower Pompeian red on the upper part, but there were no frescoes. The presence of a second marble sarcophagus, slightly larger and more elongated than that in the main chamber, was totally unexpected. On its cover, a pile of decomposed organic matter looked as if it might have been the remains of flowers or ears of wheat. Microscopic examination proved, however, that this material actually consisted of feathers of large birds. Such feathers were also found on the floor mixed with a large quantity of other organic matter, presumably the remains of clothing and wooden furniture.

High up on the walls were nails from which fabrics had probably been hung. Fine gold sheets, broken glass and ivory scattered over a large area of the floor indicated that the furniture had been gilded and elaborately decorated. A gold wreath of myrtle leaves and flowers lay on the floor next to the sarcophagus.

Many alabastra were found in the space between the door jambs and the marble door. Yet the most impressive discovery was a gold quiver or gorytus, similar to those found in the royal tombs of the Scythians in Southern Russia (see Unesco Courier, December 1976).
It was decorated in relief with scenes that probably depict the sack of Troy. Behind this gold plaque we found arrows; part of their wooden shafts had been preserved in fairly good condition. A fourth pair of greaves lay beside the quiver (no. 10 in drawing page 20). In this case the greaves were gilded. The left one was 3.5 centimetres shorter than the right, a fact which reminded us that Philip was lame.

The final surprise came from the sarcophagus in the antechamber. When we removed the heavy cover, we found another golden larnax, slightly smaller and with simpler decoration than that of the main chamber, yet with the same characteristic star on its lid (no. 9 in drawing page 20). The cremated bones inside the casket had been wrapped in a purple cloth interwoven with gold thread; its border was decorated with a wave pattern, its centre with vine leaves, flowers and branches. Beside the bones, a very elegant diadem of golden flowers and twigs had been placed, or rather pushed. In all probability this diadem had belonged to a woman.

The quantity of finds, their opulence and, most of all, their quality supported the view that we were in a royal tomb. Since the entire chamber belonged to Philip II, who could have been buried in the antechamber? It might be supposed, for instance, that the deceased was a woman, as the elegant diadem and myrtle wreath suggest, and therefore that she might be Philip's last wife, Cleopatra, who was either executed or forced to commit suicide. This interpretation, however, raises problems, the most important of which is the absence of female jewelry in the antechamber. We would prefer to wait until more research has been done before putting forward any conclusions.

Such were the results of excavations carried out in 1977.

When we continued our excavations in the summer of 1978 we made another important find. On 5 August we found the façade of another Macedonian tomb, a small distance to the north of the Great Tomb, which we opened on the 22nd of the same month.

The new tomb (tomb III) is smaller but architecturally similar to the great one. It consists of a chamber and an antechamber, and on its façade is a similar frieze. However, the mural painting on the façade, unlike that of the Great Tomb, has been totally destroyed because it was executed on some kind of organic material, possibly a wooden panel, and not on the stucco of the wall.

Inside the chamber one of the two leaves of the inner marble door was found lying broken on the ground. Instead of a sarcophagus there was a "table" with a cavity in its upper part, into which had been put a silver hydria, or pitcher, containing the burned bones of the dead. On its shoulder was a golden wreath of leaves and acorns. Almost the entire floor was covered with the remains of organic substances similar to those which had already been discovered (a wooden bed, pieces of leather, ivories etc.). In one corner there were many silver vases of high quality; in another, two big vessels of silvered bronze. Near them was a tall silvered iron lamp-stand. The clay lamp had fallen on the ground. At the other side there was a pair of greaves, two wreaths of gilded bronze and some other objects. A few pieces of the ivory decoration of the wooden bed could still be seen.

On the floor of the antechamber we found the remains of a leather garment adorned with gold. At the other side of the antechamber among other organic remains were strigils, instruments used for scraping the skin after exercise or at the bath, and the lower part of a gilded spear. Finally, the walls of the antechamber are covered with a continuous narrow frieze depicting a chariot race. Although the painting cannot be compared with those of the two other tombs, since its character is only decorative, it is nevertheless of very good quality and quite well preserved.

From the fragments of the ivory relief decoration of the bed, technicians have so far been able to reconstruct an exquisite group scene depicting Pan and a dionysiac couple, possibly Dionysos and Ariadne or some other couple in a "thiasos", or procession of worshippers. The occupant of the tomb must have been very young, but I am certain that he also belonged to the royal family. My first impression is that the new tomb is earlier than the great one, but I cannot be fully certain until I have studied the objects fully.

After this new discovery, I think that it is possible that we are in the area of the royal necropolis and that it is highly probable that a new tomb will be found as the excavation continues. Certainly there is an increasing awareness of the importance of the discovery. The objects that have been found so far offer extremely precious material for the study of the art of the 4th century BC, especially for the study of the painting of this period which has hitherto been almost unknown.

Manolis Andronicos
One of the opening scenes of the Mystery of Elche—the Apostles and the angels enter the Church of Santa Maria in procession. The Mystery was filmed in its entirety for the first time last year by a group under the direction of Michael Dodds and journalist and film-director Gudie Lawaetz whose idea it was to preserve for posterity a complete record of this unusual, centuries-old spectacle. The latest cinematographic techniques were used in the project, which was partly financed by Unesco's International Fund for the Promotion of Culture.

The Mystery of Elche

A seven-century-old sacred drama performed each year in a Spanish city

by Juan Carlos Langlois

THE profusion of Romanesque and Gothic monuments which rose in Christian Europe during the Middle Ages form a precious part of the world’s cultural heritage. These religious buildings are an intrinsic part of Europe’s physical and spiritual landscape, and European Governments today are rightly concerned with preserving and restoring them.

It is relatively easy to restore stonework. But is it possible to recreate the human and religious atmosphere of medieval times? And if so, can it be done without recourse to stage or screen reconstructions which only give a rough idea of the feelings of medieval people for whom the Church was the centre of community life?

The answer to this question is to be found in the Spanish city of Elche, in the province of Alicante. There, ever since the fourteenth century, a medieval mystery drama has been staged on 14 and 15 August to celebrate the feast of the Assumption. In the sixteenth century the Council of Trent forbade the performance of drama in churches, but the Elche Mystery was exempted from this prohibition by a special dispensation from Pope Urban VIII.

The survival of this production, the only one of its kind in Europe, owes much to the devotion of the people of Elche. For nearly seven centuries they have preserved the form and spirit of the "Misteri d’Elx" in an atmosphere of collective enthusiasm which
authentically recreates the world of medieval religious drama.

Between the twelfth and the sixteenth centuries the staging of scriptural dramas or "mysteries" in churches became widely popular in France, England and Spain. Hundreds of actors took part in these productions, which went on for days at a time and involved the use of highly elaborate scenery and equipment. Some of the texts which have survived have over 30,000 verses.

These medieval dramatizations of the scriptures, whose lineage in some respects stretches back to the ancient Greek and Roman mysteries, were the precursors of Renaissance drama and music in Europe.

But nothing in the West changes more rapidly and more constantly than the dramatic arts. Apart from certain texts, musical notations and, since the last century, a handful of productions which are for the most part merely pious attempts to reconstitute a vanished tradition, little remains of medieval scriptural drama and the upsurge of fervour with which it was imbued.

This is why the Elche Mystery is so important and why there was a pressing need to record for posterity this presentation of the mystery of the Assumption, the only one to have survived virtually intact the vicissitudes of European history and the changing pattern of religious practices and customs in Europe.

Elche is situated near the Mediterranean littoral, twenty-four kilometres from Alicante. Founded during the Roman Empire, it was subsequently occupied by the Visigoths and then by the Arabs. During the reign of Abd ar-Rahman III in the tenth century Elche enjoyed a period of spectacular development, with the construction of buildings, fortifications and an irrigation system which led to the creation of the most important oasis in south-eastern Spain and a 600-hectare palm grove, the biggest in Europe.

The combination of Arab-Muslim architecture, palm-trees and the blue Mediterranean sky make a setting not unlike that in which Christianity began, and explains why Elche is sometimes known as the "Spanish Jerusalem".

Elche is not a remote, inaccessible town but a major industrial and agricultural centre with a population of 160,000, situated twelve kilometres from a busy international airport. Rapid expansion in recent decades, industrial development and a growing influx of tourists have brought many changes to the city but have in no way affected the Mystery play. Why, it might be asked, has the Elche Mystery survived in an age when urban growth, the spread of tourism and the mass media have tainted or even destroyed so much traditional popular drama and ceremonial in many parts of the world?

One of the answers surely lies in the complex links which have for centuries bound the people of Elche to their Mystery. Today, as in the Middle Ages, the community as a whole is committed to its success. The actors who year by year polish their performance as Apostles, angels or members of the crowd, are workmen, craftsmen and technicians who live and work in the modern world; but they are very much aware of being the repositories of a remarkable tradition.

One surprising and reassuring feature of the Mystery is that the participants do not belong to a single age-group. People of all ages take part, united by a common enthusiasm. Children and youths, for example, take female roles, in accordance with custom. The Virgin Mary is currently played by an eleven-year-old boy, Manolito.

The Mystery consists of two parts, the "Vespre" and the "Festa", which take place on 14 and 15 August respectively. The former begins when the Virgin enters the church and ends with her death, or dormition, in the midst of the Apostles. Meanwhile four angels descend from "heaven" and then return to the cupola bearing an image of Mary symbolizing her soul. On the 15th, there is a dramatization of the solemn burial of the Virgin and her coronation, which takes place to applause and cries of jubilation from the crowd, while the organ plays, bells ring and fireworks explode.

The Catalan writer Eugenio d'Ors, who first attended the Elche Mystery in 1934, noted that in a lifetime as a theatre-goer he had never experienced such depths of emotion: "Here nothing separates the stage from the public", he wrote. "Nothing separates drama from religious ceremony, heaven from earth; domestic anecdote from supernatural crisis. The apse becomes a nave; the altar an alcove. Temple and street are one. Plain-chant merges into polyphony; polyphony into operatic melody. Flourishes of organ music punctuate the recitative. The distinctions disappear between psalmody and chant, chant and prayer, cries and sobbing. We applaud in the church and pray in the street."

For Eugenio d'Ors the Elche Mystery, the oldest opera in the world, combines an even vaster range of forms of expression than those of Wagnerian Bayreuth. "The cosmic rapture and ecstasy unleashed by the Elche Mystery are not even attained in the Holy Week processions in Seville," he wrote. "The immersion in the unconscious brought about by such a unique spectacle is a profound revelation of the very essence of theatre."

From an artistic point of view, the Mystery may be considered as one of the most important precursors of the operatic music and drama of Renaissance Europe. The poetry of the text, recited in Valencian, a dialect of the Catalan language, probably has roots in the literature of the Provençal troubadours. Both text and music were modified after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 and assumed their present form in 1639. Their power is undimmed by time.

A few years ago it was suggested that the Elche Mystery should be filmed in its entirety so that the unique spectacle could be preserved for posterity. The project was carried out with aid from Unesco's Interna

Mary, the mother of St. James the Less, and Mary, the mother of St. John, are seen seated, left, next to two angels, on the enclosed podium on which lies the body of the Virgin Mary. The podium forms the stage on which various scenes from the Mystery are enacted. In the background, the public watch as the drama unfolds.
Manolito, the eleven-year-old boy from Elche who plays the part of the Virgin Mary, at home with his father and grandfather, both of whom have taken an active part in the performance of the Mystery in previous years. The Mystery has taken deep root among the people of Elche and each year hundreds of families of the city are involved in the spectacle. The tradition of having a feminine role played by a boy was not peculiar to sacred medieval plays; in Shakespeare's England and in some other countries female roles were normally played by boys.

The International Fund for the Promotion of Culture

Established by Unesco in 1974, the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture is intended to promote cultural values, to assist artistic creation in all its forms and to encourage regional and international cultural co-operation. The Fund is administered by an Administrative Council composed of fifteen members appointed in their personal capacity by the Director-General of Unesco. The initial financial resources of the Fund were contributed by a number of Unesco Member States (Chile, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Venezuela and Yugoslavia) and by various foundations, institutions and private individuals.

The Fund, which became operational in April 1977, has up to now approved grants worth more than a million dollars to assist cultural promotion projects in all the major cultural regions of the world.

Projects financed by the Fund include: the establishment of the Mudra-Africa Centre, in Dakar, for the training of performing artists; a study to examine the feasibility of establishing, in Colombia, a company to produce and market cultural goods and services; the creation of an Inter-cultural School of Music, in Venice; the production of a film and a textbook as aids to the teaching of design based on traditional cultural values, for the National Institute of Design, India; the creation of an experimental television teaching centre in Venezuela; a programme for the recording of Arab music.
Polish educator, doctor and author, Janusz Korczak (1878-1942) introduced many revolutionary innovations in the field of child care and teaching and eventually died at the Treblinka concentration camp with the orphaned children to whom he had devoted the greater part of his life. Korczak taught that every child had the right to be respected as an individual and as a child. Left, at a holiday camp for poor children from Warsaw, in 1907, Korczak listens intently to a child reading, while all those around him seem concerned only with what the photographer is doing.

Janusz Korczak
The doctor who lived and died for children

by Stanislaw Tomkiewicz
and Béatrice Maffioli

A

N educator whose ideas broke new ground, a pioneer of child psychiatry and a prolific writer, Janusz Korczak was a passionate and lifelong defender, not of childhood as an abstraction but of individual children who suffered oppression, hardship and neglect.

Korczak and his work have been famous for many years in Poland, Israel, the Soviet Union and Germany but they are still not widely known in other parts of the world. This year Unesco is celebrating the hundredth anniversary of his birth (see Unesco Courier, April 1979 page 34) and publishing a selection of his works in French as part of its literature translations programme.

STANISLAW TOMKIEWICZ, head of the department of psychopathology at the University of Paris VIII (Vincennes), is director of research at the National Institute of Health and Medical Research, Paris, and scientific director of the Institute's unit for research on the mental health of young children and disturbed adolescents. A paediatrician and psychiatrist, he was born in Warsaw, and after surviving the Warsaw ghetto rising against the Nazis he was deported to the concentration camp of Belsen. He has lived in France since 1945.

BEATRICE MAFFIOLI, French specialist in the history of fascism, works at the National Institute of Health and Medical Research, Paris, and is an active member of the French "Friends of Doctor Janusz Korczak Association". She has also worked in Africa as a sociologist and educational consultant.

Korczak (whose real name was Henryk Goldszmit) was born in Warsaw, then occupied by Tsarist Russia. His family belonged to the so-called "assimilated" stratum of the Jewish community. The Goldszmits were patriots imbued with Polish language and culture; they did not practise their religion assiduously but neither did they deny their Judaism. They subscribed to the liberal reformist ideas of the intelligentsia of their time, and dreamed of the independence of Poland and of a society from which poverty would be banished.

The grandson of a doctor and the son of a famous barrister, Henryk enjoyed a happy childhood. Then, when he was seventeen years old, his father died after a long period of confinement in a psychiatric institution. The nature of his illness is not fully understood. Korczak had to provide for his mother and sister and learned for himself what it was like to be poor.

Korczak's personality was profoundly marked by his experience of being both a Jew and a Pole, by his transition from wealth to poverty, and by his fear of hereditary madness.

Paying his way by giving private lessons, he passed his baccalauréat and then began to study medicine. In these years he made friends with young people in the poorest districts of Warsaw. In 1900 he helped to organize the first holiday camps for Polish working-class children, a revolutionary idea at that time. After specializing in paediatrics in hospitals in Berlin and Paris, he soon won a reputation as a paediatrician, treating the children of wealthy families. However, he devoted more and more time to hospital work, to his writing, to educational problems and to the welfare of needy children.

In 1905, recently qualified, he took part in the Russo-Japanese War as a doctor with the Russian army where he encountered the first soldiers' soviets. In gatherings held to discuss the liberation of the working man he took the floor and pleaded for the liberation of the child without which, he said, the liberation of humanity would be an absurdity.

In 1910 he spent some time as a teacher in children's holiday camps. Out of this experience came two short novels, Moski i Srule and Joski, Jaski i Franki, which were read by children and adults alike. In them Korczak describes with sensitivity and humour the behaviour of poor children on holiday and their impressions when they discovered the countryside and community life for the first time, in an atmosphere where hierarchy and repression were non-existent.

Soon after the publication of these works Korczak took the step which was to determine the course of the rest of his life. He helped to plan the first soldiers' soviets. In gatherings held to discuss the liberation of the working man he took the floor and pleaded for the liberation of the child without which, he said, the liberation of humanity would be an absurdity.

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his tragic death in 1942 his life would be devoted to this children's home, except for a four-year absence during the First World War. After 1920 he only left the orphanage for short periods of travel, including visits to Palestine in 1934 and 1936. His fear of hereditary madness prevented Korczak from marrying and having a family of his own. His only children were those of others.

From 1922 to 1926 he also worked as a teacher and physician at an orphanage for Catholic children. He lectured at Warsaw University and between 1934 and 1938 broadcast each week on Polish radio under the pseudonym of "the old doctor". First of all he presented a programme in which he told stories for children; later he gave advice to parents and spoke in defence of children's rights. The texts of these popular talks were later published in a book entitled Droll Teaching. Even at this time Korczak had high hopes of the possibilities of audio-visual methods in popular education and ranks as a pioneer in this field.

The rise of Nazism in Germany brought a threat to the Jews of Poland. Korczak's terrible sufferings on account of this brought him closer to Judaism and even to a certain mysticism.

Korczak broadcast again on Polish radio in September 1939, raising the people's morale during the heroic defence of Warsaw against the Nazi attack which left parts of the city in ruins. From the very beginning of the occupation Korczak refused to wear the yellow star which the Jews were obliged to display, and although he was subjected to physical violence and sentenced to a term of imprisonment on this account, his resolution did not weaken.

In October 1940 the orphanage was forced to move into the newly-created Warsaw ghetto. Death took a terrible toll, especially of the children, scores of whom died in the streets every day. But wretched and starving though they were, Korczak's orphans lived in an island of relative peace and security. Right until the end, Korczak's force of personality and unremitting efforts ensured that their minimum needs of food, hygiene and above all affection were met.

In 1942, two weeks before they were sent to their death, Korczak had the children perform Rabindranath Tagore's play The Post, the story of a sick child who dies dreaming of running through the fields, in the hope of familiarizing them with the idea of death. He received several offers of safety if he would consent to leave the ghetto, his orphanage and his children. But he stubbornly elected to remain in the Ghetto, this dream comes true, as Korczak portrays the greatness and ultimate downfall of a boy king who sets out to establish a world of justice and peace for children and adults alike. The work satirizes the high and mighty, gives a comic explanation of the machinery of power and shows a topsy-turvy world in which children are workers and adults attend school.

Little Jack Goes Bankrupt (1924) presents the dream of grandeur in a different form: a little boy enters the business world, not to make a fortune but to replace the profit motive with a co-operative system.

In Jojo the Magician (1934) a child comes to realize that he has supernatural powers when some of his wishes come true, in defiance of common sense and probability.

In spite of their humour, these books are profoundly sombre. They show how dreams of grandeur, if they remain mere fantasies, are always thwarted when they come up against the realities of life.

But Korczak's last story for children, written in 1938, reveals how such dreams can be fulfilled. Entitled A Stubby Boy, it is a fictional biography of Louis Pasteur.

The creation of the famous "Little Review", the first weekly journal entirely written by children and adolescents, had an important place in Korczak's literary activities. With its 2,000 correspondents aged from six to eighteen, the magazine voiced all the preoccupations of Poland's schoolchildren. It brought out the true importance of seemingly trivial events in children's lives, their injustices and pleasures, joys and sorrows, focussing on all those things that adults tend to dismiss as trifles because, unlike Korczak, they have forgotten how important they are to children.

"I should like my children's newspaper to be printed on cigarette paper", Korczak once said, "just like the literature prohibited under Tsarist Russia and in Poland between the wars. I should like this newspaper to say things that adults will not know about because they will be afraid to read it."

The "Little Review", still a revolutionary idea even today, ceased publication when the Nazis invaded Poland in 1939.

Korczak left no academic treatises, no turgid textbooks, no abstract theories. He was not intellectually incapable of writing for a restricted academic audience, but he did not wish to do so. The destiny of each
Korczak's work with children began while he was still a young medical student and in 1900 he helped organize the first holiday camps for poor children in Poland. In 1913 he opened the orphanage for Jewish children at 92, Krochmalna Street, Warsaw, to which he was to devote his life. In 1922 he became, in addition, co-director and medical superintendent of Nas Dom (Our Home), an orphanage for Catholic children. Photos, top right, children of the Nas Dom orphanage in Warsaw and, bottom right, at a holiday camp at Bielany. Centre right, children from the Jewish orphanage at their last holiday camp, at Goclawek, in 1940. In October 1940 the Jewish orphanage was transferred to the newly constructed Warsaw ghetto. Left, Janusz Korczak in 1938. At a time when the rising tide of Nazism had already swamped Austria, Korczak wears the troubled look of a man anxious about what the future holds for his beloved children.
individual child took precedence over generalizations which might turn out to be arbitrary or unfounded.

How to Love a Child, written in a field hospital during the First World War, shows how Korczak transmuted experience and theory into poetry. His works often consist of aphorisms, thoughts and anecdotes seemingly jotted down at random. A close reading, however, reveals that they have a structure and that behind the apparent discursiveness is a coherent system based on protection, love and respect for children. Children were the subject of virtually all his writing and the mainspring of his life.

Korczak's literary, social and scientific publications for adult readers are not easy to classify because they eschew pedantry and jargon for humour and tenderness. Among the most important of these works are:

Ghetto Diary, the reflections of a man without illusions on a world collapsing into cruelty and horror;
The Child's Right to Respect is a veritable proclamation of the Rights of the Child, a denunciation of the love that stifles and a defence of the love that encourages independence. In this work Korczak also denounces the oppression of children and suggests ways of ending it;

How to Love a Child is a compendium of Korczak's ideas on education. Although the first part dealing with infancy is now somewhat outmoded, the sections on boarding education and on schools in general contain ideas which are still regarded as advanced today.

Janusz Korczak never completely abandoned medicine. He practised as a paediatrician, specializing in the study of relationships in the family and at school. He may be considered as a forerunner of the modern "antipsychiatrists" although, like almost all physicians at the beginning of the century he was a positivist, a materialist and a firm believer in scientific method. He was a defender of theories of heredity and even of eugenics, and yet he was also convinced of the perfectibility of the child through love and education.

Knowing where beliefs in eugenics and hereditary theories of behaviour led in Nazi Germany, we may feel that this paradox is a tragic contradiction in Korczak's thought. But it must be remembered that he lived in the pre-Nazi era when such notions were the dogmas of Western medicine and psychology. It was only when Hitler took these theories to their ultimate conclusions that scientists came to understand the importance of the biological, affective, cultural, political and social environment in the child's development.

But Korczak's place in the history of human thought is as an educator rather than a writer or a physician.

In the Warsaw orphanage he was able to apply his educational ideas. There, instead of the traditional structure of discipline based on the power of the adult and the obedience of the child, he created an elected parliament, an elected system of self-government, a daily wall newspaper and a diary written by the children.

Perhaps the most original institution of the orphanage was the children's court, also elected by the orphans. It settled disputes, judged misdeeds and good deeds, whether these were done by the children or the teachers. Korczak himself was not exempt from its jurisdiction. It enforced a code drawn up by Korczak with a judicious mixture of horror, understanding and kindness. The punishments inflicted were purely symbolic.

Korczak always saw the children placed in his care as human beings. He refused to consider them as miniature adults; each child was unique.

In words and acts he proclaimed that the orphans had a right to happiness. Before the war this was a novel idea and even today it seems more subversive than it may at first appear. To make children happy in an institution is an extremely arduous task. Even the best educational blueprint in the world is no guarantee of success. Korczak said that children become what institutions make of them.

Perhaps it would be fitting to end this evocation of Korczak's life and work with his own words on the so-called immaturity of the child: "They say that children are immature. Well, immaturity is a very odd thing! An old man of seventy says that a man of forty is immature; people from rich countries say that those from poor countries are immature; the bourgeoisie say the workers are immature—whatever would become of them without us? It's just the same when we say that children are immature. And it's not true; it's a way of keeping children down."

Stanislaw Tomkiewicz and Béatrice Maffioli

In 1926, Korczak founded Mały Przegląd (The Little Review), perhaps the first large-scale newspaper in the world to be entirely written, edited and produced by children. Mały Przegląd had a network of 2,000 young correspondents throughout Poland and continued publication right up to the Nazi invasion in 1939. Left, the front page of number 279 of Mały Przegląd included a graph of the number of articles sent in by its young correspondents, showing clearly defined holiday peaks, and a report on the school year 1929-1930. The headline on an inside page, SAMORZĄD w SZKOLE, introduced an article on self-government in schools.

Photo © Pedagogical Research Institute, Warsaw
STRICKEN with cancer, Margaret Mead went into hospital on 4 October 1978 and died on 15 November, the very day on which the seventy-seventh General Assembly of the American Anthropological Association took place. Margaret Mead herself would have been seventy-seven a month later. There is something symbolic in the repetition of the number seventy-seven, so closely was Margaret Mead connected, one might even say identified, with American anthropology all through her life.

Margaret Mead was born on 16 December 1901 in Philadelphia. But her ties were unquestionably Middle Western. If I am not mistaken, her great-great-grandparents had founded the little town of Winchester in Ohio. Her grandmother was a schoolmistress, her father a professor of economics and her mother a sociologist who had written a thesis on the Adaptation of Italian Immigrants. So her roots, family and her early training in a scientific environment both went back several generations. She was, in fact, a third generation "blue stocking".

She herself told how throughout her childhood her parents moved house no less than four times a year, going from one university to another, for, as we know, a university career in the United States is largely itinerant. It is perhaps because of this contrast between her dual deep-rootedness and this constant uprooting from her surroundings that she was able to keep to the unshakeable convictions that spurred her on right through her career, and to acquire her unbelievable powers of adaptation.

After a period of undistinguished study in small provincial universities she went to Barnard College, Columbia University, and worked under the prestigious supervision of Franz Boas and his assistant at the time, Ruth Benedict. We know how Margaret Mead revered these two scholars. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1923, her Master's in 1924 and her Ph.D in 1929. She had not yet got her Ph.D. when she set off on her first expeditions, to Samoa in 1925 and to Manus in the Admiralty Islands in 1928-1929. She was also to work among various tribes in the United States, around 1930, in New Guinea with her second husband, Reo Fortune, from 1931-1933, in Bali and again in New Guinea with her third husband, Gregory Bateson, between 1936 and 1938.

Then war broke out. I would not go so far as to say that this prompted Margaret Mead to break completely with the past (for she never gave up her original vocation), nevertheless, there was a superficial change, for she spent the next ten years on national research in the United States itself, interviewing minority groups and immigrants.

Her colleagues did not give her their whole-hearted support. I remember a rather lively discussion in June 1952 at the headquarters of the Wenner-Gren Foundation during a large symposium on "Anthropology today", attended by eighty anthropologists. She had been taken to task for converting to applied anthropology, and gave a splitted definition of what she understood by applied anthropology: it was not, she said, a kind of anthropology that had practical application, but one which was undertaken more from necessity than from an unselfish desire to learn and understand. And she added, "If someone were to give me a guarantee that everything in the world would remain pleasant and comfortable, and that no research of this kind need be done for the next twenty-five years, I wouldn't touch national character for the next twenty-five years because I think it is more important to go back to New Guinea". And she ended by saying, "Nearly all of us who have dedicated our time to these studies for the last ten years would much rather have done something else".

So we see that she was not pleading in favour of a new anthropology nor of a complete shift in our aims and methods. But she was a woman inspired by a sense of civic duty and profound religious feeling, for she had been converted when she was very young, although her parents were not practising Christians. It was the feeling that she owed herself to her contemporaries, to her country and to the international community that set her on the path she was to follow during the second half of her life, the path of untiring campaigning across the United States and across the world, through the medium of broadcasts, university lectures, articles and books. It also explains her feminist struggle whose source of inspiration was so different from that of all the others which the United States and other countries have known.

As far as she was concerned, it was not a matter of trying to replace various norms with new ones, but rather of helping to establish a social order that would allow all differences to find expression. In this respect, she remained faithful to the end of her first book, Coming of Age in Samoa, published in 1928—more than fifty years ago—where she expressed the hope that by studying societies with different norms from ours, people would be able to attain that high degree of individual choice and universal tolerance to which only a heterogeneous culture can aspire. Samoa only recognizes one kind of life and this she imposes on her children. But why shouldn't we, who have learnt to understand many different kinds of life, leave our children free to choose from among them?

It was, therefore, a lesson in tolerance and freedom that she tried to give her contemporaries. Like all her other philosophies, her feminism was never dogmatic.
Honours were relatively late in coming to her, if we consider the importance of her work. She received the gold medal of the Viking Fund in 1957 and only in 1975 was she elected a member of the National Academy of Sciences of the U.S.A. But she received many memorable tributes in her honour. On her fortieth-fifth birthday in 1976 the American Museum of Natural History set up the “Margaret Mead Fund for the Advancement of Anthropology” which is, in a way, an institution designed to help American anthropologists over the bad patch it is going through along with other institutions, as a result of the world crisis. Also, a five-day film festival in which she took part was organized in her honour at the American Museum of Natural History in 1977.

What I would most like to say is that Margaret Mead was a great ethnologist. She is known to a vast reading public through books that can, in some respects, be regarded as works of popularization. These are: Coming of Age in Samoa and Growing up in New Guinea; but we must not overlook the fact that each of these books had a counterpart in the form of a technical treatise for the first, Social Organization of Menas, and Kinship in the Admiralty Islands for the second.

It so happens that this year for my course at the Collège de France I have had to delve once more into these treatises which are the work of a very young anthropologist; she was only about twenty-five to twenty-eight years of age when she did her first research in the field. I was very surprised to find with what accuracy and acumen she had identified a number of problems which our New Guinea-specialist colleagues thought they had discovered in, shall we say, about 1950, and which are still a topic for discussion.

Some of these problems are, firstly, the very special place reserved for cross cousins as a result of complex systems of relationships which make them related by both blood and marriage and, consequently, the element on which the whole social structure hinges; Margaret Mead had already described it as the “nodal point” of the whole system. Secondly, the change from kinship to barter as the basis of the social structure and the fact that to achieve this societies had to suppress “the binding forms of purely blood ties”. Thirdly, the way in which these societies manage to become emancipated from blood ties through the medium of procedures such as adoption and the financing of marriage by intermediaries who later came to be known as “big men”. Margaret Mead had correctly identified what she so aptly described as the idea “of translating kinship form into a basis for extra-kinship activity”.

I remember that a few years ago I again had occasion to use the documents that Margaret Mead had brought back from Sepik and, more particularly the ones from Mundugomar, and I tried to draw diagrams from them. I was a little afraid that they did not quite correspond to reality, so I sent them to her along with my text. A few weeks later she wrote me that after consulting her old notes she had arrived at the same conclusions with regard to the diagrams. I mention this not boastfully, but only to show that at no time, not even during that period of her life when she was thought to be completely engrossed in social and political activities, had she turned her back on New Guinea or on theoretical anthropology, to which she in fact returned at regular intervals.

Her most original contribution was certainly that she was not content to make a merely surface study of customs, beliefs and institutions. She sought to understand how people live their culture from the inside, how they learn it from the moment of their birth and during their infancy; also, how they react to this culture, whether they conform by adopting it or whether they rebel or try to cheat it.

Now (and this is the dual background to which I referred at the beginning), by breaking new ground in this way, Margaret Mead was using to best advantage some of what she had learnt from Boas who had already paid a fair amount of attention to what different individuals felt. She herself tells us that it was Boas too who first interested her in Polynesia, by giving her as her first assignment a study of descent and the extent to which they succeeded in integrating into their group.

We should also pay tribute to Margaret Mead for her exalted conception of anthropology. As far as she was concerned, it was not a special field working alongside others, but the only field capable of synthesizing all the different types of research on the subject of man. “The role of anthropology”, she said, “is to try and bridge the gap between the humanities which have never realized that man is an animal and the natural sciences which would like to ignore the fact that man has a conscience, and social science which merely rehashes outmoded theories of physics.” She took the sociologist to task for relying on the psychologist who, in turn, relied on the biologist... Anthropology alone operates on various levels.

She apparently said in 1977, “My body is not going to last as long as I thought it would”. So she could feel that the end was near.

When, after her first stay there, she left the village of Pere in the Admiralty Islands to which she was to return many times, the natives cried out in tears, “You are like an old turtle who is taking to the sea and will never come back.”, and it is true that late in life Margaret Mead was a little like an old turtle. But I would say a Lewis Carroll turtle who could sometimes be sententious and dictatorial, but sometimes too could be as I saw her only two years ago in Uppsala when, despite her age and illness, she dropped the most graceful curtsey to the young King of Sweden.

We parted at Stockholm airport; she was on her way back to the United States and I to France. The last thing she said to me was that almost as soon as she got home she expected to set off again for New Guinea. That, no doubt, is where she would have liked to end her days. But this was not to be. However, we are sure that she will be remembered both as a great research worker in the field, and as the person whose work did most to earn for anthropology its rightful place in today’s world.

—Claude Lévi-Strauss

“All over the world a new age is struggling to be born, an age in which all children can grow up in families and all adolescents can have time to become individuals who are able to meet the demands of a fully adult life.” Margaret Mead saw the family as the basic unit of human living in every society and the strength of the relationships within this unit are powerfully captured in these studies by her long-time collaborator Ken Heyman. For Margaret Mead, Heyman was more than a photographer; he was a fellow ethnologist who, she declared, “brought individuals and scenes into focus. Behind the single caught gesture there would always be the intricate social and political realities.” (1) Ghana, (2) Japan, (3) Turkey, (4) Ireland, (5) Mexico.
Unesco’s Co-operative Action Programme (CO-ACTION) and the International Year of the Child

Unesco’s Co-operative Action Programme offers individuals, groups and institutions the opportunity to participate in self-help community projects throughout the world. During the International Year of the Child 1979 it has been decided to concentrate on six special projects, described below, which are particularly concerned with pre-school education, the problems of handicapped children, education related to the environment and the promotion of books and library services for children.*

*Donations, in the form of cheques, international money orders or bank transfers, as well as requests for further information, should be addressed to: Unesco, Co-operative Action Programme, OPI, 7 Place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris, France.

Books for Children Everywhere

As illiteracy diminishes in the developing countries, the demand for books increases. But many children and adults who have learned to read lose their newly acquired ability for lack of suitable reading material. Moreover, the Third World countries need books in local as well as in the international languages. The International Federation of Library Associations—which since 1973 has been co-sponsor with Unesco’s Co-operative Action Programme of the Books for Children Everywhere project—has been doing its best to ensure that young readers can obtain the books they really require. During the International Year of the Child renewed efforts are being made to ensure an adequate supply of suitable books for children’s libraries. Ten countries have been selected for special support in 1979: Bangladesh, Brazil, Indonesia, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Nigeria, Peru and Senegal. Those wishing to contribute to this project can indicate in which country they would like their contributions to be employed.

In Benin

Like many other Third World countries, the People’s Republic of Benin, in west Africa, is striving to establish an educational system which, bearing in mind the country’s limited resources and basically agricultural economy, will fit the children for life and work in an increasingly technological society, without alienating them from their rural background and traditions. Benin’s children aged between three and five, number some 400,000 and this age group is expected to double by the end of the century. To meet this challenge a system of pre-school centres is being created which are to be run by specially trained members of the children’s own communities. Co-Action support will provide simple equipment for these centres, including furniture and toys, sanitary and cooking facilities and materials for vaccination and primary health care.

In Malaysia

For the past fifty years, the St. Nicholas School and Home for the Blind, in Penang, Malaysia, has provided an academic education and courses for physical rehabilitation for a limited number of the country’s 20,000 blind and visually handicapped children. Sporting activities, in particular cycling, help to develop the children’s sense of direction and to encourage a spirit of self-confidence and independence. Among recent graduates of the school was one of the first blind climbers to have reached the summit of south-east Asia’s highest mountain, Kinabalu (4,150 metres). Co-Action contributions will help the school to expand its activities and to take part in the fight against the causes of blindness (cataract, glaucoma, etc.), 70 to 80 per cent of cases of which, according to the World Health Organization, could have been avoided.

In Lao

Three-quarters of the adult population of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, in south-east Asia, depend on agriculture for a living, yet only four per cent of the country’s territory is arable land. With a view to opening up wider prospects, the government is striving to ensure that all children of school age actually attend school. Even if this is often more than a simple thatched bamboo hut and to eliminate illiteracy among adults and young people. With an average enrolment of 500 pupils in each primary school and at least forty pupils per class, resources are strained to the limit. Materials of all kinds are lacking; paper is in short supply and exercise books are a luxury often replaced by blank pages saved from newspapers and magazines. Even the smallest contribution to Co-Action funds would make a difference; a thousand dollars would keep one school supplied with classroom materials for one year.

In Ethiopia

It is estimated that in Ethiopia there are some 600,000 children, young people and adults who are totally deaf or hard of hearing, whether from birth or as a result of injury. There are very few schools for the deaf and only two equipped to provide secondary education. Even if they have been lucky enough to begin studies at a special school, deaf pupils are quickly discouraged when they move on to regular schools which lack the facilities to help them continue their education. Support for Co-Action will help in the establishment of a system of pre-school training that will teach deaf children, from the earliest possible age, to communicate and interact with the world around them. Other objectives are the establishment of a model school which will both educate the handicapped children and provide in-service training for a new generation of teachers.
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Sukhothai ("the dawn of happiness") became in the 13th century AD the capital of a Thai kingdom and the cradle of a school of artists who created a distinctive style of depicting the Buddha (See article page 4). With its intricately worked diadem, perfectly oval face, and arched eyebrows curving gracefully into the bridge of the nose, this head of a Buddha, although it belongs to a later period, illustrates the lasting influence of the Sukhothai school on Thai art. It is part of a 153-cm-high bronze bust dating from the 17th century.