



ONE COUNTRY

"The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens" – Bahá'u'lláh

INSIDE

Newsletter of the Bahá'í
International Community
April-June 1999
Volume 11, Issue 1



2

Perspective: Writing
our common future:
was the 20th Cen-
tury one of progress?



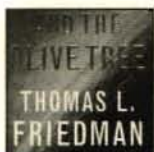
4

In the Hague, peace
activists challenge the
conventional wisdom
about diplomacy.



11

Profile: A Kenyan artist
straddles the disparate
worlds of painting and
development.



16

Review: *The Lexus and
the Olive Tree* – Thomas
L. Friedman offers a
primer on globalization
and its impact.

In Kenya, consultation and partnership are factors for success in development

In the semi-arid Kitui District, traditional women's groups are proving to be effective catalysts for grassroots development when they collaborate with knowledgeable NGOs and focus on appropriate technology.

KALIMANI, Kitui District, Kenya – Under the hot sun, the women slowly and deliberately carried their heavy loads up the steep and dusty path from the river. Some supported their burdens on their backs, braced with a cloth band around their forehead. Others used sticks to cajole donkeys, bowed with the weight of double loads.

On most days, the women of Kalimani village tote water up from the Mutendea River like this in plastic jerry cans. On this day in May, however, they were hauling up bags of riverbed sand. Their hope was that if they carried enough sand, they would soon no longer have to carry water.

"It takes a lot of time when we go for water and it tires us to carry it home, so when the water is nearer, it gives us time so we can do other activities in the home," said Lydia Kitheka, who is 28 years old and a member of the Kalimani Women's Group, which has organized a project to build a new pipeline and pumping system here that will bring water up the hill from the river to the village. She herself has carried many bags of sand, which is used to line trenches for piping and storage tanks. "We will have more time with our children, more time for gardening and more time to work for income."

There are many village water projects in the world, but what makes this one unusual is the degree to which the villagers themselves — in this case the women — have identified their needs and organized themselves to collaborate with outsiders to design, build and maintain the system.

Kalimani, continued on page 8



Members of the Kalimani Women's Group haul sand as part of a village water project that they are building. In the background, their menfolk dig the foundation for a water storage tank. The project will pull water from an underground reservoir created by a sub-surface dam on the nearby Mutendea River.

is published quarterly by the Office of Public Information of the Bahá'í International Community, an international non-governmental organization which encompasses and represents the worldwide membership of the Bahá'í Faith.

For more information on the stories in this newsletter, or any aspect of the Bahá'í International Community and its work, please contact:

ONE COUNTRY
Bahá'í International
Community - Suite 120
866 United Nations Plaza
New York, New York 10017
U.S.A.

E-mail: 1country@bic.org
<http://www.onecountry.org>

Executive Editor:
Ann Boyles

Editor:
Brad Pokorný

Associate Editors:
Nancy Ackerman (Moscow)
Christine Samandari-Hakim (Paris)
Kong Siew Huat (Macau)
Guilda Walker (London)

Editorial Assistant:
Veronica Shoffstall

Design:
Mann & Mann

Subscription inquiries should be directed to the above address. All material is copyrighted by the Bahá'í International Community and subject to all applicable international copyright laws. Stories from this newsletter may be republished by any organization provided that they are attributed as follows: "Reprinted from ONE COUNTRY, the newsletter of the Bahá'í International Community."

© 1999 by The Bahá'í International Community

ISSN 1018-9300

Printed on recycled paper ♻️

Writing our common future

[The following is adapted from a statement titled "Who is Writing the Future?: Reflections on the Twentieth Century," which was released by the Bahá'í International Community's Office of Public Information in February 1999. The statement examines the events of the twentieth century in light of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh (1817-1892), the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, and looks to the challenges facing humanity at the century's end.]

The unification of the earth's inhabitants is neither a remote utopian vision nor, ultimately, a matter of choice. It constitutes the next, inescapable stage in the process of social evolution, a stage toward which all the experience of past and present is impelling us. Until this issue is acknowledged and addressed, none of the ills afflicting our planet will find solutions, because all the essential challenges of the age we have entered are global and universal, not particular or regional.

The last one hundred years have witnessed a transformation in both the way the earth's inhabitants have begun to plan our collective future and in the way we are coming to regard one another. The hallmark of both has been a process of unification. Upheavals beyond the control of existing institutions compelled world leaders to begin putting in place new systems of global organization that would have been unthinkable at the century's beginning.

At the midpoint of the century, these two developments produced a breakthrough whose historic significance only future generations will properly appreciate. In the aftermath of World War II, far-sighted leaders found it at last possible, through the United Nations organization, to begin consolidating the foundations of world order. As with the cause of world order, so with the rights of the world's people. Exposure of the appalling suffering visited on the victims of human perversity during the course of the war produced a worldwide sense of shock. Out of this trauma emerged a new kind of moral commitment that was formally institutionalized in the work of the United Nations Commission on Human

Rights and its associated agencies.

A parallel process took place with respect to economic life. During the first half of the century, as a consequence of the havoc wrought by the great depression, many governments adopted legislation that created social welfare programs and systems of financial control, reserve funds, and trade regulations that sought to protect their societies from a recurrence of such devastation. At century's end — whatever the intentions and however crude the present generation of tools — the masses of humanity have been shown that the use of the planet's wealth can be fundamentally reorganized in response to entirely new conceptions of need. The effect of these developments was enormously amplified by the accelerating extension of education to the masses.

This process of structural reorganization on a planetary scale was animated and reinforced by a profound shift of consciousness. Throughout history, for example, experience seemed to demonstrate — and religious teaching to confirm — that women are inferior in nature to men. This prevailing perception was suddenly everywhere in retreat.

Yet another fixture of humanity's view of itself throughout past millennia was a celebration of ethnic distinctions which, in recent centuries, had hardened into various racist fantasies. With a swiftness that is breathtaking in the perspective of history, the twentieth century saw the unity of the human race establish itself as a guiding principle of international order. Today, the ethnic conflicts that continue to wreak havoc in many parts of the world are seen not as natural features of the relations among diverse peoples, but as willful aberrations that must be brought under effective international control.

Throughout humanity's long childhood, it was also assumed that poverty was an enduring and inescapable feature of the social order. Now, however, this mind-set, an assumption that had shaped the priorities of every economic system the world had ever known, has been universally rejected. In theory at least, government has come to be everywhere regarded as essentially a trustee

responsible to ensure the well-being of all of society's members.

Particularly significant was the loosening of the grip of religious prejudice. In the words of Bahá'u'lláh, "There can be no doubt whatever that the peoples of the world, of whatever race or religion, derive their inspiration from one heavenly Source, and are the subjects of one God."

During these critical decades the human mind was also experiencing fundamental changes in the way that it understood the physical universe. The first half of the century saw the new theories of relativity and quantum mechanics — both related to the nature of light — revolutionize the field of physics and alter the entire course of scientific development. Humanity entered an era in which interaction among physical sciences—physics, chemistry, and biology, along with the nascent science of ecology—opened breathtaking possibilities for the enhancement of life.

The human race is now endowed with the means needed to realize the visionary goals summoned up by a steadily maturing consciousness. Viewed more deeply, this empowerment is potentially available to all of the earth's inhabitants, without regard to race, culture, or nation.

To appreciate the transformations brought about by the period of history now ending is not to deny the accompanying darkness that throws the achievements into sharp relief: the deliberate extermination of millions of helpless human beings, the invention and use of new weapons of destruction capable of annihilating whole populations, the rise of ideologies that suffocated the spiritual and intellectual life of entire nations, damage to the physical environment of the planet on a scale so massive that it may take centuries to heal, and the incalculably greater damage done to generations of children taught to believe that violence, indecency, and selfishness are triumphs of personal liberty.

Darkness, however, is not a phenomenon endowed with some form of existence, much less autonomy. It does not extinguish light nor diminish it, but marks out those areas that light has not reached or adequately illumined.

"Peerless is this Day," Bahá'u'lláh insists, "for it is as the eye to past ages and centuries, and as a light unto the darkness of the times." In this perspective, the issue is how much more suffering and ruin must be experienced by our race before we wholeheartedly accept the spiritual nature that makes

us a single people, and gather the courage to plan our future in the light of what has been so painfully learned.

The conception of civilization's future course laid out in Bahá'u'lláh's writings challenges much that today imposes itself on our world as normative and unchangeable. If human consciousness is essentially spiritual in nature — as the vast majority of ordinary people have always been intuitively aware — its development needs cannot be understood or served through an interpretation of reality that dogmatically insists otherwise.

No aspect of contemporary civilization is more directly challenged by Bahá'u'lláh's conception of the future than is the prevailing cult of individualism, which has spread to most parts of the world. Nurtured by such cultural forces as political ideology, academic elitism, and a consumer economy, the "pursuit of happiness" has given rise to an aggressive and almost boundless sense of personal entitlement. The moral consequences have been corrosive for the individual and society alike — and devastating in terms of disease, drug addiction and other all-too-familiar blights of century's end.

The primary disease that afflicts society and generates the ills that cripple it, Bahá'u'lláh says, is the disunity of a human race that is distinguished by its capacity for collaboration and whose progress to date has depended on the extent to which unified action has, at various times and in various societies, been achieved.

Intimately related to the issue of unity is a second moral challenge that the past century has posed with ever increasing urgency. In the sight of God, Bahá'u'lláh insists, justice is the "best beloved of all things". If the body of humankind is indeed one and indivisible, then the authority exercised by its governing institutions represents essentially a trusteeship. Each individual person comes into the world as a trust of the whole, and it is this feature of human existence that constitutes the real foundation of the social, economic and cultural rights.

Responding to the impulses of the Divine, the earth's peoples have progressively developed the spiritual, intellectual, and moral capacities that have combined to civilize human character. This millennia-long, cumulative process has now reached the stage characteristic of all the decisive turning points in the evolutionary process, when previously unrealized possibilities suddenly

The unification of the earth's inhabitants is neither a remote utopian vision nor, ultimately, a matter of choice. It constitutes the next, inescapable stage in the process of social evolution, a stage toward which all the experience of past and present is impelling us.

Future, continued on page 14

At the Hague, civil society mobilizes for peace, calling for a “new diplomacy”

The Hague Appeal for Peace can be seen as a step in the on-going process of cross-sectorial alignment and collaboration among the various and diverse groups of global civil society.

THE HAGUE – In terms of their origins, the reversal between the 1899 Hague Peace Conference and one held this year is quite dramatic.

A hundred years ago, the First Hague Peace Conference was organized by governments. Convened by Russia and the Netherlands, it drew government representatives from 26 nations and resulted in the establishment of the Permanent Court of Arbitration, predecessor to today's International Court of Justice.

The 1999 Hague Appeal for Peace — which drew at least 8,000 people from some 100 countries representing more than 700 organizations — was convened not by governments but by organizations of civil society. Governments, although they had talked about holding a major peace conference in the Hague this year, disagreed over its scope and settled for a small-scale, two-day commemoration of the 1899 event.

“This shift in the initiative is most significant,” said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh, in a closing address to the Appeal, which ran 11-15 May 1999. “Once

the initiative for peace is taken over by civil society, peace cannot be far away. This should happen all over the world.”

Indeed, the decision by civil society groups to hold their own event very much reflects the resultant conference's underlying theme: that governments have failed to adequately address the wider causes of war and that the structure for lasting peace can only be erected now if civil society mobilizes to give governments a push.

“The world is emerging from the bloodiest, most war-ridden century in history,” said the Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice in the 21st Century, the Appeal's main document.

“On the eve of the new century, it is time to create the conditions in which the primary aim of the United Nations, ‘to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war’, can be realized....[T]his historic mission and responsibility cannot be entrusted solely to governments.”

The 8,500-word Agenda, which was compiled through a series of preparatory meetings and via the Internet by the 70-plus civil society groups on the conference's organizing and coordinating committees, accordingly goes beyond simply calling on governments to do more. In the Agenda and at the conference, direct actions and initiatives by civil society itself were emphasized. Specifically, conference organizers advocated greater reliance on a new model of diplomacy in which “citizen advocates, progressive governments and international organizations work together on common goals,” as stated in the Agenda.

“Together we represent what is known as the new, or democratic diplomacy, which has already proved its effectiveness in bringing about the treaty to ban landmines, the statute creating the International Criminal Court and the World Court opinion on the illegality of nuclear weapons,” said Cora Weiss, a longtime peace activist who served as president of the Appeal.

All together, the conference was also a significant demonstration of the ever in-



Hague Appeal for Peace Secretary General William Pace, left, and Nobel Prize winner Jody Williams at a press conference. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines, which Ms. Williams headed, was cited as a model of the “New Diplomacy.”

creasing organization and cooperation within international civil society as a whole. In many respects, The Hague Appeal for Peace can be seen as another step in a process of cross-sectorial alignment and collaboration among the various and diverse groups of civil society that began with the large NGO Forums associated with the decade's major United Nations global conferences on issues of education, environment and development, human rights, population, women, poverty, cities and food.

"Many NGOs expanded alliances and coalitions at the Hague," said Jonathan Dean, advisor on international security issues for the Washington-based Union of Concerned Scientists. "For example, we linked up more clearly than we had before with a couple of groups interested in early warnings of conflict. We also joined the global coalition on small arms and we tightened our relationship with groups moving toward complete nuclear disarmament. This meeting really took the place of a UN-organized conference on peace and disarmament issues, which it wasn't possible or convenient to hold."

Long preparations

The event drew a wide range of participants, from representatives of well-known international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to individual grassroots peace activists. A number of world leaders addressed the Appeal, including UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, H.M. Queen Noor of Jordan, the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, and Ms. Hasina of Bangladesh, as well as UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy and a number of Nobel Prize winners. Some 80 governments sent representatives, said conference organizers.

"Please be assured that many of us felt that the Hague Appeal for Peace was a landmark toward progress for a peaceful world," said His Excellency Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, Bangladesh's permanent representative to the United Nations, who attended the Appeal. "Personally, I felt it was a civil society organized event. Not only was it well organized, but it had heart as well. You always felt so good. Usually, government meetings are very stiff, but you actually enjoyed being there. Beyond that it was also a very substantive meeting, which produced a substantive document."

The meeting was initiated by four groups: The International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA),



the International Peace Bureau (IPB), International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), and the World Federalist Movement/Institute for Global Policy (WFM). But as of the conference's end, some 70 NGOs had become involved with the event's organizing and coordinating committees and more than 700 signed on as "registered organizations" or "endorsers."

According to Ms. Weiss, the Agenda was crafted in a two-year process that involved deep consultation of those 70-some groups. Their goals were to stimulate networking, coalition building and the advancement of various specific international initiatives, with the overall aim of stimulating a broad, worldwide campaign to hasten the establishment of lasting peace in the world.

The result, as organizers acknowledge, did not win full agreement of all those who participated in the Conference or its preparations. The Hague Agenda is nevertheless a fairly comprehensive summing up of the thinking of those progressive elements of civil society that have been so involved in the NGO Forums of the recent UN Conferences. In this regard, it might be described as the first real broad-based reiteration of civil society's collective wisdom on global issues concerning peace and justice.

Among other things, the Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice in the 21st Century broadly calls for a stronger and more proactive United Nations, stronger mechanisms to implement and enforce human rights, more efforts to promote peace education, more women in decision-making, and wider efforts to promote international democracy and global governance.

In terms of specific initiatives, the Agenda calls for wider ratification of the

The dance group "Awake," sponsored by the Netherlands Bahá'i Community, performed at the Global Forum during the Hague Appeal for Peace.

"This meeting really took the place of a UN-organized conference on peace and disarmament issues, which it wasn't possible or convenient to hold."

***— Jonathan Dean,
Union of Concerned
Scientists***



The Bahá'í International Community sponsored a presentation on "Promoting Positive Messages Through the Media," a project which uses media and theatrical techniques to promote social healing and interethnic communication in Southeastern Europe. Left to right are Lorraine Hetu of Belgium, Beth Bowen of the United States, and Robert Zuber of Croatia, doing a mock radio program based on the project's techniques.

"The New Diplomacy is a model based on partnership between governments and international organizations."

**— William Pace,
Secretary General,
the Hague Appeal
for Peace**

1997 Landmine Ban Treaty and the Biological Weapons Convention, the accelerated acceptance and establishment of the proposed International Criminal Court, and the successful launch of new campaigns to limit the proliferation of small arms and to end the use of child soldiers.

The New Diplomacy

Conference organizers hope to accomplish such activities not only through traditional forms of lobbying and coalition building, but also through great use of the so-called "New Diplomacy," a phrase adopted to signify the increasing partnership that has arisen between NGOs and governments in small- to middle-sized countries in efforts to get around opposition to specific treaties and positions by other governments, often the so-called major powers.

The most cited example of the New Diplomacy in action was the 1997 Landmine Ban Treaty, which was negotiated to a successful conclusion over the objections of several major world powers. The treaty, which as of 31 March 1999 had been signed by some 135 countries, seeks to ban the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines. It is widely agreed that the rapid and successful negotiation of its final text was due in large part to work of several "middle-power" governments working in close collaboration with a coalition of international non-governmental organizations.

"The New Diplomacy is a model based on partnership between governments and international organizations," said William Pace, executive director of the World Federalist Movement, who served as secretary-general of the Hague Appeal for Peace. "In

the international campaign to ban landmines, it was clearly grid-locked in the official process. So NGOs, working with progressive governments, and especially with the leaders of Canada and Norway, pulled it out of the UN process, convened meetings of government and NGOs, drafted a treaty and got it successfully ratified by many countries around the world."

A global bazaar

In addition to plenary speeches and "overview session" panel discussions, the Hague conference also featured some 400 smaller workshops and seminars, as well as a large exhibit area where more than 180 organizations set up booths with literature tables and displays. At times the event had the aspect of a diverse, global bazaar, with many informal meetings and performances occurring with apparent spontaneity in the hallways and foyers of the Netherlands Congress Center, where the conference was held.

Religious groups were an important presence at the Appeal. "There was also consensus that religion and spirituality needed to be incorporated into the peace process, and attention paid to the importance of religion in a world without war," said Kathleen Uhler, OSF, co-director of Franciscans International, who co-coordinated a focus group on religion and spirituality. "I think religion has been the cause of war, but it can also be used to create a culture of peace."

More than 50 Bahá'ís from 19 countries participated in the conference. Among them were representatives from the Bahá'í International Community's Office of Public Information in Paris, which sponsored a presentation on "Promoting Positive Messages Through the Media." This project was selected as one of the first initiatives of the Royaumont Process, a diplomatic counterpart to the Dayton Accords that ended the conflict in Bosnia.

"Promoting Positive Messages" uses media and theatrical techniques to promote social healing and interethnic communication in the war-torn region of southeastern Europe. To date, training sessions for the project have taken place in six countries. The war over Kosovo interrupted plans to hold sessions in Bosnia, Yugoslavia, and Macedonia in spring 1999, but a new schedule is currently being devised. [See *ONE COUNTRY* October-December 1998.]

The Netherlands Bahá'í community and the European Bahá'í Youth Council (EBYC)

coordinated the Bahá'í presence at the Appeal. Both entities had exhibition booths in the Global Forum area. As well, the Netherlands community sponsored its youth dance workshop, "Awake," which gave performances on the theme of promoting tolerance. The Youth Council was deeply involved in the formulation of the youth statement.

Many of the Bahá'ís who attended the Hague Appeal were present as representa-

tives of other peace organizations. "There were Bahá'ís there from educational groups, interreligious groups, youth organizations and others," said Yolande Milani-Van Den Hoogen, secretary of the Bahá'í community of the Netherlands. "Bahá'ís around the world are very diverse and yet they are working hard to create a culture of peace. Our hope was to show that it is possible to work together in unity and diversity." *

HUMAN RIGHTS

UNCHR again expresses concern for Iran's Bahá'ís

GENEVA — For the eighteenth time in eighteen years, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) has expressed its concern over human rights violations against the Bahá'ís of Iran, noting a "worsened pattern of persecution, including death sentences, executions, arrests and the closure of the Bahá'í Institute of Higher Education."

The resolution passed on 16 April 1999 by a vote of 23 to 16, with 14 abstentions. The vote followed a January report by Maurice Danby Copithorne, the Commission's special representative on Iran, which stated that despite "President Khatami's plans for a tolerant, diverse and law-abiding society," the condition of the Bahá'ís "remains unchanged or perhaps, in some respects, it has worsened."

Mr. Copithorne noted that as of December 1998, some 17 Bahá'ís remained in prison

with six facing death sentences. He also expressed concern over Iranian Government raids against the Bahá'í Institute of Higher Education last fall, which resulted in the arrest of 36 faculty members and the closure of the institution, a privately run university that Bahá'ís organized in response to the exclusion of Bahá'í youth from all other universities in Iran.

"The continued campaign against the Bahá'ís defies rational explanation," said Techeste Ahderom, the Bahá'í International Community's principal representative to the United Nations. "The Bahá'ís in Iran seek only their rights under the International Human Rights Covenants. What is necessary are legal and entirely public steps that will firmly establish the complete emancipation of the Bahá'ís of Iran." *

Despite "President Khatami's plans for a tolerant, diverse and law-abiding society," the condition of the Bahá'ís "remains unchanged or perhaps, in some respects, it has worsened."

— UN report

CIVIL SOCIETY

Millennium Forum to be held in UN GA hall

UNITED NATIONS — In an unusual arrangement, the Millennium Forum has been given the use of the UN General Assembly Hall for its opening and closing sessions, which have now been scheduled for 22 and 26 May 2000.

The United Nations Secretariat has also agreed to provide other conference rooms for the meeting, which will seek to bring together civil society representatives from all over the world to consult about the global challenges that must be confronted by the United Nations in the 21st Century.

As well, in a meeting held 28-29 June, the Steering Committee of the Forum established its main sub-themes. These themes will correspond to, but not match, the themes that are being proposed for consideration by governments at the UN's Millen-

nium Assembly meeting, which has now been scheduled for 6 September 2000.

The sub-themes for the Millennium Forum will be: 1) Peace, security and disarmament; 2) Eradication of poverty; 3) Human rights; 4) Sustainable development and environment; 5) Strengthening and democratizing the UN and international institutions; and, 6) Facing the challenges of globalization: achieving equality, justice, and diversity.

At the 28-29 June meeting, the Steering Committee also adopted a working budget for the Forum, and decided that a preliminary figure of \$2,031,500 will be needed for staffing, equipment, outreach, materials, and translation. More than half of the proposed budget (\$1,280,000) has been allocated to insure adequate participation of NGOs and civil society representatives from the global South. *

In Kenya, consultation and partnership are factors for success for women's groups

Dr. Eliab Some of AMREF, at center and wearing a vest, looks on while a colleague shows how high a planned sub-surface dam on the Mutendea River will be when completed. The dam will catch sand and create an underground water reservoir behind it. Behind Dr. Some, in the white hat, is Geraldine Robarts of Rehema, a Bahá'í-sponsored, non-governmental organization. Behind Dr. Some on the left is Josephine Mailu, head of the Kalimani Health Center.



Kalimani, continued from page one

"Quite often we talk about community participation, but we don't always see it," said Dr. Eliab Some, head of strategic planning and monitoring for the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), which is providing technical assistance to the Kalimani water project. "But this is active community participation. They are not just sitting and watching others work. The community was responsible for identifying the problem, seeing a solution, and now they are providing the labor. This is the ideal."

As such, the Kalimani Women's Water Project, along with a series of other projects that have been operated by women's groups in this semi-arid district some 150 kilometers east of Nairobi, makes a powerful statement about women, community participation, and the importance of multiple partnerships in development work.

The story of how the Kalimani Women's Group came to help build a water system that promises to provide safe drinking water year round for some 6,000 people in two villages is a complex one, with partners at many levels. This is made more so because it relies on sub-surface dams, an innovative

but appropriate technology that seeks to create a reservoir of underground water. But the story is inspiring and instructive.

For one thing, not only have the women here provided most of the labor for the project — they have also convinced their menfolk to shoulder much of the burden. As women struggled up the hill last May to carry bags of sand, their husbands and sons worked with mattocks and picks to dig foundation holes for a storage tank.

Traditionally, men almost never carry water, and it would be rare for them to work directly for women. But here, the women are clearly in charge. The men, like the women, work for a "payment" of two-kilograms of maize per day, provided by the German development agency, GTZ. "The brains behind this are the women," said Dr. Some. "The men are just providing the muscles."

International attention

The project — along with a group of other projects run largely by women in this district — has drawn international attention for its innovation and success. The Kalimani Women's Group, along with the Matinyani Women's Group [see story, page 13], has been

The Kalimani Women's Water Project makes a powerful statement about women, community participation, and the importance of multiple partnerships in development work.

selected for exhibition as a "worldwide" showcase project at the Expo 2000 World's Fair next year in Hanover, Germany. Another exhibition, put together by Epcot Center at Disney World in Florida, USA, as part of an exhibit celebrating the millennium, will also feature the Kalimani project and others organized by women's groups here.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell visited the project two years ago while she was executive director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and said she believes it represents "sustainable development in its real, not academic, sense."

"The thing that struck me was the ingenuity and the uncommon enthusiasm and energy of the women," Ms. Dowdeswell said. "That is what is driving the success of the project ... in terms of realizing what the community needs both in the short term and in the long term."

"They linked environmental, economic and social needs and sought responses that considered and balanced all three," Ms. Dowdeswell said. "Witness their concern for an environmentally appropriate development of water resources, their attention to health and education concerns, and their vision to find an activity that would make their community sustainable economically."

The water project is worth examining in some detail because it is among the newest and most active of the projects here, and it focuses on community development more than merely income generation. Genuine group consultation has played an important role in helping the women to identify their needs and goals.

The Kalimani Women's Group formed gradually as smaller groups consolidated in the late 1980s and early 1990s, inspired partly by the successes of the neighboring Matinyani Women's Group, which is based in Matinyani village about ten kilometers away. Josephine Mailu, a member of the Matinyani group but a resident of Kalimani, was instrumental in helping women here organize themselves into a separate group, which now has about 600 members.

"Such groups are a natural thing here," said Ms. Mailu, explaining that the harsh climate and living conditions of the region has always forced people — especially women — to work together in the villages. "We must help each other to survive."

In the early 1990s, the group began its collaboration with Rehema, a Kenya-based, Bahá'í-sponsored, non-governmental orga-

nization that had also been working with the Matinyani group. One of Rehema's founders, Geraldine Roberts, knew of the Kalimani women's desire for help.

Sharing ideas

Rehema offered workshops on health and hygiene and also on consultation — a group-oriented, non-partisan, non-adversarial decision-making process that is used by Bahá'í communities worldwide. According to some women in Kalimani, the principles of consultation were important in helping them to set goals and priorities.

"It is easier to share ideas together," said Patricia Munanie, a 42-year-old Kalimani woman who is vice chair of the group's water committee, speaking of the impact of Bahá'í principles on the group. "They help us to listen to each other and to get the good ideas, regardless of who got the good idea in the community."

About the same time, one of the group's members had a visionary dream in which she saw a hospital in the village, where medicines came in food containers and were readily available. Inspired by the lessons on consultation and the dream, the women decided to build a health center.

Rehema helped them to make contacts with development funding agencies, providing seed money for building materials. The women themselves provided the construction labor and even made the bricks. Gradually, over a period from the early 1990s to the present day, the center gradually took shape. First, a two-room birthing center was built. It was completed in 1995. Two more rooms and a veranda were added in 1996 and 1997. A storage area and laboratory

"They linked environmental, economic and social needs and sought responses that considered and balanced all three.... They were trying to meet short term needs, but clearly with an eye to long term sustainability."

— Elizabeth Dowdeswell, former executive director of UNEP

The men in Kalimani are helping to dig foundation holes for the water system. In the background is the health center building.



were finished in 1998. In all, the center cost less than \$10,000 in outside funding.

Ms. Mailu, who has training as a nurse, nutritionist and community health worker, is in charge of the clinic. She said the facility treats from 50 to 80 patients per day. But the completion of the health center building gave the women more than better medical care. It also became a focal point for the group and its main gathering place — imparting by the simple fact of its existence an enormous new sense of self-confidence.

According to Mailu and others, it soon became clear that many of the village's health problems stemmed from a shortage of clean water — indeed, any sort of water — during much of the year.

Annual rainfall here is 600 to 1000 millimeters, but that comes mainly in two rainy seasons in October-December and March-May. The rest of the year, average rainfall is less than 200mm, and as little as 25mm during the June-September dry season.

During the dry season, the Mutendea River dries up entirely, forcing the villagers to dig down one or two meters into the riverbed in search of water. The digging process creates dirty, open wells, which are shared by humans and animals alike.

Through consultations with Rehema, the group learned about an appropriate technology known as a “sub-surface” dam. Essentially an ordinary dam, it has extra strength and thickness and a special shape to catch and hold sand behind it. Over time, the extra sand becomes a repository for sub-surface water, creating an underground reservoir in the riverbed that resists evaporation during the dry season

and can be more reliably “harvested,” over a longer period of time. Ideally, each year, the wall is built higher, catching more sand and expanding the reservoir.

Designing and building such a dam was clearly beyond the financial capacity and technical expertise of the local women, but Rehema helped the group to line up several other partners, including the Canadian-based International Development Research Center (IDRC) and the Community Development Trust Fund of the European Union, which provided funding; the German development agency (GTZ), which provided support through its innovative “Food for Work” program; and AMREF, which had already been involved in setting up the health center and now began to assist in designing the water system. The World Health Organization, the Kenyan Ministry of Health, the International Women's Club of Nairobi, the Spanish-speaking Women's Club and others have also contributed to the project.

In 1998, the women successfully built two dams and a manually operated pump system and storage tank at the health center. By May 1999, they were working on an improved pumping and storage system to bring more water higher up the hill and nearer to the village. They are also adding a new dam, which will be higher, so as to catch more sand and hold more water.

“In our plan, when the water comes up we will go put a medicine in it, so it will reduce diseases like diarrhea and bilharzia,” said Ms. Munanie of the water committee, referring to the use of chlorination to kill bacteria and the worms that cause schistosomiasis. “The children will be healthier.”*



Analyzing the factors for success

Complex and interrelated factors account for the ability of the Kalimani women to work well together and with others, say those who have studied the project. The climate itself, with its long periods of drought, has forced people to work together simply to survive. Their Akamba tribal heritage also plays a role. Akamba men have traditionally been traders and were often away for long periods, which strengthened the role of women.

“There is also a high level of literacy in the community, creating a critical mass of literate and trusted people” who are able to carry out a

project, said Donna Pido, an anthropologist who studied the project for the IDRC. “These women are very good at forming a committee and getting work done,” she added. “The Akamba women have for several decades had an outstanding record in terms of their ability to overcome the petty gossiping and picking on each other that breaks up women's groups in other parts of Kenya and Africa.”

Another important factor, said Dr. Pido, has been the intervention by Rehema, specifically by Geraldine Robarts. “It goes entirely counter to the current thinking and trends in the

development community — you are not supposed to say that it is a white woman from the outside who gets the thing to work in this group,” said Dr. Pido. “But that is what it is.”

“The Kalimani women would like to do things on their own,” she continued, “but even if they could get to Nairobi and find the embassies that control the aid money, which they can't, they couldn't speak the language that the donor agencies speak. So it doesn't matter how well organized or how well motivated a group is in a rural area in Eastern Africa — if they do not have someone intermediating between them and the outside, they don't have a prayer.”*

A “world-class” artist who straddles two worlds: painting and development



Geraldine Robarts recently exhibited her paintings at the German development agency (GTZ) in Nairobi.

NAIROBI – It may be coincidence. Or it may be something working through her subconscious. But the theme in most of Geraldine Robarts' recent paintings is water.

“I love the water,” said the London-born painter. “So I've been painting the sea and the ocean for the past year.”

This is interesting because Ms. Robarts lives in Nairobi, located high and dry some 500 kilometers from the coast, and she spends much of her time these days thinking about a village water project in the semi-arid Kitui District. [See previous story.]

But for Ms. Robarts, who has lived in Kenya for more than 28 years, contradictions are more often connections in her intensely active mind. One minute Ms. Robarts is talking about the use of foot-powered water pumps in African villages and the next she is discussing how her latest paintings — which are abstract swirls of paint and glitter that can easily be envisioned as a frothy and foaming seascape — are for her a form of religious worship.

These two worlds, painting and rural development, are certainly well connected in her life and activities. Ms. Robarts' work has been featured in numerous art shows around the world and she could probably easily double or triple her income from painting with a little extra marketing. Yet she spends much of her time, her energy

and her considerable clout as an artist to promote the cause of village women in the Kitui District among humanitarian aid agencies here in Kenya's capitol.

This extends to her own pocketbook, inasmuch as she often uses her paintings as barter, either to pay her own bills or bills for the projects in Kitui. “I pay 80 percent of my bills with paintings,” she said. For her, it is as if money is just an unnecessary intermediary, something not to trifle with if an artistic short cut will save time.

In 1992, Ms. Robarts — along with two other women in Kenya — founded Rehema, a Nairobi-based non-governmental organization dedicated to helping rural women in Kenya. All three women are Bahá'is, and they seek to apply Bahá'í principles in their work. “Our theme is the integration of the practical and the spiritual to restore and sustain human dignity through economic independence,” says a Rehema brochure.

Ms. Robarts also seeks to express Bahá'í principles in her art. “The purpose of my paintings is to bring joy and life and spirituality to people,” said Ms. Robarts. “I try to create peace in my paintings.”

By all accounts, she has succeeded. “She is rated as one of the best artists in Kenya,” said Morris Amboso, curator of the Watatu Gallery, the largest private art gallery in East Africa, which has had a number of shows

“She is a highly gifted world-class artist. She is able to portray, in abstract form, what people commonly refer to as the spiritual path. And her abstracts speak to people who are deeply spiritually committed across all religions.”

**– Remi Aruasa,
owner, Halpen
Gochi Gallery**

***"What these
Kalimani women
have given me is a
feeling of
prosperity in [my
heart]. And joy in
life. They go
through such
hardships and
they go through
them with
radiance. I've
learned from them
that we are all
dust in the path of
God."***

– Geraldine Robarts

Some examples of
Ms. Robarts'
paintings can be
viewed at the ONE
COUNTRY site on
the World Wide
Web at
www.onecountry.org

featuring Ms. Robarts' work. "People like her style. They are happy paintings."

Ms. Robarts has had exhibitions not only in Nairobi, but in Uganda, South Africa, Canada, England and the United States. Private collectors worldwide, in countries from Japan to Switzerland, own her work.

"She is a highly gifted world-class artist," said Remi Aruasa, owner of Halpen Gochi Art Gallery in Nairobi. Ms. Aruasa, who is a Buddhist, has also featured Ms. Robarts in a recent exhibition and she has some 30 of her paintings in her private collection. "She is able to portray, in abstract form, what people commonly refer to as the spiritual path. And I've noticed that her abstracts speak to people who are deeply spiritually committed across all religions."

Born as Geraldine Bannister in London in 1939, she was shipped out to relatives in South Africa during the Blitz. Raised to adulthood there, she studied fine arts at the University of Witwaterstrand and later received an M.A. in education from the University of Nairobi.

She became a Bahá'í at the age of 19, a step which without doubt has been one of the major influences on her life. "I had no religious upbringing, but I searched and searched and searched," she said, describing how as a young woman she visited virtually every church in Johannesburg. "I knew there was a God."

At university, she met a young architectural student, Patrick Robarts — whom she later married. Mr. Robarts, a Bahá'í, told her of the Faith's principles. "When he said, 'There is one God, one humanity and one religion,' I just wiped the sweat off my brow and said, 'Whew, that is such a relief.'" She felt she had finally found the truth.

The Bahá'í principles reflected what she had always believed. "In my private school education in South Africa, from the age of six onward, the first lesson of the day was that 'you little white children, in this little white class, are better than any other children because you've got white skin.' And I knew that it wasn't true. Because — and this was the first time I realized that God is one — my mother had let a black family stay illegally in a little guest house we had. And every night they used to sing prayers. And I sometimes went to listen. And I knew that God was in that room. There was a presence of the Holy Spirit in that room that I didn't find at any of the churches I visited."

She married Mr. Robarts in 1962 and,

unwilling to raise children in apartheid South Africa, they moved to London and then in 1964, to Uganda. In 1972 they moved to Kenya, fleeing the turmoil of Idi Amin's repressive regime.

While raising four children, she both painted and taught painting. From 1964 to 1970, she was a lecturer in art education at Kampala's prestigious Makerere University. From 1977 to 1982, she taught painting at Kenyatta University in Nairobi, serving for two years as head of the painting department.

It was as an art teacher that her life began to intersect with rural women. Her first foray into development work was with a group of Kikuyu women in Limuru, about 50 kilometers outside of Nairobi. Their attempts at making and selling handcrafts were failing and she taught them how to make simple creations such as baskets and decorative baobab trees from readily available banana fibers.

Susan Mwendwa, chair of the Matinyani Women's Group, heard of how Ms. Robarts had helped the Limuru group and approached her, asking if she might also help them improve their weaving designs and marketing skills.

What began as an effort at artistic training soon blossomed into a full-scale collaboration in rural development, as Ms. Robarts increasingly used her contacts in Nairobi to win aid and recognition for the women of Kitui. Ms. Robarts, along with Kenyans Margaret Ogembo and Catherine Mboya — who were also involved in various forms of rural development work — founded Rehema to formalize their activities.

Ms. Robarts says she gets more from the development work than she gives. "What these Kalimani women have given me is a feeling of prosperity in here," she says, pointing to her heart. "And joy in life. They go through such hardships and they go through them with radiance. I've learned from them that we are all dust in the path of God."

And so she straddles two worlds, painting and development work, seeing both as training grounds for her spirit.

"Painting for me definitely is worship," she says. "The spirit and subject and inspiration of my paintings are all given to me, I believe, by God. I feel I draw closer to God when I am painting. I feel that tremendous sense of love, of being a hollow reed, through which the power of God is flowing." *

Relying on local resources, Matinyani women are a global model

MATINYANI, Kitui District, Kenya — Were it not for the training she has received from her participation in the Matinyani Women's Group, Tabitha Muthui believes she would be a bar-girl today — if she were alive at all. "I've seen so many people left by their parents, having to do dirty things, like working in the clubs," said Ms. Muthui. "And they get AIDS and then get sick and die."

But thanks in part to the skills she has learned at weaving classes held at the Group's community center here, Ms. Muthui today runs a relatively prosperous household, bringing in even more income than her construction-worker husband. She works at home, weaving colorful wall-hangings that sell for the equivalent of US\$65.

"I have built a house for ourselves and our children," said the 28-year-old mother. "The weaving made it possible."

Ms. Muthui's story is not uncommon here, where the success of the Matinyani Women's Group at helping its members get the skills they need to set up small-scale income generation projects has made it one of the most acclaimed development efforts in Kenya.

Founded in the late 1980s, the Group started with a simple idea — let's build a community center for ourselves. Achieving that task attracted the attention of other women's groups, plus development organizations and donor agencies, leading to a string of projects that include the weaving and marketing of sisal baskets and artistic wall-hangings, a simple but highly profitable mango-drying scheme, several small bakeries, a grain-grinding mill, brick-making efforts, and a pottery production center.

"In my professional experience, and I've been in international development work for almost 30 years, this series of projects are, collectively, examples of the most outstanding sustainable community development activities that I have observed," said Alfred K. Neumann, a senior advisor to the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) Center for Health Sciences.

"The projects have not only focused on income generation in a moral and ethical framework, but have also focused on the wise use of the income," said Dr. Neumann. "The result is that you have more children getting immunized, more children in schools, especially girls, improved nutrition, improved health and better houses."

Dr. Neumann estimates that the projects have directly benefited more than 1,000 women — and 10,000 extended family members. "The ripple effects are probably helping many more, so these are conservative figures," said Dr. Neumann. Anecdotal evidence, such as Ms. Muthui's story, indicates that income has risen substantially for many. And the Group's success has inspired others in the region to launch projects, like the Kalimani health center. [See page 1]

Collectively, the projects will be featured at the Expo 2000 World's Fair in Hanover, Germany, and at the Epcot Center in Florida, USA. They have also been recognized

with a "We the peoples..." award by the International Institute for Sustainable Development for demonstrating "significant positive self help attributes."

The project has succeeded because of a variety of factors — including specific traditions of the Akamba people that give women a high degree of autonomy and promote respect for each other within groups. But by many accounts, it is the efforts of two women — one an indigenous Akamba and the other a European raised in South Africa — that provided the outside perspective and guidance that allowed the groups really to succeed.

Susan Mwendwa, who was born in nearby Machakos district, used her leadership role as the wife of a Member of Parliament in the late 1980s to travel about and organize the Akamba women into large and well-structured groups that were able to mobilize themselves to launch the many projects undertaken in the region. As chair of the Matinyani Women's Group, she oversaw the construction of the Matinyani multi-purpose center — the Group's first big project. The center, in turn, provided a venue for the training in small-scale income generation activities.

Geraldine Robarts, a London-born, Nairobi-based artist, entered the picture shortly after the construction of the multi-purpose center and, as an agent of Rehema, a Bahá'í-inspired NGO, brought critical knowledge that enabled the Group to refocus its efforts from the production of simple and low-value baskets to much higher-value wall-hangings. Ms. Robarts introduced the mango drying technology and Rehema sponsored workshops on topics ranging from hygiene to consultation, which improved the Group's functioning and awareness of health issues. Ms. Robarts was also a critical link in obtaining outside aid.

Throughout their involvement, Ms. Mwendwa and Ms. Robarts promoted some key principles that kept the in-



At the Matinyani multi-purpose center, solar mango dryers have dramatically increased profits from the annual wild mango harvest. Before the Matinyani Women's Group acquired the dryers, they received about US\$1 per truckload of mangos; now they can make up to US\$400 per truckload.

Bahá'í Studies chair dedicated in Jerusalem

[Editor's Note: The following story is reprinted from the *Jerusalem Post*, one of Israel's largest English-language newspapers. The dedication of a Bahá'í Chair at one of Israel's top universities brings to three the number of Bahá'í academic chairs in the world. The other two are at the University of Maryland in the United States and the University of Indore in India.]

JERUSALEM (June 7) - Prof. Moshe Sharon, the first incumbent of the world's first academic chair in Bahá'í studies [in Israel], said yesterday that the post was being set up at Hebrew University of Jerusalem with the aim of doing away with "tremendous ignorance" concerning Bahá'í.

The chair, funded by an anonymous donor, is to be dedicated today. "People think it is a Moslem sect. The truth is that it is a new world religion," Sharon said.

He added that before he began his research in the field, the last academic work on Bahá'í had been done 80 years ago. It is a fascinating faith, he said, with great intellectual wealth. There are over 100,000 documents, enough to provide work for researchers for a century, he added.

Noting that Bahá'í has spread rapidly throughout the world, including Asia and Africa, he described it as the perfect faith

for the modern person, with its insistence upon complete equality between races and between sexes.

The Bahá'í faith's origins were in Persia, where, in 1844, a young man named Ali Muhammad Shirazi, known as the Báb, began to attract followers to a new religious idea. He was deemed a heretic by the Moslem religious authorities and a rebellious leader by the Persian government, which executed him in 1850.

Among the Báb's followers was Mirza Hussein Ali Nuri, later called Bahá'u'lláh, who in 1863 announced that he was the expected prophet whose coming had been foretold by the Báb. He developed the movement, which had been persecuted in Persia, and authored its holy writings. Bahá'u'lláh was banished from Persia and later from Iraq and other places, arriving in 1868 in Acre as a prisoner of the Ottoman government. He died and was buried there in 1892.

Today the Bahá'í world center is in Haifa and the faith has shrines in Haifa and Acre. There are an estimated six million followers around the world, only a handful of them in Israel.

— By Haim Shapiro. Copyright 1999 The Jerusalem Post. Reprinted by permission.*

Matinyani Women's Group

Continued from previous page

come-generation efforts of the group on track, resisting the kinds of problems that often cause other grassroots-based projects to fail, such as the reliance on expensive outside inputs to their businesses or aid dollars that artificially prop up the project

through payments to participants of training programs and the like.

In the case of the Matinyani projects, Ms. Mwendwa and Ms. Robarts emphasized the importance of developing handcrafts and marketable items that would be made almost entirely from local resources, such as sisal, using appropriate skill levels and relying upon minimal technology.*

Writing our common future

Future, continued from page 3

emerge: "This is the Day", Bahá'u'lláh asserts, "in which God's most excellent favors have been poured out upon men, the Day in which His most mighty grace hath been infused into all created things."

Viewed through Bahá'u'lláh's eyes, then, the history of tribes, peoples, and nations has effectively reached its conclusion. What we are witnessing is the beginning of the history of humankind, the history of a hu-

man race conscious of its own oneness.

The opening years of the new century will undoubtedly see the release of energies and aspirations infinitely more potent than the accumulated routines, falsities, and addictions that have so long blocked their expression.

However great the turmoil, the next period will open to every individual, every institution, and every community unprecedented opportunities to participate in the writing of the planet's future. "Soon", is Bahá'u'lláh's confident promise, "will the present-day order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead."*



Professor Moshe Sharon

Review: *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*

Review, continued from back page

"electronic herd," which is his term for the thousands if not millions of investors and financial analysts who today direct or divert billions of investment dollars into or away from a country "with the click of a mouse." In a process that is almost Darwinian by nature, he explains how global investors, with access to all kinds of electronic financial information about the flows of money into and out of a country, act in self-interest to force governments that want to thrive economically towards transparency, democracy, financial reform and, ultimately, peace.

"We keep looking at democratization as an event — like the fall of the Berlin Wall — but actually it's a process," he writes, adding that the actions of investors worldwide are among the most important forces in this process. "This is because of the herd's ability to get inside the wiring of countries, in ways that governments and even human rights organizations cannot. The herd can impose pressures that few governments can resist."

Mr. Friedman does not turn a blind eye to the problems and dislocations that are caused by globalization, and the backlash it has stirred. Indeed, the title of the book stems from his choice of two symbols — the Lexus automobile and the traditional olive tree — to represent the two "poles" of globalization and its effects.

After visiting a highly automated Lexus factory in Japan, he decided that that particular brand of luxury car well represents all those in the world who are "intent on building a better Lexus, dedicated to modernizing, streamlining and privatizing their economics in order to thrive in the system of globalization." The olive tree, for Mr. Friedman, represents "everything that roots us, anchors us, identifies us and locates us in this world — whether it be belonging to a family, a community, a tribe, a nation, a religion, or, most of all, a place called home."

"In the Cold War system, the most likely threat to your olive tree was from another olive tree," he writes. "It was from you neighbor coming over, violently digging up your olive tree and planting his in its place... The biggest threat to your olive tree today is likely to come from the Lexus — from all the anonymous, transnational, homogeniz-

ing, standardizing market forces and technologies that make up today's globalizing economic system."

The real test, then, is whether it will be possible to create a healthy balance between these two ideas, in how well "we learn to strike the right balance between globalization's inherently empowering and humanizing aspects and its inherently disempowering and dehumanizing aspects." The final chapters of the book are aimed at suggesting how Americans and American policy might promote such a balance.

Bahá'ís would certainly agree that humanity's collective happiness and prosperity in the near future will indeed depend upon how we balance the forces of modernity with our innate sense of human identity. However, Bahá'ís would suggest that the real answer to this conundrum requires a deeper, more complex analysis that goes beyond the mostly economic point of view in Mr. Friedman's book.

Although he takes note of an earlier phase of globalization in this century, Mr. Friedman's focus is mostly on the last decade of financial upheavals, industrial innovation, and the effects of the information revolution. Bahá'ís, however, view the current effects of economic globalization as spin-offs or side-effects of a profound, divinely guided process in which humanity is being led out of its collective adolescence towards an age in which its inherent oneness will be broadly recognized as the real truth about our nature.

Bahá'ís would suggest that a balance between modernity and human identity will require recognizing that all of our olive trees are essentially "one," to use Mr. Friedman's terminology — and that the balance can be found only by sharing your olive tree with others and opening yourself to the idea that, as Bahá'u'lláh wrote more than a century ago, "The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens."

In other words, the roots of the various olive trees that contain our various national, cultural or regional identities go deeper than Mr. Friedman imagines, to a common source of basic spiritual and moral values that are at the heart of every religion. Recognizing that those roots actually connect us all — instead of separate us — is the real key to bringing justice and equity to the challenges posed by the effects of a steadily intensifying globalization that extends to virtually every arena of human endeavor. *

The roots of the various olive trees that contain our various national, cultural or regional identities go deeper than Mr. Friedman imagines, to a common source of basic spiritual and moral values that are at the heart of every religion.

Riding the new wave of economic globalization

The Lexus and the Olive Tree

By Thomas L. Friedman

Farrar, Straus & Giroux

New York

In June, Amazon.com, the huge internet bookseller, listed more than 400 books about "globalization." Which raises the question: why another book on the topic?

Perhaps because, as Thomas L. Friedman writes in *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*: globalization has become "the dominant international system at the end of the twentieth century — replacing the Cold War system... it now shapes virtually everyone's domestic politics and international relations."

A Pulitzer Prize-winning foreign correspondent and now the foreign affairs columnist for *The New York Times*, Friedman has few academic qualifications as an expert on globalization. His degrees are in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies. Yet, as he puts it himself, he is an inveterate traveler, having crisscrossed the globe numerous times in his work for the *Times*. This has enabled him to talk to a wide range of world leaders, financial experts and ordinary people everywhere, and their quotations — combined with Friedman's own considerable powers of observation and analysis — give weight to the book.

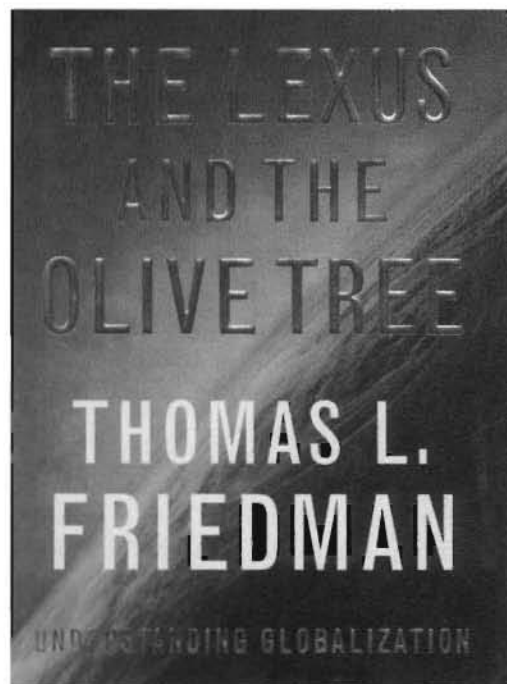
Mr. Friedman's main message is that whatever the considerable upheavals and negative effects that have been triggered by the processes of economic globalization which are remaking the modern world, those processes are here to stay and the adversities they cause can only be ameliorated by facing them squarely and learning to ride with the current instead of trying to stop it.

"Globalization," he writes, "is driven by enormously powerful human aspirations for higher standards of living and by enormously powerful technologies which are integrating us more and more every day, whether we like it or not. Theoretically, these aspirations and technologies can be choked off, but only at a huge price to society's development and only by building ever higher and ever thicker walls."

He traces globalization — a term he generally uses without modification even though his main focus is actually on "economic" globalization — to "three fundamental changes" in "how we communicate, how we invest, and how we learn about the

world" that occurred in the late 1980s. "[T]oday there is no more First World, Second World, or Third World," he writes. "There now just the Fast World — the world of the wide-open plain — and the Slow World — the world of those who either fall by the wayside or choose to live away from the plain in some artificially walled-off valley of their own..."

Mr. Friedman believes that this new wide open world is bringing more benefits to more people than is widely realized, despite the vociferous backlash from individuals and groups that have lost jobs, power or a sense of connection to their culture from globalization's effects.



Among the benefits Mr. Friedman lists are: a general trend towards democracy and transparency in government worldwide; rising standards of living for those countries who have decided to play by the economic rules of globalization; and, last but not least, a general absence of war between countries who have "plugged into" the globalization system.

These benefits, Mr. Friedman writes, come about largely because of the pressures of the

Review, continued on page 15