The International day of Monuments and Site is celebrated annually on the 18th Day of April. It was initiated by ICOMOS in 1982 and was approved by UNESCO in 1983. The aim of this event is to celebrate monuments and sites around the world. In Seychelles, the organizing committee has extended the monuments and sites day to one week activities celebrating both the tangible and intangible aspects of the Seychelles cultural heritage.

Heritage Week provides us with an opportunity to not only reflect on the achievements and obstacles in the heritage domain but most importantly it is an opportunity to reconnect with our ancestral heritage and embrace the possibilities it offers in the future. It is equally a celebration of our unique cultural and material inheritance, the very essence that makes us what we are today, a renewed attachment with the common threads that connects the Seychellois people to itsSocial, Economic and Political history and which contributes to our ability to live the legacy of cultural diversity, social cohesion, peace and unity.

The sustain ability of Heritage Week is also reflective in the participation of the younger generation especially students at various levels of our academic institutions. This provides a very viable medium to learn first-hand the Seychellois cultural heritage and to interact with cultural practitioners and knowledge bearers. It is also an institutionalized medium to protect, safe guard and preserve our esteemed cultural heritage.

The 2018 edition of Heritage Week was celebrated from Wednesday 18th April to Wednesday 25th April with the theme 'Heritage for Generations'. This year’s heritage week has been the combined efforts of the National Heritage Research and Protection Section (NHRPS), National Museum and Seychelles Heritage Foundation (SHF) who are all institutions mandated with the preservation and promotion of our cultural heritage. The activities for the week included there opening of craft village at Domaine de Val de Prés, sales of medicinal plant products, art exhibition, an obstacle race, guided tours in Victoria, the launching of information boards at Venns Town, heritage quiz and treasure hunt at La Buse treasure site at Belombre.
Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today and we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration, our touchstone, our reference point, our identity (UNESCO).

The main aspects of Cultural Heritage include the Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage. Tangible Cultural Heritage refers to the physical artifacts produced, maintained and transmitted from one generation to the other. They are characterized by human artistic creation and built heritage such as physical landscapes, sites and monuments with great cultural significance and they bear witness to multiple identities.

Whereas the intangible heritage are characterized as living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature, the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts. Furthermore, intangible culture is categorized as folklore, traditions, language, and knowledge.

Both tangible and intangible cultural heritage can be significant to a nation or communities due to their present or past values. They may create a sense of belonging in our way of life as a nation, or a community, and the practical way to safeguard and preserve one's cultural heritage is to live it and share it with others.

It is however important to preserve our cultural heritage as it reflects the diversities and our space in the global culture. It promotes our identity and uniqueness, reflects and shapes values, beliefs, and aspirations that define a people's essence, national identity and its integrity.

It is easier to protect and conserve the tangible elements of Heritage. Their physical aspects can be maintained and conserve through legislations, whereas for the intangible elements of heritage there is a risk that they could disappear and die out. The only way is to safeguard them. Safeguarding them should focus on the processes involved in the transmission and communication from one generation to another, rather than on the production of its concrete manifestations, such as a dance performance, a song, a music instrument or a craft.

By B. Walter

Sanson tinge i laplipar ditan pa an kreol. Sa bann parol i san dout Swahili.

Preski tou danser tinge ti nwar e nou konnen ki bann nwar i sorti pa nek dan lafrik. Dan lannen 1980, en zonm nonmen Msye Lauset 87 an sa letan, ki ti reste Anse Reunion La Digue, i dir ki en lepok letan i ti lo zil Alphonse, i ti trouv antre en bato aple «Kalvremann». Sa bato ti plen ek dimoun nwar ki sorti Grannter (Lafrik). Sa bann dimoun zot ti dans tinge e zot ti sant sirtou sa de sanson:

1) Sega se ...
   Repet 1 apre 2 kante fwa

2) Villa y se ...
   Telesa Telesa Mbaye ...
   Repet kante fwa
   Tumba Lisa ...

Dapre msye Lauset “ sa bann Swahili ti bann bon zwer tinge”. I dir ki ler i ti ankor zanfan, en madanm ki ti aple Ma Fanny ki sorti grannter (Lafrik) ti dir li ki laba kot i ti sorti zot ti dans tinge. Sa sanson tinge ti sa lepok popilerlo La Digue, lo grannter zot ti sant sa ler pou fer dormi pti baba; la sa sanson:

Tie Tumba Lisa tie – repet kante fwa.
Swahili pa ganny koze dan tou kwen lafrik e alor i vreman difisil pou konnen ki kote dan sa landwarz tinge i sorti e si zot ankor pe danse ou pa.


Ler tinge tin opwen, si lalin pa ti kler, bann danser ti dans ek flanbo fer avek fey koko sek pou alim sa landrwa kot zot danse ziska never diswar. Isi Sesel, selman bann zonm ki zot travay ti souvan anmas koko, plante e lezot travay labourer ki ti dans tinge. Bann dimoun ki ti vin regarde ti bann madanm, bann zonm ki pa ti partisipe ek bann zanfan, fiy konman garson. Antre zot danser, zot ti aranze pou ki en sannddi zot a dans iyi e dimans zot ti ava dans lor dan. Okenn gran kantite larzan pa ti neseser akoz zis sa ki zot ti bezwen ti en bon pe baka, memm ki sa ti kont lafak. Bann danser tinge pa ti bezwen okenn resanz spesyal, ni okenn lenstriman mizikal parski sa ki zot ti bezwen fer se zis bat lanmen, sante e danse.

Pou dans tinge fodre omwen dis dimoun. Vreman sa danse i en konpetisyen ant sa dis zonm ki’n ganny separe pour ki i annan senk sak kote. Prezian i annan de group pou fer konpetisyen. En zonm dan en kote i apros enn son oponan an memm tan ki bann geter zot antour bann konpeterter, an forman en gran ron ki kapab permet sa de danser vin lib pou danse. Dapre lawla tinge fodre ki sa de danser zot konnen dan ki kote zot ete akoz i annan de kote: troke ek vizavi. Tinge pou fer pli kler, i en danse lev lipye. Si en danser ki lo kote troke e ki i anfas avek son oponan kin lev son lipye gos e li i lev son lipye drwat, I perdi akoz lipye drwat ek lipye gos zot vizavi.

Savedir lipye drwat ek lipye gos, dapre laawla tinge, zot vizavi e lipye gos pougos, zot troke. Bann danser tinge, ede par bann geter zot sante e bat lanmen an memm tan ki sa de konpetitter pe danse. Ler enn sa bann konpetitter I perdi, lot danser dan son group I vin zwenn sa enn ki pan’perdi. Sa I ale koumsa ziska en kote I perdi, e la si fodre, zot renkonmans ankor.

Danser tinge, Silhouette-dan lannen 1980. fotografer: Gabriel Essack

By Mosianne Jeremie
INTRODUCTION

The revitalization of ancient traditions is shrouded in deep rooted misconceptions and myopic views of modernization while people are left in the taunted euphoria of its feasibility and relevance in our contemporary lives. One amongst many which are becoming obsolete in Seychelles is the tradition of making charcoal. Historically, wood and charcoal have proven to be the oldest and most popular fuel for cooking, before the advent of other forms of fuel and power. The majority of the population depended on charcoal for their daily energy needs. It was made from a wide range of wood species such as timber, cinnamon, casuarina and sandragon just to name a few. In the past, forestry was an important economic activity, especially where charcoal was used daily to supply numerous cinnamon and copra distilleries. Generally, the charcoal production contributed to the economic growth and sustainable development of the country.

POLICY CHALLENGE

The environmental conservatives have argued that the charcoal trade has led to massive deforestation which causes environmental degradation. Furthermore, charcoal making has significantly declined as a result of modern forestry initiatives which establishes strict guidelines to regulate the cutting and felling of tree species, especially those that are endemic and indigenous. The stringent burning permit has not also helped matters. The effect of these policies has led to very scarce raw materials for making charcoal, as the producers have to go deeper into the forest to get the wood. We only have few traders in existence till date due to the unprofitability witnessed in recent times.

What happened to our local traditional charcoal?

At present, retailers are forced to import charcoal from other foreign countries just to meet our local demand, which is not good for our local economy.

BENEFITS OF CHARCOAL

Although charcoal is one of the most disregarded products at our home, it has a number of socio-cultural, medicinal and economic values. Some of these benefits include:

Socio-Cultural Value
- It has a sense of connecting us to our history and shared heritage;
- It brings unity amongst the community members because it’s the major fuel used during camping, carnivals and barbeques. This fosters connectivity and intercultural dialogue;
- The beauty of nature is expressed in the cycle of life and death. Charcoals are reminders of life and death not just for trees, but for humans also.

Medicinal Value
- Teeth whitening and promoting good oral health;
- Detoxification of food and the body;
- Keeping food fresh;
- Odor prevention;
- Neutralization of alcohol in the body;
- Healing wounds;
- Water filtration;
- Skin cleansing;
- Stain removal;
- Getting rid of bloated stomach;
- Reduces bad cholesterol and increases good cholesterol in the body;
- Ulcer treatment.

Economic Value
- It remains the cheapest fuel for low income earners.
- It can be a major good for local trade and exportation which will boost the economy and help the strength of our currency.

Recommendation:

It is important that the Seychellois society comes to a compromise with careful considerations of the pros and cons. The modern forestry rather than prohibit felling of trees, can create an afforestation program of ensuring that the people in the trade of charcoal will also be mandated to plant trees to replace each tree felled. This I believe will create a very balanced forestry life cycle. In order to avoid air pollution charcoal making should be in a well-organized and controlled environment.

Conclusion:

Modernization should not be a tool for cultural erosion, but rather a means of cultural revitalization and promotion. I strongly hope that the Authorities of Seychelles will come to terms with this, and help, safeguard, preserve and conserve the Seychellois Cultural Heritage.
Lighthouses have served two main purposes globally: to serve as a navigational aid and to warn boats of dangerous areas. It can best be described as a traffic sign on the sea. Lighthouses in Seychelles has existed since late 1870's and so, this article shall attempt to enlighten the public of two historic lighthouses of Seychelles; the Victoria lighthouse and the Denis island Lighthouse. These two lighthouses are considered historical sites because they are most prominent in the history of maritime heritage of Seychelles. The light house system was introduced in 1838 by the United States and then, the United Kingdom in 1849 followed suit. Interestingly, the Victoria lighthouse in Seychelles came on board in 1876, followed by the Denise island lighthouse in 1883.

The Victoria lighthouse is located about 3km northeast of the Victoria waterfront, at the entrance to the Victoria harbour. It is situated at a location of 04°36.84S/055°28.24E. The lighthouse was replaced in 1877, and then a new one was built in 1909 and still stands today. It was however declared a National Monument in 2011. The Denis Island lighthouse is located at 1.4 km² (0.54 sq. mi) is a coral island which has been developed into a resort. It was named after the French explorer Jean François Sylvestre Denis de Trobriand, who visited it in 1773.

At that period the colonial administration of Seychelles, was governed as dependency of Mauritius. The administration was pressured by French shipping company Messageries Maritimes, which had been operating regular services to Seychelles since 1864, to provide navigational safety to thousands of ships traveling in this area. At night, ships from the east or north arriving in the archipelago of Seychelles, their captain expect to detect a flashing light located at precisely 03 47.81’S, 055 40.02’E, 95km (59 miles) north of the main island of Mahe. The Denis island lighthouse is represented on two stamps of Seychelles which depicted its transformation during its restoration. The two lighthouses, Victoria and Denis Island, are therefore very prominent to offer ships coming to Seychelles or just crossing the Suez Canal to travel safely to their destinations. Beyond that, it reminds us of our historic colonial masters and depicts independence to today’s multi cultural Seychellois society.

Its ambience cannot be over emphasised, as it sends its light over the sea, winking comfortably at ships on the ocean all round, as the lantern revolves on its mercury trough.

Photo source:Klaus Huelse Article: T. Barbe
CONSERVATION OF OUR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE AND SACRED PLACES

What is our religious heritage and sacred places? How do we conserve them? Our religious heritage and sacred places are the spaces or building where we choose to carry out our religious practices and beliefs. It could be in the form of churches, mosques, temples, shrines, grottos and even open spaces such as the ‘Chemins de Calvaire’ at Cascade, Trois Frere or La Misere.

The National Heritage Research and Protection Section accordingly seeks to develop an understanding of how best to maintain the sacred nature of religious places and of the associated materials used in worship/rituals in the face of simultaneous modernization and globalization.

Our biggest challenge is to conserve important cultural heritage while acknowledging that the practice of faith will continue to require change, renewal and accommodation to the needs of worshippers. So, to what extent are contemporary approaches to managing heritage sites appropriate to the conservation of our religious heritage and sacred sites?

Case study 1: The chapel of “Notre Dame du PerpétuelSecour” at Pointe Aux Sel. Although it is not a declared monument, it is a small chapel of great historical value offering spiritual sanctuary to all Roman Catholics, especially the Au Cap community. The chapel is currently being renovated. The aspirations of the worshippers (Roman Catholics) needs to be reconciled with the management policies of the official heritage Authorities, so that the original architecture of the chapel can be preserved.

Case study 2: An example of good conservation of religious heritage is that of the Shimoni Sacred Grove Cave in Kenya. The Shimoni Sacred Grove Cave is a natural cave formed as a result of the built up of a sedimentary coral reef. In the cave there are several chambers with formations of stalactites and stalagmites.

One of the most prominent chambers in the sacred cave is the religious shrine used by the local community. This is said to have been used in the past for various purposes, including the hiding or imprisoning of slaves and more recently various rituals have been reported as having taking place inside. In fact, the cave, the village history and its heritage are inextricably linked. What is so special about the way conservation is being done at Shimoni is that both the Muslims and African traditional religious practitioners are taking care of the cave. There are some contested issues, but the people of Shimoni Village are very interested in the protection and promotion of the Shimoni cave and sacred grove.

We can conclude that our heritage is recognized as having a living religious value will always present different conservation challenges to that which can be admired mainly as a historical monument. This involves compromise and tolerance of different ways of working. A mutual understanding can be achieved that acknowledges the needs of both faith and conservation.

By Julienne BARRA
**Did you know?**

**Water cooler (gargoulet)**
Water cooler (gargoulet) is a vase made of soil. It was used in the olden days to keep water cool. Nowadays it has been replaced by the refrigerator.