

# Editorial Note

On 18 September 2001 it was 40 years since Dag Hammarskjöld, the second Secretary-General of the United Nations, died in a plane crash at Ndola in Northern Zambia in the midst of negotiating peace in the conflict-ridden Congo. In commemoration of his life and achievements a series of events was organised in Uppsala, Sweden, by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and Uppsala University during the course of the month. Some of the contributions to the commemoration are published in this issue of *Development Dialogue*.

Most of Dag Hammarskjöld's childhood and adolescence were spent in Uppsala, where his father was the provincial governor. He went to school in Uppsala and also took his first and second academic degrees at Uppsala University. He left Uppsala in 1930 at the age of 25 to begin doctoral studies in economics at the university college in Stockholm. Uppsala's importance in the formative stages of Hammarskjöld's life is easily discernible in his writings, among them the moving essay *Castle Hill*, which was written in New York shortly before his death.

The main event during the commemoration weeks was the visit to Uppsala by the present Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, on 6 September. During the course of the day, he laid a wreath on Dag Hammarskjöld's grave and visited the premises of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, where he was briefed about the programmes of the Foundation as well as of the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University. The high point of his programme was the delivery of the fourth Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture, with the title 'Dag Hammarskjöld and the 21st Century'. It was given in the University Main Hall, which was filled to capacity by an enthusiastic audience of 2000 people. Almost as many had to remain outside the university building but greeted the Secretary-General with loud applause and cheers on his arrival. Kofi Annan's lecture is the first contribution to this issue of *Development Dialogue*. It is also published in a separate booklet.

The Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture was jointly instituted by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and Uppsala University in memory of the second Secretary-General of the United Nations. The guidelines used in the selection process state that 'the privilege of delivering the lecture is offered to a person who has promoted, in action and spirit, the values that inspired Dag Hammarskjöld as Secretary-General of the United Nations and generally in his life: compassion, humanism and commitment to international solidarity and cooperation'. Kofi Annan fulfils these criteria to a remarkably high degree.

As readers of *Development Dialogue* are well aware, earlier lectures have been given by Mary Robinson, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; Brian Urquhart, the former UN Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs; and Joseph Rotblat, Nobel Prize Laureate and founder of the Pugwash Conferences.

The day after Kofi Annan's Lecture, 7 September, the Hammarskjöld commemoration programme continued with an International Seminar and, in the evening, a Panel Discussion. The theme for the International Seminar was 'Beyond Globalisation: New Challenges to the United Nations'. It focused on two interrelated topics, the first being 'Preventive Security and the New Wars', with contributions by Peter Wallensteen, Mary Kaldor, Richard Falk and

Patrick Molutsi. The second session addressed the topic of ‘New Approaches to the Global Economy’, with Karl Eric Knutsson, Pat Mooney, Cynthia Hewitt de Alcantara and Kunda Dixit making short introductions. A publication containing the material from the seminar is being edited.

For the commemoration programme a special effort had been made to draw attention to a side of Dag Hammarskjöld’s personality that is not well known to many but played an extremely important part in his life: his passion for culture in all its forms. In his excellent introduction to three contributions reflecting different sides of Hammarskjöld’s interest in culture – ‘Dag Hammarskjöld: A Leader in the Field of Culture’ – Brian Urquhart writes: ‘One of the most impressive, and unusual, features of Dag Hammarskjöld’s way of life was the integration into one scheme of activity of all his interests and pursuits. ... Literature, music, the visual arts, and nature were both his recreation and an important and sustaining part of his routine. They were the true companions of his bachelor life. They refreshed him and lightened the burden of his very public office.’

In order to illustrate this, we asked three authors to write about different aspects of Hammarskjöld’s interest in culture. Manuel Fröhlich has brought together the extremely interesting correspondence between Dag Hammarskjöld and the British sculptor Barbara Hepworth, dating from the period 1956–61, and written a very penetrating essay on it. He calls his contribution ‘A Fully Integrated Vision: Politics and the Arts in the Dag Hammarskjöld–Barbara Hepworth Correspondence’.

Another significant correspondence that Hammarskjöld developed, this time with a literary person, was his exchange of letters with the French poet Alexis Leger, better known as Saint-John Perse, who received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1960 and was an absolute favourite among Hammarskjöld’s many literary contacts. Marie-Noëlle Little, who has collected this correspondence and edited both a French and an English edition, writes here about the background to the close relationship between the two.

For Dag Hammarskjöld, his close contact with nature was as important as his interest in art and literature. He particularly liked to hike in the mountains in the north of Sweden and also to walk along the shores of the Baltic Sea in the south. Bengt Thelin writes about this in the last essay of this issue of *Development Dialogue*, drawing on his new book covering the first 25 years of Hammarskjöld’s life.

Readers of *Development Dialogue* may already have observed that this issue, published in commemoration of Dag Hammarskjöld’s life and achievements 40 years after his death, is somewhat different from other issues. We hope you will find the contents interesting and inspiring, and also relevant to the struggle for democracy, equitable development and justice. A quote from Barbara Hepworth may be helpful, as it throws light on Hammarskjöld’s integrated view of the world, a very important quality that seems to be almost lost in today’s world: ‘Dag Hammarskjöld had a pure and exact perception of aesthetic principles, as exact as it was over ethical and moral principles. I believe they were, to him, one and the same thing.’

# Dag Hammarskjöld and the 21st Century

By Kofi Annan

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*In the fourth Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, opens up an ingenious imaginary conversation with Hammarskjöld, drawing comparisons between the global political situation of around 1960 and the present. He addresses several crucial issues for the United Nations, reflecting on the progress made, as well as the disappointments experienced, and drawing attention to both similarities and differences between the challenges confronting the UN during Hammarskjöld's era and those that face it now in the new century.*

*As his framework for the lecture, Kofi Annan uses Hammarskjöld's Introduction to his final Annual Report to the UN, presented in August 1961. In this, Hammarskjöld expressed the conviction that the United Nations must be a 'dynamic instrument' for change in the world rather than a form of 'static conference machinery'. Kofi Annan confirms this view very clearly and states that 'the United Nations will fail in its duty to the world's peoples, who are the ultimate source of its authority, if it allows itself to be reduced to a mere "static conference" whether on economic and social rights or on civil and political ones'.*

*In the conclusion to his lecture, Kofi Annan suggests that the greatest difference between the political environment of four decades ago and that of today is 'the sheer complexity of a world in which individuals and groups of all kinds are constantly interacting without expecting or receiving any permission, let alone assistance, from their national governments'. To achieve the aims of the UN Charter in the 21st century it will be necessary, Kofi Annan argues, to involve not just governments but all the different actors – 'to listen to them, to guide them, and to urge them on'.*

*Kofi Annan has served the United Nations for almost 40 years: he joined the organisation in 1962 at the age of 24, and began his service in the World Health Organization in Geneva; he subsequently moved to the UN Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa. Later, he returned to Geneva to work in the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, before moving to the UN headquarters in New York, where he held the posts of Assistant Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General in several important departments. On 1 January 1997 he began his first term as Secretary-General, an appointment that was extended by the General Assembly in June 2001, with a second five-year period beginning in January 2002.*

*Only a month after delivering the Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture, Kofi Annan was nominated to receive, jointly with the organisation he leads, the Nobel Peace Prize. The nomination carries a special significance in this context both because Kofi Annan and Dag Hammarskjöld (posthumously) are the only Secretaries-General who have been awarded the Peace Prize and because the themes discussed in the Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture have taken on even greater importance in the darker international atmosphere following 11 September.*

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Photo: Mikael Wallerstedt

*Kofi Annan  
delivering the fourth Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture,  
Uppsala University Main Hall*

As Secretary-General of the United Nations, I have to give many speeches, and even quite a few lectures. But I can think of no invitation to speak that is a greater honour, or a greater challenge, than this one.

It will not surprise you to hear that Dag Hammarskjöld is a figure of great importance for me – as he must be for any Secretary-General. His life and his death, his words and his action, have done more to shape public expectations of the office, and indeed of the Organization, than those of any other man or woman in its history.

His wisdom and his modesty, his unimpeachable integrity and single-minded devotion to duty, have set a standard for all servants of the international community – and especially, of course for his successors – which is simply impossible to live up to. There can be no better rule of thumb for a Secretary-General, as he approaches each new challenge or crisis, than to ask himself, ‘how would Hammarskjöld have handled this?’.

If that is true for any Secretary-General, how much more so for one of my generation, who came of age during the years when Hammarskjöld personified the United Nations, and began my own career in the UN system within a year of his death.

And how much more true, also, for one who has the special relationship that I do with this, his home country!

So you see, it is quite a solemn thing for me to give this lecture, especially so close to the 40th anniversary of Hammarskjöld’s death. And I feel all the more solemn about it coming here, as I do, directly from the part of Africa where he met that death – and where, 40 years later, the United Nations is again struggling to help restore unity and peace to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

I can tell you that the Congolese have never forgotten Dag Hammarskjöld. Four days ago, during my visit to the Congo, I met with the parties involved in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. Their spokesman began the meeting by telling me how much they appreciated the late Secretary-General’s dedication, and the fact that he gave his life for peace in their country. And he asked us to pay tribute to Hammarskjöld’s memory by observing a minute of silence. I found it very moving that people could feel like that about him after 40 years.

In Zambia, too – which, as you know, was where he actually died –

Hammar skjöld's death is commemorated annually. The Zambian government, together with your own and with the United Nations system, has launched a 'living memorial', which includes a programme to educate young Africans as 'messengers of peace', as well as a Centre for Peace, Good Governance and Human Rights. There could be no better way to commemorate him than by promoting these ideals, which he held so dear.

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If Dag Hammar skjöld were to walk through that door now, and ask me what are the main problems the United Nations is dealing with today, I could easily answer in a way that would make him think nothing much had changed.

I could talk to him not only about the Congo, but about the Middle East, or Cyprus, or the relations between India and Pakistan, and it would all seem very familiar.

But I could also tell him things that he would find very unfamiliar – though some would surprise him less than others, and some would gratify him more than others.

He would probably be relieved, but not surprised, to hear that China is now represented at the United Nations by the government that actually governs the vast majority of Chinese people.

It would surprise him much more to learn that the Soviet Union no longer exists. But he could only be pleased to find that there is no longer an unbridgeable ideological difference between the permanent members of the Security Council.

He might be struck by the number of conflicts the United Nations is dealing with today that are within, rather than between, States – though the experience of the Congo would have prepared him for this – and also by the number of regional organisations that have developed as partners of the UN in different parts of the world.

I feel sure, in any case, that he would be pleased to see the way United Nations peacekeeping has developed, from the model that he and Lester Pearson so brilliantly improvised in 1956 to something much more diverse and complex, which is often more accurately described as 'peace building'.

And I imagine he would be equally impressed by the wide range of issues that the United Nations is now called upon to face outside the traditional security arena – from climate change to HIV/AIDS.

He would be gratified, and perhaps not all that surprised, to hear that human rights and democracy are now generally accepted as world norms – though he might well be distressed to see how far, in many countries, the practice still falls short of the rhetoric.

He would definitely be distressed to learn that, within the last decade, genocide had again disfigured the face of humanity – and that well over a billion people today are living in extreme poverty. I think he would see preventing the recurrence of the former, and putting an end to the latter, as the most urgent tasks confronting us in this new century.

He would no doubt be impressed by the speed and intensity of modern communications, and momentarily confused by talk of faxes and sat-phones – let alone e-mails and the Internet. But I'm sure he would be quick to grasp the advantages and disadvantages of all these innovations, both for civilisation as a whole and for the conduct of diplomacy in particular.

What is clear is that his core ideas remain highly relevant in this new international context. The challenge for us is to see how they can be adapted to take account of it.

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One idea which inspired all his words and actions as Secretary-General was his belief that the United Nations had to be a 'dynamic instrument', through which its Members would collectively 'develop forms of executive action'.

During his time in office he became increasingly sensitive to the fact that some Member States did not share this vision, but regarded the United Nations as only 'a static conference machinery for resolving conflicts of interests and ideologies with a view to peaceful coexistence'.

In the Introduction to his last Annual Report – a magisterial work, which reads almost as if he was consciously writing his political testament – Hammarskjöld argued that those who regarded the Organization in this way were not paying adequate attention to certain essential principles of the Charter.

He showed that the Charter clearly implies the existence of ‘an international community, for which the Organization is an instrument and an expression’. The overriding purpose of this community was to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, and to do this it had to follow certain key principles.

These were:

- First, ‘equal political rights’ – which encompassed both the ‘sovereign equality’ of all Member States, in Article 2 of the Charter, and ‘respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms’, in Article 1.
- Second, ‘equal economic opportunities’ – spelt out in Article 55 as the promotion of ‘higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development’, as well as ‘solutions of international economic, social, health, and related problems’.
- Third, ‘justice’ – by which he meant that the international community must be ‘based on law ... with a judicial procedure through which law and justice could be made to apply’.
- And finally the prohibition of the use of armed force, ‘save in the common interest’.

These principles, Hammarskjöld argued, are incompatible with the idea of the United Nations as merely a conference or debating chamber – as indeed is the authority the Charter gives to its principal organs, and particularly to the Security Council, which clearly has both legislative and executive powers.

The context in which he put forward these arguments was, of course, the Cold War, and particularly the Soviet campaign against him during the Congo crisis of 1960–61.

That campaign is happily long past. But we still face, from time to time, attempts by Member States to reduce the United Nations to a ‘conference mechanism’.

Those attempts no longer come systematically from one particular ideological camp. Instead, they tend to vary according to the subject under discussion.

Broadly speaking, industrialised countries remain reluctant to see the United Nations act on Hammarskjöld’s second principle – the promotion of ‘equal economic opportunities’. And the governments of some other



countries are equally loath to see it actively promote ‘respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all’.

In both cases, I believe the Secretary-General has no choice. He has to follow in the footsteps of Hammarskjöld, upholding the right and duty of the United Nations to pursue the aims laid down for it by the Charter.

Of course there is always a need for negotiation and discussion on the appropriate forms of action. But the United Nations will fail in its duty to the world’s peoples, who are the ultimate source of its authority, if it allows itself to be reduced to a mere ‘static conference’, whether on economic and social rights or on civil and political ones.

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The same applies to Hammarskjöld’s exalted view of the ‘international civil servant’, which he also pursued in that last annual report, and in a lecture given that same summer at Oxford University.

His argument here was that the people charged with carrying out the executive functions of the United Nations could not be neutral in relation to the principles of the Charter. Nor could they be regarded, or allowed to regard themselves, as nominees or representatives of their own nations. They had to represent the international community as a whole.

Here too, Hammarskjöld based his argument on a very careful reading of the Charter itself – in this case Articles 100 and 101.

Article 100 forbids the Secretary-General or any of his staff either to seek or to receive instructions from States. And Article 101 prescribes ‘the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity’ as ‘the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff’.

Once again, Hammarskjöld was arguing in the context of the Cold War, in which first one side and then the other had tried to insist on the right to be represented, within the Secretariat, by people who were loyal to its political or ideological point of view.

Again, the context has changed, and I am glad to say that States today, while extremely keen to see their nationals appointed to senior positions, no longer seek – or at least, not in the same way – to exercise political control over them, once appointed.

But the principle of an independent international civil service, to which Hammarskjöld was so attached, remains as important as ever. Each successive Secretary-General must be vigilant in defending it, even if, on occasion, changing times require us to depart from the letter of his views, in order to preserve the spirit.

To give just one example: Hammarskjöld insisted that the bulk of United Nations staff should have permanent appointments and expect to spend their whole career with the Organization.

That may have been appropriate in his time. It is less so now that the role of the United Nations has expanded, and more than half of our employees are serving in missions in the field. This is a development which Hammarskjöld would surely have welcomed, since it reflects a transition from the 'static conference' model to the 'dynamic instrument' model which he so strongly believed in.

But what is clear is that his ideal of the United Nations as an expression of the international community, whose staff carry out decisions taken by States collectively rather than bending to the will of any one of them, is just as relevant in our times as in his.

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And that, of course, has very important implications for the role of the Secretary-General himself.

Hammarskjöld pointed out that Article 99 of the Charter – which allows the Secretary-General, on his own initiative, to bring matters to the Security Council's attention when in his view they may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security – makes him clearly a political rather than a purely administrative official.

In practice, successive Secretaries-General, including Hammarskjöld, have invoked this article very sparingly. I myself have never yet found it necessary to do so. But the fact that the Secretary-General has this power crucially affects the way he is treated by the Security Council, and by the Member States in general.

Few people now question the responsibility of the Secretary-General to act politically, or to make public pronouncements on political issues.

In fact, the boot today is if anything on the other foot: I find myself called on to make official statements on almost everything that happens in the world, from royal marriages to the possibility of human cloning!

I do my best to satisfy this demand with due respect for the decisions of the Security Council and General Assembly. But those bodies would find it very strange if on each occasion I sought their approval before opening my mouth!

Their members can, and do, take exception to some of my statements – and thank goodness they do. There must be freedom of speech for governments, as well as for international officials! But they do not question my right to make such statements, according to my own understanding of the purposes and principles of the United Nations as set out in the Charter.

No doubt Dag Hammarskjöld would also disagree with some of the specific positions I have taken. But I suspect he would envy me the discretion I enjoy in deciding what to say. And I have no doubt he would strongly endorse the principle that the Secretary-General must strive to make himself an authentic and independent voice of the international community.

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What he might not have foreseen is the way our concept of that community has developed in recent years. In his time it was essentially a community of separate nations or peoples, who for all practical purposes were represented by States.

So if we go back to the things about today's world that we would have to explain to him, if he unexpectedly joined us now, probably the most difficult for him to adjust to would be the sheer complexity of a world in which individuals and groups of all kinds are constantly interacting – across frontiers and across oceans, economically, socially and culturally – without expecting or receiving any permission, let alone assistance, from their national governments.

He might well find it difficult to identify the precise role, in such a world, of a body like the United Nations, whose Charter presupposes the division of the world into sovereign and equal States, and in which the peoples of the world are represented essentially by their governments.

He might find that difficult – and if so, he would not be alone! But I am

convinced he would relish the challenge. And I am sure he would not stray from his fundamental conviction that the essential task of the United Nations is to protect the weak against the strong.

In the long term, the vitality and viability of the Organization depend on its ability to perform that task, by adapting itself to changing realities. That, I believe, is the biggest test it faces in the new century.

How would Hammarskjöld approach that task?

First of all he would insist, quite correctly, that States are still the main holders of political authority in the world, and are likely to remain so. Indeed, the more democratic they become – the more genuinely representative of, and accountable to, their peoples – the greater also will be their political legitimacy. And therefore it is entirely proper, as well as inevitable, that they will remain the political masters of the United Nations.

He would also insist, I am sure, on the continuing responsibility of States to maintain international order – and, indeed, on their collective responsibility, which their leaders solemnly recognised in last year’s Millennium Declaration, ‘to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level.

And he might well say that, with a few honourable exceptions, the more fortunate countries in this world are not living up to that responsibility, so long as they do not fulfil their longstanding commitments to much higher levels of development assistance, to much more generous debt relief, and to duty- and quota-free access for exports from the least developed countries.

But then he would also see that his own lifetime coincided, in most countries, with the high watermark of State control over the lives of citizens. And he would see that States today generally tax and spend a smaller proportion of their citizens’ wealth than they did 40 years ago.

From this he might well conclude that we should not rely exclusively on State action to achieve our objectives on the international level, either.

A great deal, he would think, is likely to depend on non-State actors in the system – private companies, voluntary agencies or pressure groups, philanthropic foundations, universities and think tanks, and, of course, creative individuals.

And that thought would surely feed into his reflection on the role of the United Nations.

Can it confine itself, in the 21st century, to the role of coordinating action by States? Or should it reach out further?

Is it not obliged, in order to fulfil the purposes of the Charter, to form partnerships with all these different actors? To listen to them, to guide them, and to urge them on?

Above all, to provide a framework of shared values and understanding, within which their free and voluntary efforts can interact, and reinforce each other, instead of getting in each other's way?

Perhaps it is presumptuous of me to suggest that this would be part of Hammarskjöld's vision of the role of the United Nations in the 21st century – because it is, of course, my own vision.

No doubt if he were alive today he would offer us something nobler and more profound.

But I like to think, Ladies and Gentlemen, that what I have just described would find some place in it.



Photo: Mikael Wallerstedt

*Kofi Annan  
laying a wreath at the grave of Dag Hammarskjöld  
Uppsala Cemetery*

# Dag Hammarskjöld: A Leader in the Field of Culture

By Brian Urquhart

One of the most impressive, and unusual, features of Dag Hammarskjöld's way of life was the integration into one scheme of activity of all his interests and pursuits. As Barbara Hepworth put it, 'Dag Hammarskjöld had a pure and exact perception of aesthetic principles, as exact as it was over ethical and moral principles. I believe they were, to him, one and the same thing.' Literature, music, the visual arts, and nature were both his recreation and an important and sustaining part of his routine. They were the true companions of his bachelor life. They refreshed him and lightened the burden of his very public office. 'It is curious', he wrote after his visit to China in 1955, 'how experiences can suddenly fertilize each other. Subconsciously my reaction to the Peking landscape was certainly flavored by [Saint-John Perse's] *Anabase*. On the other hand, reading *Anabase* after having seen northern China, it is a new poem....'

Even at the most critical periods, Hammarskjöld made a point of finding time for his literary and artistic interests. Just before and during the period of the Congo crisis, which absorbed absolutely all the time and energy of the rest of us, he translated into Swedish Perse's *Chronique* and Djuna Barnes' extremely difficult play, *The Antiphon*, which premiered in Stockholm, published an article on Mount Everest with his own superb photographs, and kept up his correspondence with Barbara Hepworth. He also started on a translation of Martin Buber's *Ich und Du*, which he was actually working on during his fatal last flight. He evaded answering a journalist who asked him how he found time for all this extra-curricular activity. The point, I think, is that, for Hammarskjöld, it was *not* extra-curricular. It was very much a part of a perfectly balanced curriculum.

Hammarskjöld's wide and continuous reading was required for his work as a member of the committee of the Swedish Academy that awards the Nobel Prize for Literature, but it was a pleasure as well as a duty. He had strong and interesting views on writers both contemporary and classical, as well as on publishing. He was always ready to help and support writers, young or old, and it was through his initiative that Eugene O'Neill's dying wish was fulfilled – to have his last and unpublished play, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, first produced at the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm.

At the UN, Hammarskjöld particularly enjoyed walking round the headquarters and finding ways to improve its aesthetic quality, as well as the artists who might assist in this task. The pictures in his own office, mostly selected by him on loan from the Museum of Modern Art – Gris, Picasso, Feininger, Glarner, Matisse, Rouault, Delafresnaye, Braque, Leger, Helion

and others – made meetings there a particular pleasure. Hammarskjöld was responsible for acquiring, with the financial help of Thomas J. Watson, the moveable orchestral stage for the General Assembly Hall. He instituted the tradition of annual concerts on UN Day – concerts which had the largest worldwide broadcast audience in history. He devoted a great deal of time and attention to the programmes and other details of these concerts and was extraordinarily knowledgeable about music.

Hammarskjöld regarded as completely private the essential part of his life devoted to the arts. None of us at the time had any idea of the extent and variety of it. Nor did we know much of his love of nature, and the walks he delighted in, whether around Brewster in New York, where he had a weekend house, or along the shore in Skåne, or in the mountains of Lapland. His beautiful photographs are a lasting witness to his love of nature.

I am very glad that this hitherto rather neglected side of Dag Hammarskjöld's world is being opened up on this 40th anniversary, featuring three particular aspects of it. The striking personal integrity, as well as the demanding abstract forms of her sculpture, made Barbara Hepworth an inspiring friend and support in the travails of Hammarskjöld's last years. Her great memorial to him, *Single Form*, dominates the forecourt of the UN headquarters in New York. His relationship with the poet/diplomat, Saint-John Perse/Alexis Leger, is a perfect example of the integration in Hammarskjöld's life of literature and his public, political work.

Manuel Fröhlich's study on the Hammarskjöld–Hepworth correspondence is a striking new assessment of a great man and his impact, character and interests. Marie-Noëlle Little has contributed a splendid introduction to and overview of the Hammarskjöld–Perse(Leger) correspondence, which throws new light on both protagonists. Bengt Thelin, finally, has provided new and moving insights into the importance of nature in Hammarskjöld's life.



# A Fully Integrated Vision

## Politics and the Arts in the Dag Hammarskjöld– Barbara Hepworth Correspondence

By *Manuel Fröhlich*

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*One of the first things that the visitor to the United Nations headquarters sees is a bronze sculpture standing in the centre of the pool in front of the Secretariat building. This sculpture, Single Form, was made in 1961–64 by the British sculptor Barbara Hepworth as a memorial to Dag Hammarskjöld after his death at Ndola. The UN's choice of artist for the commission was in part based on Hepworth's international reputation: her own work had been widely exhibited and acclaimed; moreover, since the 1920s she had been centrally engaged in debates on abstract art and constructivism together with her friend Henry Moore and other leading artists. But the commission for the UN also came from a particular connection with the Secretary-General. An intermittent correspondence between Hammarskjöld and Hepworth from 1956 to 1961 focused on their shared quest for social, artistic and philosophical reconstruction in the aftermath of two devastating world wars; and it was Hammarskjöld who originally proposed having a Hepworth sculpture at the United Nations. Hammarskjöld's letters reflect his concern with literature and the arts generally, a perspective that sustained and supported his political work. Hepworth, for her part, repeatedly underlines the importance to her artistic inspiration of the political work undertaken by Hammarskjöld and the United Nations. The correspondence between these two outstanding and influential personalities reveals a fundamental engagement on the part of both politician and artist in what Hammarskjöld in one letter called the struggle between 'sub-human chaos and human creative order'.*

*Dr Manuel Fröhlich is Assistant Professor at the Department for Political Science, Christian-Albrechts-University Kiel. His main fields of research are international organisations, contemporary political philosophy and German politics. His dissertation on Dag Hammarskjöld und die Vereinten Nationen. Die politische Ethik des UNO-Generalsekretärs deals with the connection between Hammarskjöld's reflection of ethical questions and a number of the political and legal innovations in UN action and diplomacy, which he established as the special potential for international leadership inherent in the office of the UN Secretary-General.*

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In 1954 Dag Hammarskjöld was invited to speak at the 25th anniversary of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Selecting the UN Secretary-General to give an address on the subject of art may have seemed rather unconventional. But it was not the Museum that contacted Hammarskjöld first. He had asked the Museum if they would allow some works of art to be displayed on loan at the United Nations. The curator, Dorothy Miller, expected that the UN would leave the choice of works to the Museum.<sup>1</sup> To her surprise, the Secretary-General himself turned up at the Museum, personally chose various paintings and left the impression of being unusually informed in matters of modern art – hence the invitation to give the address. In his short speech, Hammarskjöld ventured to draw a parallel between modern art and modern politics, thus underlining that his perspective on art was not confined to a ‘private interest’. Hammarskjöld said: ‘In modern international politics – aiming toward that world of order which now more than ever seems to be the only alternative to disruption and disaster – we have to approach our task in the spirit which animates the modern artist. We have to tackle our problems without the armour of inherited convictions or set formulas, but only with our bare hands and all the honesty we can muster. And we have to do so with an unbreakable will to master the inert matter of patterns created by history and sociological conditions.’<sup>2</sup> This comparison between the artist and the politician could be read as a polite reference to the institution that had invited the Secretary-General. The draft of the speech however shows that Hammarskjöld – as with most of his speeches – had worked intensively and personally on the wording of his address. His interest in art as well as his conviction of its link with politics was genuine. He stressed that, to him, the two spheres were related and that ‘this parallel means a lot to me’.<sup>3</sup> Just how much it meant to him and what made up the special relationship between politics and art is best illustrated by the friendship that he developed with Barbara Hepworth.<sup>4</sup> Their correspondence is a remarkable testimony of the mutual influence of politics and art epitomised by the UN Secretary-General and the English sculptor.

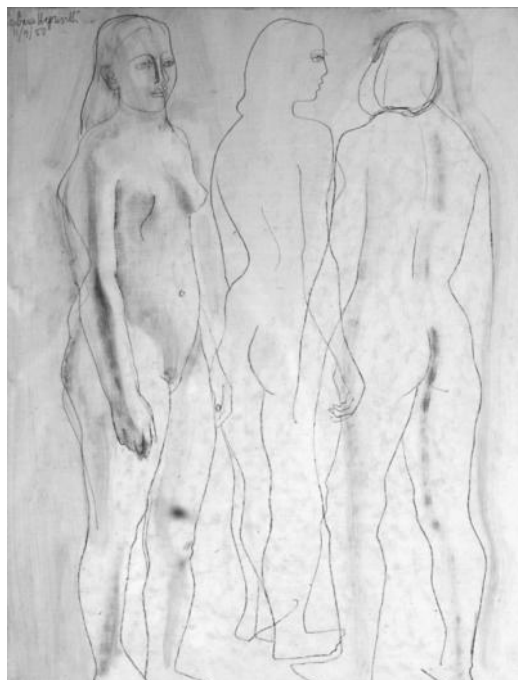
#### I.

Their contact was established in 1956 via J. R. M. Brumwell, an advertising director with a great interest in art who also was a close friend and supporter of Hepworth and Ben Nicholson. He visited Hammarskjöld at the United Nations on 25 October where they had lunch together. George Ivan Smith, head of the United Nations Centre in London with whom Hammarskjöld shared many artistic and literary interests, had brought them together. Inspired by the presence of the paintings on loan from the Museum of

Modern Art in the Secretary-General's office, Brumwell promised to look for 'a suitable piece of contemporary British sculpture'.<sup>5</sup> His choice fell on the work of Barbara Hepworth, which, he said 'would suit your office and your interest in contemporary art, and stand up to the Picasso'. Hepworth, for her part, must have strongly supported the idea because through Brumwell she sent a signed copy of a book on her work, as well as a catalogue from her exhibition at the Martha Jackson Gallery in New York at the time. Also through Brumwell, she proposed two carvings on attached photographs. Only *Antiphon* is directly named by her as being 'elegant as well as "supplicating"'. The agreement was, however, that Hammarskjöld should have his own choice if he could arrange to visit the exhibition at Jackson Gallery.<sup>6</sup> On 25 December Hammarskjöld informed Smith that he looked forward to choosing a work by Hepworth 'balancing the good paintings I am fortunate enough to have deposited here'.<sup>7</sup> On the same Christmas day he wrote to Brumwell and thanked him for his efforts: 'It is encouraging indeed at a time when all values seem to be shaken to see this quiet generosity in a field lifted above our day-to-day strife. I am sure that the work chosen will be a source of inspiration to all the many who come here, just as it will be a constant joy to me.'<sup>8</sup> The same day also marks the beginning of the Hammarskjöld–Hepworth correspondence with a letter from the Secretary-General to the artist.

Hammarskjöld and Smith went to the exhibition on 5 January 1957 and it was Smith who wrote to Brumwell that they discovered 'the perfect work for his [Hammarskjöld's] office':<sup>9</sup> 'It is the carving *Single Form*. The simplicity and beauty of line and balance are quite wonderful. The size of the carving and the colour of the wood could not be better.' It is interesting to note that *Single Form*, which Hepworth carved in 1937–38 from sandalwood, was not one of the two works she had originally proposed, and Smith writes that one of these (most probably *Antiphon*, which was over 7 feet tall) was too large for the office whereas the other (unnamed) carving was too small. At the exhibition Hammarskjöld also privately bought a drawing that Smith describes as 'a lovely set of figures' and which is Hepworth's *Group (Three views of a young girl)* of 1950. *Single Form* was first kept in Hammarskjöld's office and later transferred to the dining room suite of his New York apartment where the drawing also found a place in his library.<sup>10</sup>

Hammarskjöld and Hepworth personally met for the first time in early April 1958 on the occasion of Hammarskjöld's visit to London where just a few days before the beginning of his second term in office, he had given a speech before both houses of parliament. Again, it could have been



Group (Three views of a young girl).  
Oil and pencil, 1950.  
Backåkra

Photo: Thorsten Persson

George Ivan Smith who brought them together since a party organised by him is mentioned in the correspondence. Their next meeting took place in October 1959 in New York, where Barbara Hepworth had an exhibition at the Galerie Chalette. Hammarskjöld had invited her to dinner at his private apartment together with some other people, one of whom was the writer Djuna Barnes.<sup>11</sup> On the occasion of this visit, Hepworth offered *Single Form* as a gift to Hammarskjöld, who also visited her exhibition before she left New York. In Hammarskjöld's posthumously published spiritual diary *Markings* there is a poem entitled 'Single Form', written as early as 1958, obviously relating to Hepworth's work: 'The breaking wave / And the muscle as it contracts / Obey the same law. / An austere line / Gathers the body's play of strength / In a bold balance. / Shall my soul meet / This curve, as bend in the road / On her way to form?'<sup>12</sup> This kind of reflection on Hepworth's art once again shows how close their contact was. Moreover, the correspondence increasingly reveals that Hepworth for her part communicated with Hammarskjöld through her works and that she conceived the idea of doing something specially for him. There is also a reference to the UN Meditation room with whose furnishing and artistic ar-



Single Form.  
Sandal wood, 1937–38.  
Backåkra

Photo: Thorsten Persson

rangement Hammarskjöld had been personally involved in 1957.<sup>13</sup> The meaning and presence of the uncarved block in this room and its references to Chinese mysticism must have been appealing to Hepworth and it is not by accident that Herbert Read refers to the uncarved block in his introduction to her carvings and drawings.<sup>14</sup> Visitors to the Meditation Room are given a leaflet which contains a text by Hammarskjöld, in which once again his interest in art is evident: ‘However, there are simple things which speak to us all with the same language.... We may see it [the uncarved block] as an altar, empty not because there is no God, not because it is an altar to an unknown god, but because it is dedicated to the God whom man worships under many names and in many forms. The stone in the middle of

the room reminds us also of the firm and permanent in a world of movement and change. The block of iron ore has the weight and solidity of the everlasting. It is a reminder of that cornerstone of endurance and faith on which all human endeavour must be based.’<sup>15</sup>

## II.

This last line can serve as a starting point to explore further the relationship between the Secretary-General and the artist. Hammarskjöld held an integrative view of various social, philosophical, literary and artistic activities.<sup>16</sup> This integrative view is best illustrated by the wide scope of his projects and endeavours which point to aspects of his personality that went beyond Hammarskjöld the Secretary-General: Hammarskjöld the photographer,<sup>17</sup> whose pictures of Mount Everest together with an accompanying essay were published in the *National Geographic*.<sup>18</sup> Or Hammarskjöld the translator of contemporary literature and philosophy, whose work on Saint-John Perse’s *Chronique*,<sup>19</sup> Djuna Barnes’ *Antiphon*<sup>20</sup> or Martin Buber’s *Ich und Du* demonstrated, even for a Member of the Swedish Academy, an extraordinary concern for literature. But these various activities were no mere distraction for Hammarskjöld the politician. He himself called his literary activities (for which he tried to reserve one or two hours each day) ‘un complément indispensable’<sup>21</sup> to his political and diplomatic activities. In an interview after Perse had been proclaimed winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, Hammarskjöld stated: ‘N’oubliez pas non plus le genre de monde où nous vivons ici. Le problème de traduire, de transposer, d’exprimer les choses dans des langues différentes ne nous quitte jamais. Traduire, transposer, mais c’est notre existence quotidienne, permanente’ (‘Don’t forget, either, what kind of world we live in. The problem of translating, of transposing, of expressing things in different languages, never leaves us. Translating, transposing – this is what we do every day, all the time.’)<sup>22</sup> This relationship between politics and literature is also mentioned by O’Brien: ‘Mr. Hammarskjöld thought and felt as much about literature as he did about politics. He believed, with an almost mystical intensity of conviction, that the two fields were really one and required the same qualities.’<sup>23</sup> Urquhart comments: ‘As part of a general and continuous process of self-realisation, he developed standards of behaviour and religious feeling with great care and persistence. These religious and ethical standards were applied to everything he did, both private and public, so that there was an impressive consistency in his approach to all aspects of his life.’<sup>24</sup>

Apart from various references in his speeches, this relationship was ul-

timately revealed in the posthumous publication *Markings* in which Hammarskjöld the author not only showed his close acquaintance with a considerable body of world literature from the Middle Ages to the present but also wrote his own haikus, poems and prayers. In *Markings* there are a number of references dealing with Hammarskjöld's quest for common standards in different fields, for example an entry in 1956: 'A poem is like a deed in that it is to be judged as a manifestation of the personality of its maker. This in no way ignores its beauty as measured by aesthetic standards of perfection, but also considers its authenticity as measured by its congruence with an inner life.'<sup>25</sup> Writing on the requirement of personal humility in following one's calling in professional circumstances but also as a way of finding one's own way in life, Hammarskjöld on his birthday, 29 July 1959, states: 'To give to people, works, poetry, art, what the self can contribute, and to take, simply and freely, what belongs to it by reason of its identity.'<sup>26</sup> In such a perspective, literature, art or politics are ways of revealing the subtle link between individual and society, between thought and action or between inner and outer world, in order to discover what Hammarskjöld calls 'congruence with an inner life'. As different as the ultimate expression may be, the process in each field was governed, for Hammarskjöld, by similar rules of dedication, humility and integrity. In this context, the analysis of a political problem can draw from the expression of an artistic challenge and vice versa. In a similar vein Hammarskjöld's friend, the painter Bo Beskow, said: 'Dag often compared the problems in art and science with those he encountered in his own field of work – a moral and philosophical comparison.'<sup>27</sup> This, then, is also the background against which the relationship with Hepworth and their correspondence must be seen. With utmost clarity Hepworth herself expressed this connection on the occasion of the unveiling of *Single Form (Memorial)* in front of the UN building in 1964: 'Dag Hammarskjöld had a pure and exacting perception of aesthetic principles, as exact as it was over ethical and moral principles. I believe they were, to him, one and the same thing, and he asked of each of us the best we could give.'<sup>28</sup>

A *leitmotif* in approaching Hammarskjöld's perspective is the word 'integrity': 'Hammarskjöld often used "integrity", and it was the keynote of his own character – integrity in the sense not only of purity and honour but also of seeing life as a consistent whole, subject in all its parts to the same rules of conduct and standards of performance.'<sup>29</sup> In a speech at Johns Hopkins University he said: 'What is true in a life of action, like that of a politician or a diplomat, is true also in intellectual activities. Even a genius never achieves a lasting result in science without patience and hard work, just as in politics the results of the work of the most brilliant mind will ul-

timately find their value determined by character. Those who are called to be teachers or leaders may profit from intelligence but can only justify their position by integrity.<sup>30</sup> In this respect Hammar skjöld also perceived the problems of international politics as ones whose solution had to start at the individual level and required personal ethics that emphasised ‘integrity’.

A number of similarities exist between this view and Hepworth’s perspective on her own work and the process of carving. This is not the place for a detailed analysis of Hepworth’s artistic philosophy, which also underwent some transformations in the course of her life, but some observations seem to be in order. For Hepworth, carving was a creative process in which the integrity of the aesthetic idea had to be reconciled with the importance of being true to the material: ‘Before I can start carving the idea must be almost complete. I say “almost” because the really important thing seems to be the sculptor’s ability to let his intuition guide him over the gap between conception and realisation without compromising the integrity of the original idea; the point being that the material has vitality – it resists and makes demands.’<sup>31</sup> Hepworth believed in ‘direct carving’ in opposition to modelling the shapes in advance, but this did not mean that she let herself be overwhelmed by material demands – an approach she herself attributed to the influence of Jean Arp and others. She moved increasingly into abstract art and observed for instance that already in the 1930s her drawings of the landscape were not concerned with the exact reproduction of landscape but with the exploration of new ideas and forms for sculptures.<sup>32</sup> In this she was engaged in a quest to find a creative expression of a personal sensual experience. In her autobiography, she writes: ‘I think the very nature of art is affirmative, and in being so it reflects the laws and the evolution of the universe – both in power and rhythm of growth and structure as well as the infinitude of ideas which reveal themselves when one is in accord with the cosmos and the personality is then free to develop.’<sup>33</sup> In her recollections on ‘the excitement of discovering the nature of carving’, she speaks of ‘an understanding, almost a kind of persuasion, and above all greater coordination between head and hand’<sup>34</sup> which one had to aim for when approaching the material.

This attitude to the challenges facing the artist was exactly what Hammar skjöld had in mind when comparing art and politics in his speech at the Museum of Modern Art. Hepworth clearly articulates the importance of certain inner standards of humility, integrity and dedication as prerequisites to allow the creative process to take place. The closeness of her philosophy to Hammar skjöld’s becomes even clearer when one reads an entry





Single Form (Memorial).  
Bronze, 1962–63

© Alan Bowness, Hepworth Estate

in *Markings* from 1941/42 – again before the two had met: ‘The more faithfully you listen to the voice within you, the better you will hear what is sounding outside. And only he who listens can speak. Is this the starting point of the road towards the union of your two dreams – to be allowed in clarity of mind to mirror life and in purity of heart to mold it?’<sup>35</sup> The relationship between inner voice and surroundings for both Hammarskjöld and Hepworth had to do with another key concept that makes up a remarkable link between their attitudes, namely the meaning of ‘landscape’.

### III.

The relevance of ‘landscape’ for Barbara Hepworth is a recurrent theme in the critical writing on her work.<sup>36</sup> Time and again she herself pointed to the significance that landscape and its interaction with human beings had for

her as a sculptor. In a recollection of her childhood years, she remembers: 'Above all, there was the sensation of moving physically over the contours of fulnesses and concavities, through hollows and over peaks – feeling, touching, seeing, through mind and hand and eye. This sensation has never left me. I, the sculptor, *am* the landscape. I am the form and I am the hollow, the thrust and the contour.'<sup>37</sup> It was the landscape of Yorkshire that influenced her at that time and which stayed in her imaginative repertoire ever afterwards. Later on these impressions were broadened by various travels to Italy, France and Greece and ultimately were brought together with the overwhelming influence of Cornwall, the coastal region whose interplay of tidal movements and a rough countryside with Celtic stone formations particularly inspired her.

The notion of 'Single Forms' as realised for example in the aforementioned *Single Form* of 1937 for Hepworth was associated with 'the feeling of the magic of man in a landscape':<sup>38</sup> 'On the lonely hills a human figure has the vitality and the poignancy of all man's struggles in this universe.' This interaction of life and landscape, the tension between human beings and their surroundings, between art and nature (which for Hepworth meant also art placed in and thereby existing in nature) contained a unique capacity for creativity. Such an approach must have been appealing to Hammar-skjöld: in *Markings* there are numerous entries that not only show Hammar-skjöld as an exacting observer of the landscape and nature around him, but illustrate that in the impact of a particular landscape as outer world, he experienced a defining moment for the state of the inner world. Again it is 'congruence with an inner life' that comes to mind, something which for Hammar-skjöld as for Hepworth could only be expressed by a special kind of language, as Hammar-skjöld wrote in an entry of 1950: 'A line, a shade, a colour – their fiery expressiveness. / The language of flowers, mountains, shores, human bodies: the interplay of light and shade in a look, the aching beauty of a neckline, the white crocus on the alpine meadow in the morning sunshine – words in a transcendental language of the senses.'<sup>39</sup> So it is not pure coincidence that Hepworth in her autobiography showed herself aware of Hammar-skjöld's strong relationship with Sweden and the Swedish landscape. At the same time there is no direct reference to 'landscape' in the correspondence, which draws attention to the fact that the letters cannot convey the breadth of the discussions between them. In any case, for both, landscape had its significance as the mirror and sounding board for another key concept that both of them use with significant frequency: Life.

In her autobiography, Hepworth writes: 'In our present time, so governed



Barbara Hepworth 1903–1975

© Alan Bowness, Hepworth Estate

by fear of destruction, the artist senses more and more the energies and impulses which give life and are the affirmation of life. Perhaps by learning more and letting the microcosm reflect the macrocosm, a new way of life can be found which will allow the human spirit to develop and surmount fear.<sup>40</sup> Recalling the years after the second World War, she further explains: ‘At that time I was reading very extensively and I became concerned as to the true relationship of the artist and society. I remember expecting the major upheaval of war to change my outlook; but it seemed as though the worse the international scene became the more determined and passionate became my desire to find a full expression of the ideas which had germinated before the war broke out, retaining freedom to do so whilst carrying out what was demanded of me as a human being. I do not think this preoccupation with abstract forms was escapism; I see it as a consolidation of faith in living values, and a completely logical way of expressing the intrinsic ‘will to life’ as opposed to the extrinsic disaster of the World War.’<sup>41</sup> In this one can clearly see the social relevance of the quest for a new ‘language’ which Barbara Hepworth here links with the

‘will to life’, an expression that is reminiscent of Albert Schweitzer’s terminology in his ethical philosophy of culture.<sup>42</sup> Although there is no direct reference to Schweitzer here, it is interesting to note that Schweitzer’s thoughts on the meaning of life and cultural revitalisation after the end of the first World War heavily influenced Hammarskjöld. He in fact engaged in a correspondence with Schweitzer in which, among other things, he interpreted Schweitzer’s formula of ‘reverence for life’ as the basis for a new ideology of co-existence and mutual respect.<sup>43</sup> Again, the correspondence between Hammarskjöld and Hepworth has no explicit mention of Schweitzer but the similarity of ideas is obvious. The ethical mysticism that Schweitzer advocated was of tremendous importance to Hammarskjöld and this also probably paved the way for a similarity of thought with Hepworth. A quote from her autobiography can easily be compared to a further entry in *Markings*. Hepworth wrote: ‘Working realistically replenishes one’s love for life, humanity and the earth. Working abstractly seems to release one’s personality and sharpen perceptions, so that in the observation of life it is the wholeness or inner intention which moves one so profoundly: the components fall into place, the detail is significant of unity.’<sup>44</sup> And in 1959 Hammarskjöld writes: ‘To have humility is to experience reality, not in relation to ourselves, but in its sacred independence. It is to see, judge, and act from the point of rest in ourselves. Then, how much disappears, and all that remains falls into place. / In the point of rest at the centre of our being, we encounter a world where all things are at rest in the same way. Then a tree becomes a mystery, a cloud a revelation, each man a cosmos of whose riches we can only catch glimpses. The life of simplicity is simple, but it opens to us a book in which we never get beyond the first syllable.’<sup>45</sup>

#### IV.

The occupation with and concern for the concept of ‘life’ with direct or indirect reference to Schweitzer and other thinkers is also relevant in that it points to the fact that the topics and problems with which Hammarskjöld and Hepworth (born in 1905 and 1903) concerned themselves were embedded in the intellectual debates of a generation that searched for new foundations for society and culture in the aftermath of world wars. This generational debate was also a strong feature of the community of artists already working together in England in the 1930s: Naum Gabo, Walter Gropius, Piet Mondrian, Marcel Breuer and others.<sup>46</sup> Hepworth recalls: ‘[B]ecause of the dangers of totalitarianism and impending war, all of us worked the harder to lay strong foundations for the future through an understanding of the true relationship between architecture, painting and

sculpture.’<sup>47</sup> A direct product of this work for the future was *Circle*,<sup>48</sup> a publication in which some of these artists expressed their understanding of what they (to varying degrees) called Constructivism, and this was not only a discourse in which artists showed their attitudes to and differences from Cubism or Surrealism; it was a concept of art with a clear social ambition. Gabo, for example, interpreted the war as ‘a natural consequence of a disintegration which started long ago in the depths of previous civilisations’<sup>49</sup> and it was in this context that he and the artists represented in *Circle* saw the challenge and calling for art in their time. Hepworth did not want to be labelled a Constructivist but all the same shared some basic convictions of the group. In a letter to Herbert Read after the second World War, she writes: ‘[T]he emotional link is far greater now between society and the artist than at any time since the last war. . . . We are clear, quite clear about reconstruction but there is so much to be done – now . . . as you say – good art is always socially relevant and the art of the last 30 years has been GOOD and being a part of the revolution it must contain the seed of social change.’<sup>50</sup> So it is the need for reconstruction that characterises Hepworth’s understanding of the constructivist idea.

Again it is interesting to see how near these thoughts are to Albert Schweitzer’s *Kulturphilosophie* in which he shared the view that cultural degeneration was a pre-condition of the violent outbreak of the war. He called for spiritual reconstruction and saw his reverence for life as a cornerstone on which to build these new constructions. And this can easily be linked to Gabo, for whom the term ‘life’ is of major importance: ‘The constructive idea is not a programmatic one. It is not a technical scheme for an artistic manner, nor a rebellious demonstration of an artistic sect; it is a general concept of the world, or better, a spiritual state of a generation, an ideology caused by life, bound up with it and directed to influence its course.’<sup>51</sup> From this perspective Schweitzer, Gabo, Hepworth and Hammarskjöld reveal themselves as members of a generation with a common intellectual understanding and a similar inventory of concepts. Hammarskjöld in particular had a strong sense of being part of a generation faced with the task of ‘reconstruction’ – an attitude that not only emerged in his contact with Schweitzer or Martin Buber but also with John Steinbeck<sup>52</sup> and Djuna Barnes. In a letter introducing Steinbeck to Buber, Hammarskjöld wrote: ‘He [Steinbeck] is, as you will know, one of those observers of life in our generation, who feel that its survival will depend on our ability to know ourselves and to stick to basic human values with the will to pay what it may cost.’<sup>53</sup> It is in this context that Hammarskjöld, in a letter to Hepworth, alludes to Hermann Hesse’s book *Morgenlandfahrt* (‘The Journey to the East’) since this is the story of a spiritual brotherhood

sharing a similar faith and convictions and experiencing the desire to dedicate themselves and serve others in a common cause. The generational discourse (in which the Hammarskjöld–Hepworth correspondence has to be read) was substantiated for Hammarskjöld and maybe for other members of this generation by Henri Bergson’s philosophy of life and his model of organic growth in social relations.<sup>54</sup> But the sense of urgency with which they engaged in these matters derived from two sources: the catastrophe of the war and the acceleration of scientific progress – which for Hammarskjöld the Secretary General meant addressing (among other things) the peaceful use of atomic energy.

Both Hammarskjöld and Hepworth saw the development of the sciences as a profound force changing human and social life. In a letter from the early 1930s Hepworth writes: ‘I think there will be a new form of ethics – social & political – very *much* to the good & what we had hoped for – but the speed is out of proportion in the world of invention to the detriment of poetry & aesthetic vision.... I cannot see any hope of stopping this suicidal impulse unless Art & Science stand firm together.’<sup>55</sup> She further writes: ‘I regard the present era of flight and projection into space and time as a tremendous expansion of our sensibilities, and space sculpture and kinetic forms are an expression of it; but in order to appreciate this fully I think we must affirm some ancient stability – a stability which is inherent in land and rocks and trees, inherent in our capacity to stand and move and feel – in order to assess our true physiological responses to our poise in the landscape as well as to our position in space and time.’<sup>56</sup> Art, seen from this perspective, has a social role to play, namely that of stabilising and preserving a human scale in relation to the vast enlargement of scientific knowledge. For Gabo, too, one of the chief characteristics of the constructivist idea was its assertive and positive quality in the face of tremendous upheavals and negativism: ‘This does not mean that this idea consequently compels art to an immediate construction of material values in life; it is sufficient when art prepares a state of mind which will be able to construct, co-ordinate and perfect, instead of destroy, disintegrate and deteriorate.’<sup>57</sup> In this he also concurred with Hepworth, who contributed a section on ‘Sculpture’ in *Circle*. For Hepworth, as well as for Gabo, the artist had the task of affirming the existence of a world of thoughts and ideas challenging the overall negative ‘reality’ of social and political affairs in their time: ‘In his [the artist’s] rebellion he can take either of two courses – he can give way to despair and wildly try to overthrow all those things which seem to stand between the world as it appears to be and the world as it could be – or he can passionately affirm and re-affirm and demonstrate in his plastic medium his faith that this world of ideas exists. He can demonstrate con-

structively, believing that the plastic embodiment of a free idea – a universal truth of spiritual power – can do more, say more and be more vividly potent, because it puts no pressure on anything.<sup>58</sup> The social ambition of the constructivist idea for Hepworth therefore emerged quite clearly: ‘This is no escapism, no ivory tower, no isolated pleasure in proportion and space – it is an unconscious manner of expressing our belief in a possible life. The language of colour and form is universal and not one for a special class (though this may have been in the past) – it is a thought which gives the same life, the same expansion, the same universal freedom to everyone.’<sup>59</sup> It is in this context that Gale and Stephens conclude that just like Hammarskjöld ‘she sought a spiritual guidance and meaning for her work which could inform its political and social relevance’.<sup>60</sup>

The experiences of the second World War intensified these convictions. The war and the Holocaust underlined the cultural and spiritual degeneration that these artists had sensed. Hepworth wrote to Ben Nicholson, her second husband: ‘It is hopeless to presume that I, or anybody, thinks the same as in 1936, either about Art, Philosophy or Religion. You won’t have a friend who thinks the same after this war as they did before it.’<sup>61</sup> In this situation and also under the influence of Nicholson and his first wife, Hepworth’s outlook turned to a new perspective: ‘The experience of the Holocaust (Hepworth went to the cinema specifically to see reports from Belsen) altered the perception of the human body, and of the individual’s role within society, and brought Hepworth to a more rounded approach which she defined as religious.’<sup>62</sup> In a letter after the war, Hepworth wrote: ‘In Belsen I can find the heart of things which was missing for our Civilisation before the war. I don’t want to share in a crusade of only abstract qualities – but a crusade which is fully religious.’<sup>63</sup> In a further letter relating to the war experience she notes: ‘The world was already becoming civilised in some ways & we have been within an inch of all reality, all knowledge, all love & creative energy being exterminated for perhaps ever. In its place there would be a ghastly paganism & withering of the spirit too ugly to contemplate. One does not need to be in a concentration camp to imagine the murder, rape, lust, torture & lying which the Nazi & Fascist doctrine would impose upon the world.’<sup>64</sup> In this letter, in harsh words and images, she strongly advocates the death penalty for war criminals and concludes: ‘It seems clear to me that unless we fight like the devil for every human & creative value our sense cannot survive the cold power of a machine age.’<sup>65</sup>

These observations can be linked with the analysis of totalitarianism undertaken by another member of this generation – Hannah Arendt – and her plea

for the reconstruction of the very foundations of human and social relations by ‘thinking without banister’<sup>66</sup> and going back to classical times to find those forms of interaction that were eventually buried by the catastrophes of their age. Such thinking also underlies J. P. Hodin’s description of Hepworth’s work as a quest for a ‘new humanism’.<sup>67</sup> Hammarskjöld – most prominently in his contact with Buber and Schweitzer, but also in his reading of the medieval mystics – showed himself to be engaged in a similar endeavour. That he was inspired by similar motives to those of Hepworth and others in the same circle of artists is most clearly expressed in remarks that he made at the beginning of his second term of office when he spoke of his attitude towards his task: ‘It is not the facile faith of generations before us, who thought that everything was arranged for the best in the best of worlds or that physical and psychological development necessarily worked out toward something they called progress. It is in a sense a much harder belief – the belief that the future will be all right because there will always be enough people to fight for a decent future.... It is in a sense a switch from the atmosphere of pre-1914 to what I believe is the atmosphere of our generation in this time – a switch from the, so to say, mechanical optimism of previous generations to what I might call the fighting optimism of this present generation. We have learned it the hard way, and we will certainly have to learn it again and again and again.’<sup>68</sup> The closeness of the ideas of Hammarskjöld and Hepworth can be paralleled to the way she described the artistic influence which Nicholson had on her work: ‘It often happens that one can obtain special revelations through a similar idea in a different medium.’<sup>69</sup> This seems to be exactly what happened between Hammarskjöld and Hepworth in the ‘different media’ of politics and art. In this context, the enthusiastic way in which Hepworth spoke in her letters of the contact with Hammarskjöld can also be seen as ‘unique in breaking into [the] emotional isolation’<sup>70</sup> which Hepworth experienced after her divorce from Nicholson and the alteration within the community of artists at St. Ives.

## V.

Of course there are numerous differences between the two, not the least being that Hepworth as a mother of four children who was married twice also held a very conscious view on the specific feminine contribution to art. But when, in a letter of December 1959, she speaks of Hammarskjöld and his work as a ‘constant inspiration’ for her art, these are no mere words, because in Hammarskjöld she found a re-affirmation of many convictions (or ‘reassessment of values’ as she calls it in an October 1959 letter) that she had developed herself. And with the amendment to her will allowing Hammarskjöld to choose from her work, she underlines the sin-





Photo: Thorsten Persson

Hollow Form (Churinga III).  
Lignum vitae, 1960.  
Backåkra



© Alan Bowness, Hepworth Estate

Chûn Quoit.  
Bronze, 1961

cerity with which she saw their mutual understanding. Her ‘special carving’ was finally finished and, in view of the closeness of their ideas and attitudes, it is not that surprising to learn that in a visit to Hepworth’s exhibition in London 1961 (right after his Oxford Lecture on the ‘International Civil Servant’)<sup>71</sup> Hammarskjöld identified himself the carving *Churinga III* without any hint from Hepworth. Their mutual understanding is adequately described by Hammarskjöld who speaks of ‘beauty used as a road to some very fundamental experiences and, if I may say so, expressions of faith’.

After the death of Hammarskjöld, this special relationship between politics and art was manifested in Hepworth’s sculpture *Single Form (Memorial)* that was installed outside the Secretariat building in memory of Dag Hammarskjöld and his understanding of the United Nations.<sup>72</sup> Hammarskjöld had wanted a sculpture from Hepworth for the United Nations, but the idea had not been transformed into a concrete commission by the time of his death although they had already talked about possible forms.<sup>73</sup> Barbara Hepworth recalls: ‘*Bryher II* was really the beginning of the work.... We talked about the nature of the site, and about the kind of shapes he liked. I also made *Chûn Quoit* and the small walnut carving, *Single Form (September)*, with Dag in mind – we discussed our ideas together but hadn’t reached any conclusion.’<sup>74</sup> Hepworth further states that she probably would have given *Single Form (September)* to Hammarskjöld among other things because she was convinced that Hammarskjöld would have liked the wood of the sculpture. The air crash at Ndola, however, thwarted her plans: ‘[W]hen I heard of his [Hammarskjöld’s] death, in a kind of despair, I made the ten-foot high *Single Form (Memorial)*. This is the same theme as *September*, but the hole is moved over and now goes through the form. Memorial was made just to console myself, because I was so upset.’<sup>75</sup> It is interesting to note that the sculptures Hepworth mentions seem to echo the inspiration of her drawings *Sea Form* and *Incised Form (Granite)* – those very paintings Hammarskjöld had chosen for himself in the years before. At about the same time Ralph Bunche and Brian Urquhart, with the backing of the acting Secretary-General U Thant, approached Hepworth<sup>76</sup> and took up Hammarskjöld’s plans for the redesign of the pond in front of the UN building. From then on, an intense correspondence on the preparations for the instalment of the sculpture took place, involving not only Bunche (to whom Hepworth primarily related), but also Wallace K. Harrison and Max Abramowitz in their capacity as the architects of the UN building, E. A. van Name of the UN’s Maintenance and Engineering Section, the Blaustein<sup>77</sup> Foundation as sponsors of the project and, once again, George Ivan Smith.

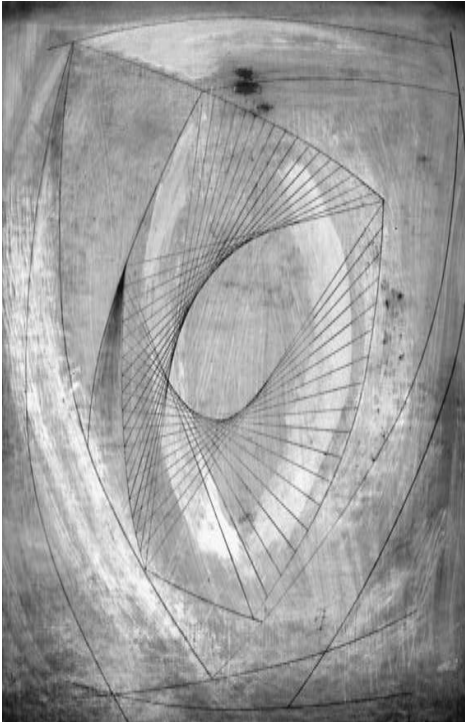
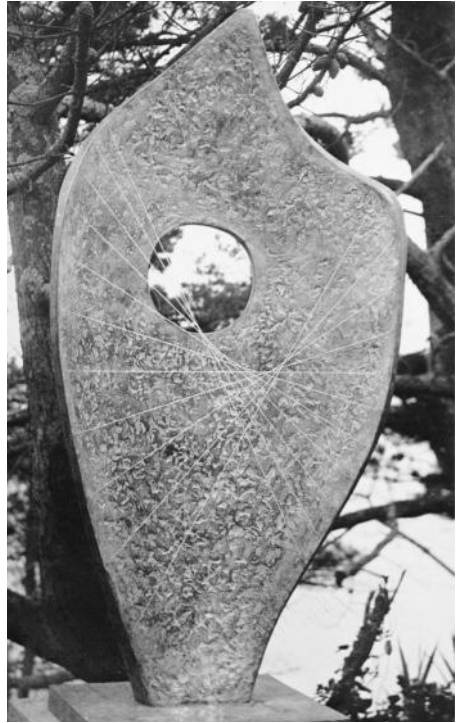


Photo: Thorsten Persson

Sea Form.  
Oil and pencil, 1959.  
Backåkra



© Alan Bowness, Hepworth Estate

Bryher II.  
Bronze, 1961

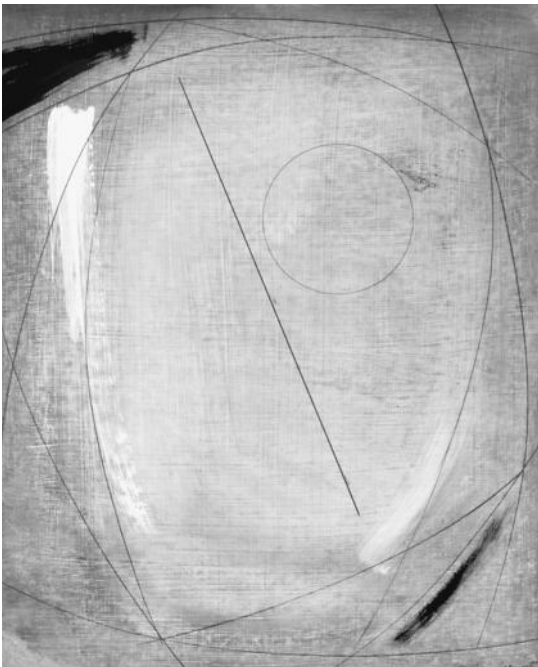


Photo: Thorsten Persson

Incised Form (Granite).  
Oil and pencil, 1960.  
Backåkra

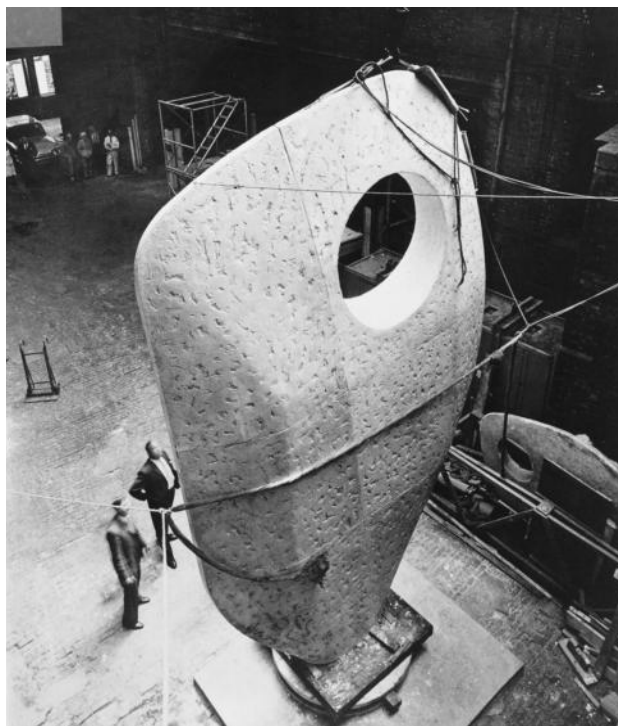


© Alan Bowness, Hepworth Estate

Single Form (September).  
Walnut, 1961

In the correspondence Hepworth not only deals with the more practical issues to do with the instalment – from thinking about possible weathering of the surface to determining the right height and taking statics into account. She also showed a very strong sense of dedication to the function of the sculpture as a memorial to Hammarskjöld. In a letter of November 1961 she writes to Bunche: ‘There is no work in the world which I would like better.’<sup>78</sup> In this spirit, she would not allow distraction from the creative process even if it was for the rather necessary purpose of coming to New York and taking a closer look at the actual surroundings which she only recalled from her brief visit in 1959. It was not until October 1962 that she came to New York. In a further letter to Bunche she explains: ‘The whole world situation seems so intensely difficult that, in this particular project so near to my heart, I could not bear any kind of contamination or blurring of the conception which must be the sort of work in the purest form which Dag Hammarskjöld would both have wished for and commanded.’<sup>79</sup> And a few weeks later: ‘Knowing how Dag was thinking about world ideas and about ideas in sculpture, when I last saw him in June last year, I feel that it is my duty to keep my ideas dedicated and untrammelled for the final work. I will meet and fulfil what is required of me; but I can only do it by being single-minded and by excluding any diversion.’<sup>80</sup> In other words, working on the memorial for a man whose quest for universal standards had so much impressed her, she meticulously tried to stick to those very standards.

The relevance of *Single Form (Memorial)* to her as an artist is abundantly expressed in a note to Bunche in 1962: ‘I think this sculpture I am doing is the best work I have ever done and I am very deeply absorbed in it.’<sup>81</sup> For Hepworth, apart from the position of the sculpture, the relation to the scale of human beings was of tremendous importance, as she writes to Bunche: ‘I feel that beyond twenty feet, a sculpture can become unrelated to human beings and become therefore decoration.’<sup>82</sup> And again, it is with a reference to Hammarskjöld that Hepworth underlines her argument: ‘He would have wanted true feeling – and would have rejected all that might veer towards the grandiose and pompous. He would have wished people to perceive, and feel, and be moved, by the intention in terms of sculpture.’<sup>83</sup> Asked by Alan Bowness if the sculpture in this way is not ‘dwarfed by the skyscraper environment’ around it, Hepworth answered: ‘Not at all. It’s the right scale for human beings to relate to. They’ve left behind enormous buildings, and now here’s this vast facade of glass, but the sculpture is still on a human scale. A person walking round can encompass it as part of their life. And when you look down on it from the 38th floor, it’s like an old friend standing there below. I don’t believe in heroic sculpture – I want to



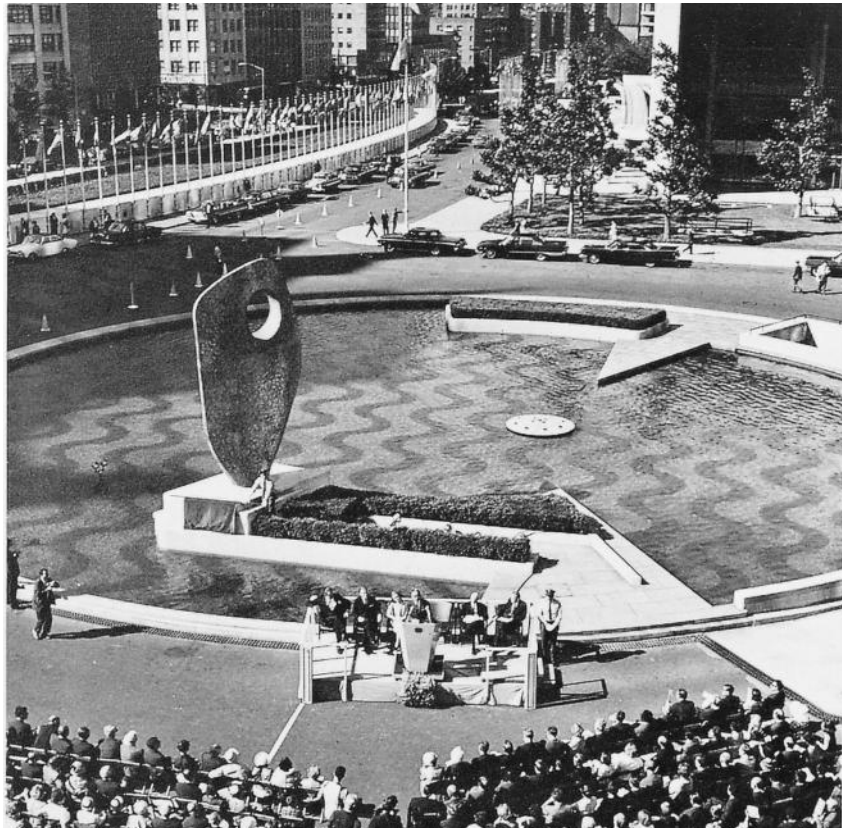
Working on *Single Form* (Memorial).

© Alan Bowness, Hepworth Estate

get the human relationship right. When I'm working big, what concerns me most is first the perspective in relation to the height of man – for we don't change, whatever else does – and then the movement which has to take place if you're going to look at it, and finally I like to try to give an emphasis of quietude and draw out what I hope is some poetry.'<sup>84</sup> Hepworth's statement reveals that many of the important motives for her work are integrated in this commission for the United Nations. At the unveiling ceremony, she spoke about the meaning and relation of compassion, courage and creativity for Hammarskjöld and then went on to say: 'The United Nations is our conscience. If it succeeds it is our success. If it fails, it is our failure. Throughout my work on *Single Form* I have kept in mind Dag Hammarskjöld's ideas of human and aesthetic ideology and have tried to perfect a symbol that would reflect the nobility of his life, and at the same time give us a motive and symbol of both continuity and solidarity for the future.'<sup>85</sup> These words tie in with a line in one of the last letters of the correspondence from October 1960 where Hammarskjöld – faced with the

thin line between possible success or failure in the Congo operation – spoke of ‘the present fight between sub-human chaos and human creative order’.

Speaking of the recognition which she saw expressed in the honour of becoming a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 1965, she wrote to Bunche: ‘Also, if the arts, in all new forms can be recognised as valid – then all other forms of new thinking (through UN) will be understood & become acceptable & part of our new life in the future?’<sup>86</sup> This brings us full circle to Hammarskjöld’s address at the Museum of Modern Art where he said: ‘Even in the political sphere we are likely to look to the creations



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The unveiling of Single Form (Memorial) in front of the UN, New York.

of the past with nostalgia. But we know that those creations can never be brought back to life, that ours is the duty to find new forms, starting often from nothing.<sup>87</sup> This, expressed in an analogy to the realm of art, is what Hammarskjöld saw as the meaning of the United Nations and his own efforts as Secretary-General: Paving the way for a new form of international cooperation in a world shaken by two world wars, threatened by atomic extinction, profoundly transformed by scientific progress and burdened by an atmosphere of mistrust that called for spiritual reconstruction.

## Notes

The author would like to thank various people without whose kind cooperation it would have been impossible to gather the material necessary for the following text and documents. The bulk of the correspondence is kept in the Dag Hammarskjöld collection (DHS) at the Royal Library in Stockholm where Jack Zawistowski offered invaluable help. Sir Alan Bowness, son-in-law of Barbara Hepworth and former director of the Tate Gallery made accessible two letters that had been missing in the Stockholm collection. He also generously gave permission for photographs of Hepworth's works to be reproduced. Sophie Bowness kindly contributed a number of beneficial suggestions on a first draft. Additional support came from Helen Simpson, curator at the New Art Centre at Roche Court. Last but not least, Marilla Guptil and Marleen Buelinckx of the United Nations Archives (UNA-DAG) provided much appreciated help in identifying additional material on the instalment of the Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial by Hepworth. The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation in the person of Olle Nordberg right from the beginning supported the project and together with Nils Hansell took special care for some of the photos printed here.

1. Cf. Lipsey, Roger, *An Art of Our Own. The Spiritual in Twentieth-Century Art*, Boston and London, 1997, p. 448.
2. Address at the Inauguration of the 25th Anniversary of the Museum of Modern Art 19.10.1954, in Cordier, Andrew W., and Foote, Wilder (eds), *Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations. Volume II: Dag Hammarskjöld 1953–1956*, New York and London, 1972, p. 375.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 374–375.
4. For Hepworth see Hepworth, Barbara, *Carvings and Drawings*. With an introduction by Herbert Read, London, 1952; Hodin, J. P., *Barbara Hepworth*, Neuchâtel, 1961; Hepworth, Barbara, *A Pictorial Autobiography*, London, 1993, as well as the conversation with Alan Bowness, in Bowness, Alan, (ed.), *The complete sculpture of Barbara Hepworth 1960–69*, London, 1971, pp. 7–16. In addition see Hammacher, A. M., *Barbara Hepworth*, London, revised ed. 1987; *Barbara Hepworth. Sculptures from the Estate*. Essay by Alan G. Wilkinson, New York, 1996; Curtis, Penelope, and Wilkinson, Alan G., *Barbara Hepworth. A Retrospective*, London, 1996; Gale, Matthew, and Stephens, Chris, *Barbara Hepworth. Works in the Tate Gallery Collection and the Barbara Hep-*

- worth Museum St. Ives, London, 1998, and Curtis, Penelope, *Barbara Hepworth*, London, 1998. The last three titles offer a number of references to Hammarskjöld, especially by Curtis. From the perspective of Hammarskjöld see also Urquhart, Brian, *Hammarskjöld* (1972), New York, 1994, pp. 42–43, and Lipsey, Roger, *op. cit.*, pp. 444–460.
5. Letter from J. R. M. Brumwell to Dag Hammarskjöld 05.12.1956 (DHS).
  6. Brumwell underlined that this offer to choose something from the exhibition was confined to the unsold pieces so that ‘the artist doesn’t miss a sale!’.
  7. Letter from Dag Hammarskjöld to George Ivan Smith 25.12.1956 (DHS).
  8. Letter from Dag Hammarskjöld to J. R. M. Brumwell 25.12.1956 (DHS).
  9. Letter from George Ivan Smith to J. R. M. Brumwell 10.01.1957 (DHS).
  10. Urquhart, Brian, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
  11. For the relationship with Barnes see Grace, Sherill E., ‘About a Tragic Business: The Djuna Barnes/Dag Hammarskjöld Letters’, in *Development Dialogue* 1987:2, pp. 91–117.
  12. Hammarskjöld, Dag, *Markings*. Translated from Swedish by W. H. Auden, New York, 1964, p. 171.
  13. See also Lipsey, Roger, *op. cit.*, pp. 449–456.
  14. Read, Herbert, in Hepworth, Barbara, *Carvings and Drawings*, *op. cit.*, p. xii.
  15. ‘A Room of Quiet’, in Cordier, Andrew W., and Foote, Wilder (eds), *Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations. Volume III: Dag Hammarskjöld 1956–1957*, New York and London 1973, pp. 710–711. In Hammarskjöld, Dag, *Markings*, *op. cit.*, p. 159, there is also a clear reference to the block in this year: ‘“The Uncarved Block” – remain at the Center, which is yours and that of all humanity. For those goals which it gives to your life, do the utmost which, at each moment, is possible for you. Also, act without thinking of the consequences, or seeking anything for yourself.’
  16. For this context see also Fröhlich, Manuel, *Dag Hammarskjöld und die Vereinten Nationen. Die politische Ethik des UNO-Generalsekretärs*. Paderborn et al., (forthcoming).
  17. Cf. ‘Landmarks. Photographs by Dag Hammarskjöld’, in *Development Dialogue* 1987:1, pp. 17–32.
  18. Cf. ‘A New Look at Everest’, article written for the *National Geographic*, January 1961, in Cordier, Andrew W., and Foote, Wilder (eds), *Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations. Volume V: Dag Hammarskjöld 1960–1961*, New York and London, 1975, pp. 298–304.
  19. In this context see Alexis Leger/Dag Hammarskjöld, *Correspondance 1955–1961*, textes réunies et présentés par Marie-Noëlle Little, Paris, 1993, and Sauvage, Leo, ‘M. Hammarskjöld quitte la séance de l’O.N.U. et nous parle des bienfaits de la Poésie en diplomatie’, in *Le Figaro Littéraire* 05.11.1960, pp. 1 and 5.
  20. Cf. Grace, Sherill E., *op. cit.*
  21. Cf. Sauvage, Leo, *Hammarskjöld*, *op. cit.*, p. 1.
  22. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
  23. Cf. O’Brien, Conor Cruise, ‘My case’, in *The Observer* 17.12.1961, p. 17.
  24. Urquhart, Brian, ‘The Point of Rest’, in *The New Yorker* 31.10.1964, p. 234.



25. Hammarskjöld, Dag, *Markings*, *op. cit.*, p. 128.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 174.
27. Beskow, Bo, *Dag Hammarskjöld: Strictly personal*, Garden City/New York, 1969, p. 72.
28. Manuscript of remarks by Barbara Hepworth at the unveiling ceremony 11.06.1964 (UNA DAG – 1/2.3 Box 321).
29. Urquhart, Brian, *Hammarskjöld*, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
30. 'International Service'. Address at Johns Hopkins University Commencement Exercises 14.06.1955, in Cordier, Andrew W., and Foote, Wilder (eds), *Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations. Volume II: Dag Hammarskjöld 1953–1956*, *op. cit.*, p. 507.
31. Hepworth, Barbara, 'Approach to Sculpture', in *The Studio CXXXII*, No. 643, October 1946, p. 98.
32. Hepworth, Barbara, *A Pictorial Autobiography*, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
34. Hepworth, Barbara, *Carvings and Drawings*, *op. cit.*, chapter 1.
35. Hammarskjöld, Dag, *Markings*, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
36. On this cf. Curtis, Penelope, 'The Landscape of Barbara Hepworth', in *The Sculpture Journal II*, 1998, pp. 106–112. Curtis also warns of over-emphasising this aspect in any explanation of Hepworth's work.
37. Hepworth, Barbara, *A Pictorial Autobiography*, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
39. Hammarskjöld, Dag, *Markings*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
40. Hepworth, Barbara, *A Pictorial Autobiography*, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
41. Hepworth, Barbara, *Carvings and Drawings*, *op. cit.*, chapter 4.
42. Cf. Schweitzer, Albert, *Kultur und Ethik: Kulturphilosophie*, Zwei Teile, München, 1923.
43. This is elaborated in detail in Fröhlich, Manuel, *op. cit.*
44. Hepworth, Barbara, *A Pictorial Autobiography*, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
45. Hammarskjöld, Dag, *Markings*, *op. cit.*, p. 174.
46. See the vivid account by Gardiner, Margret, *Barbara Hepworth. A Memoir*, London, 1982.
47. Hepworth, Barbara, *A Pictorial Autobiography*, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
48. Martin, John L., Nicholson, Ben, and Gabo, Naum, *Circle, International Survey of Constructive Art*, London, 1937.
49. Gabo, Naum, 'The Constructive Idea in Art', in Martin, John L., Nicholson, Ben, and Gabo, Naum (eds), *op. cit.*, p. 1.
50. Cited according to Curtis, Penelope, 'The artist in Post-War Britain', in Curtis, Penelope, and Wilkinson, Alan G., (eds), *Hepworth. A Retrospective*, *op. cit.*, p. 125.
51. Gabo, Naum, 'The Constructive Idea in Art', *op. cit.*, p. 6.
52. See Hovde, Carl F., 'The Dag Hammarskjöld–John Steinbeck Correspondence', in *Development Dialogue* 1997:1–2, pp. 97–122.
53. Letter from Dag Hammarskjöld to Martin Buber 05.09.1961 (DHS).
54. Bergson, Henri, *L'évolution créatrice*, Paris, 1909. In their understanding of creativity and organic growth Hammarskjöld and Hepworth clearly distinguish

- themselves from the potentially destructive and even racist implications that were derived from other notions of organic growth at the time. For a further appraisal of Hepworth's thought and her concern e.g. with psychoanalysis see the chapter 'Material sources and spiritual values' in Gale, Matthew, and Stephens, Chris, *op. cit.*, pp. 15–21.
55. Cited according to Gardiner, Margret, *Barbara Hepworth. A Memoir, op. cit.*, p. 28.
  56. Hepworth, Barbara, *Carvings and Drawings, op. cit.*, p. vii.
  57. Gabo, Naum, 'The Constructive Idea in Art', *op. cit.*, p. 9.
  58. Hepworth, Barbara, 'Sculpture', in Martin, John L., Nicholson, Ben, and Gabo, Naum (eds), *op. cit.*, p. 116.
  59. *Ibid.*, p. 116.
  60. Gale, Matthew, and Stephens, Chris, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
  61. Cited according to Curtis, Penelope, *Barbara Hepworth, op. cit.*, p. 16. See also Curtis, Penelope, 'The artist in Post-War Britain', in Curtis, Penelope, and Wilkinson, Alan G., *Barbara Hepworth. A Retrospective, op. cit.*, p. 125.
  62. Curtis, Penelope, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
  63. Letter after the war cited in Curtis, Penelope, 'The artist in Post-War Britain', *op. cit.*, p. 127. In *Circle* Nicholson had already expressed his belief that "painting" and "religious experience" are the same thing. It is a question of the perpetual motion of a right idea.' Nicholson, Ben, Quotation, in Martin, John L., Nicholson, Ben, and Gabo, Naum (eds), *Circle, International Survey of Constructive Art, Circle, op. cit.*, p. 75. See also Curtis, Penelope, *Barbara Hepworth, op. cit.*, p. 10.
  64. Cited according to Gardiner, Margret, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
  65. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
  66. Cf. Arendt, Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, New York, 1951. The quote is from a conversation with friends and colleagues in Toronto. See Arendt, Hannah, *Ich will verstehen*, edited by Ursula Ludz, München and Zürich, 1996, p. 110.
  67. Hodin, J.P., *op. cit.*, p. 17.
  68. Extemporaneous Remarks at UN Correspondents Association Luncheon in His Honor at the Beginning of His Second Term 09.04.1958, in Cordier, Andrew W. and Foote, Wilder (eds), *Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations. Volume IV: Dag Hammarskjöld 1958–1960*, New York and London, 1974, p. 64.
  69. Hepworth, Barbara, *Carvings and Drawings, op. cit.*, chapter 2.
  70. Curtis, Penelope, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
  71. 'The International Civil Servant in Law and in Fact.' Lecture delivered in Congregation at Oxford University 30.05.1961, in Cordier, Andrew W. and Foote, Wilder (eds), Volume IV, *op. cit.*, pp. 471–489.
  72. See also the remarks in the annex of Curtis, Penelope, and Wilkinson, Alan G., *Barbara Hepworth. A Retrospective, op. cit.*, p. 155.
  73. Hammarskjöld had also approached Henry Moore which later on resulted for a time in a 'delicate inter-relationship between the two' (Letter from George Ivan

Smith to C.V. Narasimhan and Ralph Bunche 08.06.1962 (UNA S–0292) – an aspect that can not be dealt with in detail here.

74. Hepworth, in Bowness, Alan (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 10.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
76. Cf. Urquhart, Brian, 'My century'. Radio Programme on Barbara Hepworth 'Single Form' 27.08.1999 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk>).
77. Blaustein served the American delegation at the UN in various capacities and, even after his appointment ended, met with Hammarskjöld for a number of informal talks. At one such meeting the issue of redesigning the area in front of the Secretariat building came up. Hammarskjöld, however, did not want to raise with Blaustein the possibility of his making a financial contribution in case he gave the impression of exploiting a friend. In March 1962 Ralph Bunche officially asked the Blaustein Foundation for financial support in realising Hammarskjöld's idea.
78. Letter from Barbara Hepworth to Ralph Bunche 23.11.1961 (UNA DAG – 1/2.3 Box 321).
79. Letter from Barbara Hepworth to Ralph Bunche 01.01.1962 (UNA DAG – 1/2.3 Box 321.)
80. Letter from Barbara Hepworth to Ralph Bunche 27.03.1962 (UNA DAG – 1/2.3 Box 321).
81. Letter from Barbara Hepworth to Ralph Bunche 24.01.1962 (UNA DAG – 1/2.3 Box 321).
82. Letter from Barbara Hepworth to Ralph Bunche 22.05.1962 (UNA DAG – 1/2.3 Box 321).
83. Letter from Barbara Hepworth to Ralph Bunche 19.06.1962 (UNA DAG – 1/2.3 Box 321).
84. Hepworth, in Bowness, Alan (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 11.
85. Hepworth, Barbara, *A Pictorial Autobiography*, *op. cit.*, p. 96.
86. Letter from Barbara Hepworth to Ralph Bunche 28.06.1965 (UNA DAG – 1/2.3 Box 321).
87. Hammarskjöld, Dag, Address 19.10.1954, *op. cit.*, p. 375.

# The Dag Hammarskjöld–Barbara Hepworth Letters

To Barbara Hepworth

Address: Miss Barbara Hepworth, Trewyn Studio, St. Ives, Cornwall, England

25 December 1956<sup>1</sup>

Dear Miss Hepworth,

Through Mr. Brumwell and Mr. George Ivan Smith I have had the great pleasure of receiving your offer of one of the works belonging to you as a loan to my office at the United Nations. It is most generous of you, and I can assure you that the offer is warmly appreciated indeed, and that it will give me a constant joy to have one of your works before my eyes. I think you would approve of the setting, not only in general terms but also more specifically: on the walls you find a very good Picasso, a good Gris, a Braque and a Leger.<sup>2</sup>

I wish to send you also my special thanks for the beautiful book<sup>3</sup> on your work which, with its inscription, will be a highly valued part of my library.

I hope that some time in England I may get an opportunity to visit you and to thank you personally. Or else, may we look forward to a visit by you in New York? It would give us great pleasure indeed.

Dag Hammarskjöld<sup>4</sup>

To Dag Hammarskjöld

Trewyn Studio, St. Ives, Cornwall, St. Ives 905

22 May 1958

Dear Mr. Hammarskjöld,

I wonder whether you would accept this small book<sup>5</sup> on my work – it was such a very great privilege, & inspiration, to be allowed to meet you last month – it is my only way of saying 'thank-you'.

My exhibition of new sculpture is on at Gimpel Fils, London, next week. I have two new wood sculptures, one in walnut, &<sup>6</sup> the other in yew,<sup>7</sup> which I should love to show you. It is too much to expect that you might have time when you are in London so I enclose a photograph of *Requiem*.

Thank you for the constant inspiration of your work.

Barbara Hepworth

Trewyn Studio  
St. Ives  
Cornwall  
St. Ives 905

Barbara Hepworth

May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1958

Dear Mr Hammarskjöld  
Wonder whether you would  
accept this small book on my work -  
it was such a very great privilege,  
& inspiration, to be allowed to  
meet you last month - it is  
my only way of saying 'thank-you'  
My exhibition of new sculpture  
is on at Gimpel Fibs, London,  
next week. I have two new  
wood sculptures, one in walnut, &  
the other in yew, which I should  
love to show you. It is too much  
to expect that you might have  
time when you are in London  
so I enclose a photograph of  
'Requiem'  
Thank you for the constant inspiration  
of your work. Barbara Hepworth

To Barbara Hepworth

Address: Miss Barbara Hepworth, Trewyn Studio, St. Ives, Cornwall, England.

12 June 1958

It was most kind of you to write to me and to send me the excellent little publication on your work. It is my hope that one day it will be possible for me to stay in England long enough for me to call on you in your studio. This time, as you know, I did not even get to London, and for that reason I could not drop in and have a look at your exhibition. I would like very much to see your new wooden sculptures.

It was a great pleasure to meet you when I was in London in early April. One of the sacrifices of public life is that one cannot always choose where to have one's dinner, and I was sorry, on that occasion, to miss George Ivan Smith's party.

With kind regards and renewed thanks,

Dag Hammarskjöld

To Dag Hammarskjöld

The Stanhope Hotel/as from Trewyn Studio, St. Ives, Cornwall, St. Ives 905

16 October 1959

Dear Dag Hammarskjöld

Thank you very much for the wonderful dinner party last night. It will always remain in my mind as a moment of great significance.

Meeting you has impelled within me a tremendous reassessment of values (as it did, to a lesser degree, when I met you at Lancaster House) & this re-valuation contains within itself the innate strength to correct & confirm my ideas & go forward with greater vitality.

I have tried to write to you for nearly two years to tell you how much we, as artists, all owe to you, & depend upon you for art itself as well as for our lives. Every morning when I listen to the news, & read the papers, what you are doing & saying & creating is the one 'reality' in a conflicting nightmare of unreality & disbelief.

In England the artists are deeply implicated because we are such a small & concentrated unit, & the impulse to create depends on the ability to resolve & establish what U.N. stands for as being an essential part of the true discipline of the creative imagination.

You have the fully integrated 'vision' which demonstrates the naturalness & beauty of the spirit of man which all of us, in varying degrees are striving to obtain by the unity of mind & imagination. These are halting words & I could only do better in the quietness of my studio, where I have, for a long time, thought of you and all you stand for, almost every day.

I could more easily express my thoughts by making you something. I have always wanted *Single Form* to be yours entirely [*Insertion: to give it to you*] but hesitated to speak as I do not know whether this is what you would even like.

An alternative idea would be to carve you a special object just for handling, a more personal sculpture done after my experiences here.

Do not hesitate to say if you do not like either of these ideas – I am quite detached. *Single Form* belongs to you in essence anyway; & I shall do you a small carving, also whether you see it or not!

With my sincere thanks

Yours ever

Barbara

To Barbara Hepworth; By Hand – Personal

Address: Miss Barbara Hepworth, Hotel The Stanhope, Fifth Avenue and 81<sup>st</sup> Street,  
New York 28, N.Y.

16 October 1959

Dear Barbara Hepworth,

I just received your kind letter. Its warmth and generosity and its whole spirit moved me deeply. Thank you!

Let me tell you what a pleasure you gave me, and us all, by being with us yesterday. What a pity you do not stay somewhat longer so that we could have that pleasure here again. Now we will look forward to a new visit or to seeing you in your home. In the meanwhile I will think of you and your work looking at the *Single Form* or at my 'girl'.<sup>8</sup>

How very kind of you to offer me *Single Form* as a gift or to make something for me 'to handle'. I would be happy for such a beautiful – and meaningful – gift. It is for you to decide; whatever you choose to do will make me very glad. But, needless to say, something you have wished to make 'for me', after your visit here would have a very special value.

You write very beautiful and very true words about the task of the artist in our world of today. You have sensed the kinship with what we try to do in our own field. I am proud that you wish to count us as members of your fraternity. Do you read German? If so I would like to send you Hermann Hesse's 'Morgenlandfahrt'.<sup>9</sup> If not I shall try to find an English translation. It contains the right comments to your feelings.

With deep gratitude and friendship.

Yours  
Dag Hammarskjöld

To Dag Hammarskjöld

The Stanhope Hotel, 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. at 81<sup>st</sup> St. N.Y. 28

17 October 1959

Dear Dag Hammarskjöld

Thank you for your most kind letter which I received last night. Alas: I cannot read German; but I would be very grateful indeed for an English translation of the book.

I look forward to making your sculpture & thank you for accepting the 'idea' of it. When you see it, eventually, the choice between it & *Single Form* must, I think, be yours?

I was deeply grateful for your letter

With every good wish

Barbara



SECRETARY-GENERAL

16 Oct. - 79.

Dear Barbara Hepworth,

I just received your kind letter. Its warmth and generosity and its whole spirit moved me deeply. Thank you!

Let me tell you what a pleasure you gave me, and us all, by being with us yesterday. What a pity you do not stay somewhat longer so that we could have that pleasure here again. Now we will look forward to a new visit or to seeing you in your home. In the meanwhile I will think of you and your work looking at the



To Dag Hammarskjöld

Trewyn Studio, St. Ives, Cornwall, St. Ives 905

21 October 1959

Dear Dag Hammarskjöld

I was so deeply touched by your kindness in coming to the Gallery<sup>10</sup> to say 'farewell' to me that I was utterly inarticulate. There was much that I wanted to say – & I said nothing; I do ask you to forgive me. I answered your wonderful letter of encouragement & friendship 'by return' in New York & I hope it reached you? I marked it 'special delivery' last Saturday morning, & thanked you for offering to send me the book.

I left the Gallery for Idlewild five minutes after you left & throughout the long journey to this remote place I regretted not being able to speak & thank you for visiting the Gallery & for getting one of my drawings.<sup>11</sup>

I had the feeling that perhaps you may prefer one of my 'blue' drawings<sup>12</sup> & want you to know that, when I do more of these, you must feel free to exchange the one you have if there is another which you prefer. This is a matter of great importance to me!

Part of me was left in New York & I am not yet re-orientated within my studio. [Insertion: I carried away from N.Y. (& have before me) a photograph of the Meditation Room,<sup>13</sup> a beautiful shuttle from Sicily & a fine small stone from Peru]

The flight through the night was such an amazing aesthetic experience, after a week of new inspiration, that now I know I must suffer the inevitable pains of assimilation. I came away with such a sense of the integrity at U.N., & so fortified by your friendship towards me, that now I can only hope that I can retain this quality of the macrocosm within this small workshop & invest my stones with a greater purity of idea.

I cannot thank you enough for those last minutes on Sunday evening – an unexpected moment of 'arrested time' which you invested with a special grace – & which for me has become a charge which I hope to fulfil.

To visit any part of Europe is to 'go home' as it were; but to visit USA is an entirely new experience & I have not, as yet, been able to define my thoughts outside U.N. & all the painters & sculptors I met.

I have ordered 'Antiphon'<sup>14</sup> & particularly enjoyed meeting Miss Barnes.

Thank you again for the wonderful encouragement & friendship you have given me.

Barbara

To Dag Hammarskjöld

Trewyn Studio, St Ives Cornwall

26 October 1959

Dear Dag Hammarskjöld

What I would most like to do – if you will allow me to do it – is to give you *Single Form*, & then also, at a later date, the small object which I hope to make. Only in this way can I express my thoughts & feel that everything is as it should be – so I do hope you can agree?

The flag was flying for U.N. yesterday, in bright sun against the sea.<sup>15</sup>  
Forgive the imposition of a third letter.  
With every good wish

Barbara

[Insertion: There is a new book just out 'La sculpture de ce siècle' by Michel Seuphor, edition Grifton, Neuchâtel,<sup>16</sup> which I think you would like.]

To Barbara Hepworth

Address: Miss Barbara Hepworth, Trewyn Studio, St. Ives, Cornwall, England

4 November 1959

Dear Barbara Hepworth,

The spirit which prompts your new and most generous offer of *Single Form*, in addition to what you say you want to make for me 'to handle', makes it easy for me to accept your great gift. I see it is a manifestation of your feeling of solidarity with what we try to do and as such *Single Form* will always be before our eyes here as an encouragement and with its message of friendship. I feel that its pure, strong integrity makes it singularly well fitted for that purpose. Thank you!

So far I have not found a translation of 'Morgenlandfahrt'. But I hope there is one because I know you would like that book.

I like your Seaforms painting<sup>17</sup> very much and would not wish to change it.

Especially one of your 'Blues' was very suggestive and lovely, but so is this one too! I am happy to have it. It will be in the same room as the 'Girl'.

With warm regards and deep gratitude,

DagHd.

To Dag Hammarskjöld

Trewyn Studio, St. Ives, Cornwall, St Ives 905

5 December 1959

Dear Dag Hammarskjöld

Your most kind letter was waiting for me here when I returned from my work in Paris.

Please forgive the delay in thanking you: I caught a 'flu' germ on my travels.

I was deeply grateful that you felt happy about *Single Form* becoming yours – & your acceptance of the 'idea' will flow into my new work as an encouragement & new inspiration.

The 'special' carving for you will be done at the crest of a spell of work: at the moment I am still finding my way again towards new ideas; but I have set up blocks of marble, wood & stone, & hope that very soon I shall be 'lost' in a new period of carving. At the right moment *your* sculpture will happen & form naturally.

I had a wonderful time in Paris<sup>18</sup> although it was very hard work. The big bronze<sup>19</sup> is now finished & will be set up in London early next year. It looked rather like a vast tiger in a cage in the foundry – but I hope that when it is sited the pure curves, rising up, will be revealed!

Later next year I will send you my new monograph.<sup>20</sup> I hope it will be published before my exhibition of new work at the Lienhard Gallery in Zurich.

I send you every good wish for Christmas & the New Year – and, through the daily papers and my radio will follow your work & your movements with a tremendous sense of gratitude. St. Ives is a small place; but the artists & writers here do, I know, think of you & your work each day. May I offer my own special thoughts for your own protection as well as for the growth & realisation in 1960 of all you stand for. With every good wish and thank you for your constant inspiration

Barbara

To Barbara Hepworth

Address: Miss Barbara Hepworth, St. Ives, Cornwall, England.

12 December 1959

I was happy to get your letter and to hear about your Paris work and your return to St. Ives. It was most kind of you to send me these greetings and good wishes.

I look forward with great interest to what may one day emerge as the 'special' carving. Again, how can I thank you for your wish to give us this further sign of your trust.

Next week I am off for a long trip to Africa. Although I shall have very little time at my disposal, I am sure that this broad confrontation with the world South of the Sahara will be very rewarding.

With renewed thanks and all good wishes,

Dag Hammarskjöld

To Dag Hammarskjöld

Trewyn Studio, St. Ives, Cornwall, St. Ives 905

25 September 1960

Dear Dag Hammarskjöld,

I have not dared to write to you because of the burden on your shoulders – now, at the worst moment I must write.

I have sent my lawyer a note to attach to my will so that if anything happened to me before I make a sculpture which I feel is 'right' to offer you, you can have a choice from all my remaining works.

All this sounds absurd at such a moment in 'time' – & yet it is because of this anguish that I write. Almost everybody I meet is completely aware of the fact that you are the only living person both able, & willing to help humanity – everywhere the gratitude for this, & for your strength is profound. Because of the anguish, perhaps, there is something in my work that you may not like. I just don't know – but, so far, the form I had envisaged in those far-off days when I had dinner with you last November, has not matured. [Insertion: The living creative imagination of man, this mature compassion must transcend the material powers?]

I am sending you my large catalogue (30 plates) of my Zurich Exhibition<sup>21</sup> which opens on October 4th. If you ever have time tell me what you think.

You are in all our thoughts – every day. My sincere thoughts for your health & the fulfilment of your ideas. I leave for Zurich to-morrow.

Barbara Hepworth

To Barbara Hepworth

Address: Mrs. Barbara Hepworth, Trewyn Studio, St. Ives, Cornwall, England

15 October 1960

Dear Barbara Hepworth,

Although I have not the time to sit down and write you the letter I would like to write in reply to your kind lines of 25 September and the beautiful catalogue, I must send you now a word of warm and moved thanks. It did me no end of good to receive your greeting with all that it means of deep engagement and deep understanding. I am looking forward to seeing you again; in the meanwhile your *Single Form* stands as a sentinel, representing the integrity both of the artist and of this operation.<sup>22</sup>

I would like to look much more at your catalogue before I comment on it. However, I can tell you that my first impression is one of great beauty but also of an increasing sense of the drama of the present fight between sub-human chaos and human creative order.

*To Dag Hammarskjöld*

Trewyn Studio, St. Ives, Cornwall

11 May 1961

Dear Dag Hammarskjöld

I see that you will be in Oxford on May 30<sup>th</sup>.<sup>23</sup> My new exhibition opens on May 29<sup>th</sup> in London at Gimpel Fils. Is there any hope of seeing you? I have a sculpture you might like – at least I feel it is good & worthy as an offering.<sup>24</sup> Our thoughts have been with you daily during the trials & suffering of the last year.

Ever

Barbara Hepworth

*To Barbara Hepworth*

Address: Miss Barbara Hepworth, St. Ives, Cornwall, England.

20 May 1961

I am happy to have your lines of 11 May and I am most grateful for your generous offer. Naturally, I am terribly keen to see the sculpture you would like me to have; in fact, my question is whether the receiver will be worthy of the gift, not the other way around. If I manage to follow through on my plan to come for two days to England, I shall be very happy to drop in on the 31st and see all your work, including the one you have especially in mind.

Dag Hammarskjöld

*To Dag Hammarskjöld*

Cable 26 May 1961

4537NY UNATIONS/RC3/MM  
UWS2439 86  
STIVES CORNWALL 37 25 1132

LT

MR DAG HAMMARSKJOLD THE SECRETARY GENERAL UNITED NATIONS  
NEW YORK

MOST DELIGHTED STOP WILL BE AT GIMPEL FILS 50 SOUTH  
MOLTON STREET W1 STOP TELEPHONE NUMBER MAYFAIR 3720  
STOP FROM TEN OCLOCK TO THREE OCLOCK

BARBARA HEPWORTH

4537NY UNATIONS/SENT AT 11.13PMEST MM TU ++

*To Barbara Hepworth*

Address: Mrs. Barbara Hepworth, St. Ives, Cornwall, England.

3 June 1961

On my return I wish to send you a line in order to tell you how happy I am that I got a chance to drop in and see your extremely beautiful exhibition and, most of all, to meet you again.

It was a sunny moment, full of impressions of perfect beauty, but beauty used as a road to some very fundamental experiences and, if I may say so, expressions of faith. I long to have the extraordinary sculpture which you gave me with a generosity which would embarrass me if I did not know it for what it is, yet another outflow of the will and the hope for which you have found such a definite expression in your sculpture. And how splendidly the message of the sculpture is confirmed by the design which you added to your great gift!

But one small objection: I believe that all who have got to know your work would agree that you have managed to tell them what you want to convey many, many times more than 'the three or four times' to which you referred yourself.

I hope that your plans for a new exhibition in New York will come true, and that I shall have the great pleasure of seeing you here. In the meanwhile I promise you that we shall, for our part, continue as well as we can to model in action and words what you are so fortunate to express, to perfection, visibly and tangibly.

Dag Hammarskjöld

*To Barbara Hepworth*

Address: Miss Barbara Hepworth, St. Ives, Cornwall, England

7 July 1961

The other day, your beautiful painting<sup>25</sup> arrived. I do not know if one can say that a work of art cleans your soul and straightens out your will. But if that can be said – and understood – I would say it about your painting. Therefore, I have to send you, right away, my renewed thanks, expressing my gratitude this time, especially, for the impact that your painting has on me where it hangs, right ahead of me when I sit at my desk.

To Dag Hammarskjöld

Trewyn Studio, St. Ives, Cornwall, St. Ives 905

10 July 1961

Dear Dag Hammarskjöld

Thank you so very much for your two most kind letters & for what you say in them.

Your appreciation is an inspiration to me and your generous visit to my exhibition meant rather more than I can say. One has a tremendous need, as an artist, to see what one does through the eyes of somebody of immense integrity – and then by waiting quietly the inner spirit is both acknowledged & strengthened.

I cannot thank you adequately for giving me your time in this way & it was, of course, the greatest joy that you recognized *Churinga III* as being 'your sculpture'. I knew you would – when I was in my studio; but in the Gallery I was stricken by shyness.

Your sculpture leaves to-day in a specially made crate. When this letter is finished I will screw down the lid. In London, during the sudden heat, the *lignum vitae* reacted badly to the absence of humidity. I was terribly upset about it & I have re-worked the surfaces in an effort to restore the tactile qualities it had when I first finished it – when it was quite perfect. This is why there has been this delay in sending it to you.

Once more it is as perfect as I can make it; but I realise I must give in to the forces within the wood. It may crack more in New York air; but I think the forms are pure enough to survive any cracks or checking – & I feel that the vitality of the sculpture is not impaired.

I was so very happy to hear from you that the drawing wears well and I hope, so much, that you will always like the sculpture, & that it will find its place.

*Lignum vitae* is very heavy; but it is on a turntable so that it will not be static.

Thank you once more, for your inspiring visit which meant so much to me – & for the generous way in which you accepted my 'hommage' to the great work you are doing for the world & the truth of the ideas which inspire you.

Barbara Hepworth

To Barbara Hepworth

Address: Miss Barbara Hepworth, St. Ives, Cornwall, England

11 September 1961<sup>26</sup>

Dear Barbara Hepworth,

This is a report not on 'progress' but on success.

Your sculpture – as strong as it is moving – arrived safely. An inconspicuous base was made and it was placed where I had hoped that it would come into its own and, at the same time, give me daily and, indeed, hourly pleasure.

I have now had it before me a couple of weeks, living with it in all shades of light, both physically and mentally, and this is the report: it is a strong and exacting companion, but at the same time one of deep quiet and timeless perspective in inner space. You may react at the word exacting, but a work of great art sets its own standard of integrity and remains a continuous reminder of what should be achieved in everything.

So you hear that your gift gives me great joy of a kind which ultimately is of great help, whatever our specific task may be. I believe that this is what you wanted to achieve and, if so, you have indeed amply succeeded.

Once again, thank you for what you have done and for your daily contribution to our work.

Dag Hammarskjöld

## Notes

1. Hammarskjöld's letters were all sent from New York.
2. In 1954 Hammarskjöld was lent a number of paintings by the Museum of Modern Art. According to the archives of the Museum these were: Pablo Picasso's *Still life with a cake* (oil on canvas); Fernand Léger's *Woman combing her hair* (oil on canvas); Georges Rouault's *Landscape* (oil on canvas); Fritz Glarner's *Relational painting* (oil on canvas); Peter Blume's *The Boat* (oil on canvas); Lyonel Feininger's *Viaduct* (oil on canvas); Henri Matisse's *Gourds* (oil on canvas); and Jacques Gris' *Guitar and Pipe* (oil on canvas). The Museum also says that these paintings were given back in August 1954. Brian Urquhart recalls, in *Hammarskjöld* (1972), New York, 1994, p. 42, additional pieces by Delafresnaye, Helion, Braque and – apart from the Hepworth drawings – two by Jean-Jacques Morvans.
3. This was probably Hepworth, Barbara, *Carvings and Drawings*, with an introduction by Herbert Read, London, 1952. Unfortunately the book is not to be found in Hammarskjöld's private library at the Royal Library in Stockholm.
4. The originals in the Hepworth archive are all signed by Hammarskjöld with varying expressions of his gratitude, regard and friendship to Hepworth. In general, Hepworth's letters are handwritten whereas Hammarskjöld's – with some exceptions – are typed.
5. This could have been William Gibson's *Barbara Hepworth*, London, 1946, or the small book by A. M. Hammacher, also entitled *Barbara Hepworth*, Cologne, 1958, which appeared in the 'Modern Sculpture' series.
6. Hepworth often uses '&' or '+' instead of 'and'. The difference between the two signs can not always be clearly identified which is why they are generally taken as '&' in this edition.
7. This might be *Figure: 'Requiem'* which Hepworth made out of walnut in 1958, or *Figure: 'Nanjizal'* of the same year, which was also on display at Gimpel Fils.
8. This alludes to the drawing Hammarskjöld bought in 1957.
9. Hesse, Hermann, *Die Morgenlandfahrt*, Zürich, 1945.
10. In 1959 Barbara Hepworth exhibited at the Galerie Chalette, Madison Avenue, in New York.
11. This is *Sea Form* (oil and pencil, 1959).



12. During the 1950s Barbara Hepworth did a number of drawings with a dominant blue colour. See for example *Three reclining figures* (1951; Prussian Blue) or *Recumbent figures* (1951).
13. This was the UN meditation room.
14. This is Djuna Barnes' play, *Antiphon*, London, 1958. Urquhart had already pointed out, in *Hammarskjöld*, p. 43, that Barnes' play (which Hammarskjöld translated) bears the same name as the carving that Hepworth had offered him.
15. This reference remains somewhat unclear. 24 October is United Nations day.
16. This book (published in 1959) contains a section on 'Moore et Hepworth' (pp. 91–100) as well as a short biography of Barbara Hepworth, pp. 279–80.
17. See Note 11.
18. During 1959 Barbara Hepworth visited Paris to work on *Meridian*.
19. This is most probably *Meridian*, a huge bronze sculpture which Barbara Hepworth made on commission for an office block named 'State House' in London, between 1958 and 1960. It was unveiled in March 1960.
20. This probably alludes to the catalogue by Hodin who also wrote the introduction for the Lienhard Gallery exhibition.
21. This is the exhibition at the Galerie Charles Lienhard. The catalogue has an introduction by J.P. Hodin.
22. This was at the height of the collusion in the General Assembly of the course of the United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC).
23. Dag Hammarskjöld was in Oxford to receive an honorary degree. On this occasion he also gave his Lecture 'The International Civil Servant in Law and in Fact'.
24. This is *Churinga III* (*lignum vitae*).
25. This is the drawing *Incised form (Granite)* (oil and pencil, 1960).
26. The date entry on the original letter reads '11 Monday 1961'. The only Monday that fell on an 11th was 11 September 1961. Hammarskjöld left for his final trip to the Congo on 12 September 1961 so this is probably one of his very last letters before his death.

# Travellers in Two Worlds

Dag Hammarskjöld and Alexis Leger

By Marie-Noëlle Little

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Marie-Noëlle Little's French edition of the rich correspondence between Dag Hammarskjöld and the French poet and diplomat Alexis Leger (also known as Saint-John Perse) was published in Paris by Gallimard in 1993, in the *CAHIERS SAINT-JOHN PERSE*. On the cover, in very large letters, one can read *SAINT-JOHN PERSE*, with a much smaller subtitle, *CORRESPONDANCE AVEC DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD*. Not only is it possible that Hammarskjöld himself would not have noticed the difference, but it is safe to say that he probably would not have wanted it any other way. The writers he translated or wrote to always seemed to be the stars, not himself.

Did Hammarskjöld ever think that his personal letters would some day be translated, let alone published? He would have been quite surprised, indeed, had he seen *THE POET AND THE DIPLOMAT: THE CORRESPONDENCE OF DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD AND ALEXIS LEGER* (Syracuse University Press), the English edition of his correspondence with Saint-John Perse. This time, the title would certainly have caught his eye: Who was the poet? Who the diplomat? The date of its publication – 31 July 2001 – was just a few weeks before the 40th anniversary of Hammarskjöld's death. Coincidentally, 31 July was also the day he wrote his strongest letter to Alexis Leger, a very long and poignant one about the Tunisian crisis, centred on events in Bizerte in 1961.

The title of this article, 'Travellers in Two Worlds',<sup>1</sup> is also the title of the first chapter of the prologue to *THE POET AND THE DIPLOMAT*. It refers to the worlds of poetry and diplomacy, of course, but also to the strikingly different geographical areas in which Alexis Leger and Dag Hammarskjöld grew up. Alexis, born in 1887 in Pointe-à-Pitre, on the French West Indies island of Guadeloupe, spent his first 12 years there before moving to France, while Dag, born in 1905 in Jönköping, Sweden, spent most of his childhood and youth in Uppsala. The choice of this title also allows the author to include herself as a 'traveller' in their respective worlds, as well as in the two worlds of the French and English editions of their correspondence.

Marie-Noëlle Little is Professor of French at Utica College of Syracuse University in Utica, New York. She has also taught at Mount Holyoke College, Amherst College and the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, and prior to that at Indiana State University. She arrived in the United States in 1969 after completing her undergraduate studies at the French *École des Lettres* and the American University in Beirut, Lebanon.

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Choices seem, at times, to have lives of their own, like the one I made in the early 1970s, as a young graduate student at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, when I chose as the subject of my doctoral dissertation a comparison of the works of Saint-John Perse<sup>2</sup> and the Swedish poet Harry Martinson (who received the Nobel Prize shortly thereafter, in 1974).<sup>3</sup> That was the beginning of an intellectual journey lasting over a quarter of a century and taking me back to Sweden, the country where I was born (to French parents) and had spent the first 17 years of my life. In 1960, I was a student at Franska Skolan, the French school in Stockholm, when Nobel laureate Saint-John Perse visited there, as had Albert Camus a few years earlier. Both must have made lasting impressions on me, as I was to spend years reading *L'Étranger* with my students, and reading Saint-John Perse's poems and letters for my own research.

While working on my dissertation, I wrote to Saint-John Perse, but never had a chance to see him again, as he was already very ill. (He died in 1975.) Martinson, whom I had hoped to meet, was not well either, and died in 1978. Had I had the opportunity, I would have asked Perse if he had met Martinson while in Stockholm, and Martinson, if he had ever read Perse's poems.

What had started as a basic comparison of two poetic visions of the universe would soon develop into a fascinating adventure when I found that I was not the only traveller on this journey. Much to my surprise, I discovered that, some 20 years earlier, the Swedish poet Erik Lindegren had, within a few months, translated Perse's poem *Anabase* and written a libretto based upon Martinson's space odyssey *Aniara*. I also learned that the Swedish composer Karl-Birger Blomdahl, inspired by the same two poems, had composed the oratorio *Anabase* and the opera *Aniara*.<sup>4</sup> Then I thought the American poet Archibald MacLeish (who lived near Amherst, in Conway) was perhaps the real pioneer in the Perse–Martinson comparison, when I found at Smith College copies of Daniel Racine's dissertation on Saint-John Perse and Tord Hall's English translation of *Aniara*, both of which MacLeish had given to the college library. I immediately wrote to MacLeish, who replied that it was only a coincidence, offering me his best wishes as I embarked upon what he saw as quite a 'voyage'.

In 1975, while I was doing some research at Kungliga Biblioteket, the Royal Library in Stockholm, Karin Lindegren authorised me to read her late husband's uncatalogued correspondence in the Lindegren Collection. I didn't know, then, that the notes I scribbled about a few letters between Dag Hammarskjöld and Erik Lindegren (most of them dealing with Linde-



Photo: United Nations

Henri Hoppenot at the United Nations, 1952.



Photo: Saint-John Perse Archives

Alexis Leger at his desk in Washington, circa 1958.



Photo: Boris Engström/Pressens Bild

Karl-Birger Blomdahl (left) and Erik Lindegren in Stockholm, 1956.



Photo: United Nations

Dag Hammarskjöld at his desk in New York, May 1954.

gren's translations of Perse's poems) would some day give me an excellent research topic and lead to the publication of at least two books. A few years later, at the Saint-John Perse Foundation in Aix-en-Provence, France, after participating in a Colloquium on 'Saint-John Perse and the United States', I came across a few of Hammarskjöld's letters to Alexis Leger, which led me to return to Sweden in 1985 and 1986 to look for the rest of their correspondence. Little did I know then that I was embarking upon a new voyage that would last more than seven years, with several more trips to Stockholm and Aix-en-Provence, and one to the West Indies.

In Stockholm, I spent most of my time at the Royal Library, looking through boxes and files in the Dag Hammarskjöld Collection, with letters and documents all left in the same order in which they had been found in

Hammar skjöld's office at the United Nations and in his New York apartment.<sup>5</sup> In the course of my research, I made some unusual discoveries. After asking for a particular box, for example, and starting to unwrap its contents in the very quiet manuscript room, as if trying to unwrap candy in a movie theatre, much to my surprise, I found Hammar skjöld's first shoes. I came across other such memorabilia, most of them having been saved by his mother. There were many photo albums and other documents, all of them pertinent. They helped me understand Hammar skjöld's world before and during his years at the United Nations.

I can only regret not always having had the time to decipher some of Hammar skjöld's handwriting, and especially not being able to record the conversations I had with all the former colleagues, friends and relatives of Hammar skjöld I met. Halvar Sehlin, former director of Svenska Turistföreningen, the Swedish Touring Club, was a steady source of information and guidance, as he had known Hammar skjöld since the early 1940s. Another faithful guide was Peder Hammar skjöld, Dag's nephew (the son of his brother Åke), with whom I corresponded for years while working on the Gallimard edition and until his death in 1994. I also saw Dag's niece, Marlene (daughter of his brother Sten), who gave me permission to publish her uncle's correspondence. She, too, had been a student at Franska Skolan, and had met Saint-John Perse during his 1960 visit to our school.

Some of the most interesting letters I found in the Hammar skjöld Collection were the hundred or more from the Swedish painter Bo Beskow. I took a few copies along when I visited him for the first time in Mogata (south-west of Stockholm) in the summer of 1985. It was fascinating to hear him read aloud, after a quarter of a century, passages from letters he thought had long been lost. He also talked about other friends, and even read to me some of his letters from John Steinbeck.<sup>6</sup>

Bo Beskow and his wife Greta had both been very close to Hammar skjöld, and at times would still talk about him with great emotion. My visits to their home are among my best memories, and Bo's biography *Dag Hammar skjöld: Strictly Personal* has become a priceless reference over the years.

During one of my visits, when I mentioned my interest in *Anabase* and *Aniara*, Beskow surprised me with a copy of his illustrated edition of *Aniara*.<sup>7</sup> He autographed it, adding a few lines thanking me 'for having brought back good memories of a time with great men'. He was perhaps



Bo Beskow standing beside his portrait of Dag Hammarskjöld, at the United Nations, 1966.

Photo: United Nations

the one person who really *knew* Hammarskjöld, and more importantly, who understood him. Beskow was familiar with Hammarskjöld's world both at home in Sweden and in New York, where he spent a considerable amount of time while painting the fresco for the UN Meditation Room and the mural for the UN Library. He also did several portraits of Hammarskjöld, the first one just before his appointment as Secretary-General in 1953 and the last one, posthumously, in 1966, almost as opening and closure.

The Beskows and the Legers had met in Stockholm in 1960. Hammarskjöld, who could not leave New York, had asked Bo Beskow to replace him as their host, providing some relief from the more formal, official events surrounding the Nobel Prize ceremony. Beskow made their visit a

pleasant one, even inviting them to his studio to see his illustrations for *Chronique*, which Leger liked very much.<sup>8</sup> Beskow later corresponded with them, and a passage from one of his most poignant letters to Leger is quoted in the epilogue to *The Poet and the Diplomat*.

When Hammarskjöld died, Beskow felt he had lost not just a friend, but also a brother. There had always been a special bond between Beskow and the friend who so much reminded him of his youngest brother, also named Dag, who had drowned at the age of eight.

Some of Bo Beskow's childhood memories were, in a way, also mine and those of any child growing up in Sweden and reading the famous story books illustrated by his mother, Elsa Beskow. When I see his own production not only of paintings and stained-glass windows, but also of stories, children's books and illustrations, I wonder if he ever left that wonderful world of hers.<sup>9</sup> I recognise her characteristic *joie de vivre* in Bo's works, and in many of his photographs of a smiling and laughing Hammarskjöld.

As far as we know, Alexis Leger never went back to Guadeloupe, the island where he was born.<sup>10</sup> In a way, that journey was done much later, symbolically, by those of us who participated in the 1987 International Colloquium in Pointe-à-Pitre, celebrating Saint-John Perse's centennial. As significant as the colloquium, for many of us, was the chance to explore the island Alexis Leger had never really left in spirit. As indicated in the conference title, 'Antillanité et Universalité', his poetry was at the same time universal and very much rooted in the French Antilles, the islands of his childhood. The paper I presented, 'Saint-John Perse and Sweden', brought the correspondence between Alexis Leger and Dag Hammarskjöld to public notice for the first time. The highlight of the conference, for me, was to read aloud in the large conference auditorium the first few lines of Lindegren's translation of *Anabase*, in Swedish.

*Anabase* was Alexis Leger's first major poem, written in the Gobi desert when he was a young diplomat on his first major mission. Sent to Peking in 1917 to settle the Franco-Chinese crisis over French interests in T'ien-Tsin,<sup>11</sup> Leger remained in China until 1921.

*Anabase* was also Hammarskjöld's introduction to Alexis Leger's poetry, long before he ever met the poet. And Hammarskjöld had *Anabase* in mind during his first major diplomatic mission as Secretary-General, which took place in China in January 1955. He had been sent to Peking to negotiate the fate of 15 American airmen shot down over Korea. The success of this first



Photo: Saint-John Perse Archives

Alexis Leger in China, in front of the Buddhist temple of Tao-Yu, circa 1917.



Photo: Peder Hammarskjöld

Dag Hammarskjöld leaving a Ming tomb with Sir Humphrey Waldock and Chinese officials, Peking, January 1955.



Photo: Saint-John Perse Archives

Alexis Leger in Peking with Chinese officials, circa 1917.



Photo: Peder Hammarskjöld

Dag Hammarskjöld with Chinese officials, Peking, January 1955.

mission proved to be equally important for Hammarskjöld and for the United Nations, strengthening both his role as Secretary-General and the UN's role as a mediator.

That trip was also a literary journey for a Secretary-General who seldom travelled without books to read or translate. For Hammarskjöld, in fact, discovering China was like rediscovering *Anabase*. On 31 January he wrote to Uno Willers, secretary of the Nobel Prize Committee:

Apart from the sheer beauty of his poetry there is a kind of wild 'grandeur' in his vision which is more of our age than any other poetry I know of today. It is really the poetry of an 'anabasis' of mankind in a time of global conscience.

A few weeks earlier, Hammarskjöld had officially recommended Leger to Willers for the Nobel Prize.



‘Thanks to our mutual friend Monsieur Henri Hoppenot’, Hammarskjöld wrote in his first letter to Leger, ‘I have indirectly become acquainted with you already’. It was not mere coincidence that Hammarskjöld should mention Hoppenot, who in 1953, as chief of the French delegation at the United Nations, had recommended Hammarskjöld to Henry Cabot Lodge, chief of the US delegation, for the post of Secretary-General.

Hammarskjöld and Hoppenot had met in Paris in 1948, where Hammarskjöld was Sweden’s chief delegate to the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC). Hoppenot and Leger had met in London in 1912, and worked together in 1914 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris, to which Leger was to return after his time in China. From 1925 to 1932, Leger worked with Aristide Briand, and after Briand’s death, as *Secrétaire général* of an ever-changing Foreign Affairs ministry, often attending major events (the 1938 Munich Conference, for example).<sup>12</sup> In May 1940, Leger was abruptly and illegally dismissed by Foreign Affairs minister Paul Reynaud, and soon left France. Instead of joining de Gaulle in London, though, Leger chose the United States, and an exile that would last 17 years.

Leger arrived in New York on 14 July 1940, leaving behind his family and his diplomatic career. He settled in Washington, where he became a consultant at the Library of Congress. The post had been arranged by Archibald MacLeish, to whom Leger dedicated the first poem he wrote in the United States, *Exil*, in 1942. That same year Henri Hoppenot resigned from the Vichy government and was appointed by the French Committee of National Liberation to the French Military Mission to the United States. In 1943, he was appointed chief of the special delegation to the French Antilles.<sup>13</sup>

Ten years later, when Hammarskjöld arrived at the United Nations, Hoppenot was eager for the newly appointed Secretary-General to meet his friend the French poet-diplomat. Some of their most interesting discussions in Hammarskjöld’s office included literature, and especially Alexis Leger’s poems, reminding Hoppenot of his enthusiastic discussions with Leger when they were in Paris together. It is not surprising, then, that when Hammarskjöld and Leger finally met in 1955, it was at Hoppenot’s own home. During that visit, they probably talked about *Anabase*, and even China, where Hoppenot had lived and worked from 1933 to 1937. They may have talked about Leger’s chances of getting the Nobel Prize the following year, the French press having just revealed that Hammarskjöld was

2800 WOODLEY ROAD, N. W.  
WASHINGTON 8, D. C.

8 Nov. 55

Cher Monsieur

J'ai reçu de Stockholm, du compositeur Suédois Karl Birger Blomdahl, une lettre personnelle me demandant l'autorisation d'utiliser le texte français d'une de mes œuvres (ANABASE) pour une composition musicale en forme de cantate ou d'oratorio, avec orchestration symphonique, chœurs, solistes et récitants.

M. Blomdahl, que je ne connais pas, me, pour m'atteindre, d'une adresse qui n'est pas la mienne et qu'il n'a pu tenir, directement ou indirectement, que de vous : celle d'un lieu de villégiature, chez des amis, au Cape Cod,

supporting Leger's candidacy. Who would have guessed, back then, that it would be such a long and winding road to Stockholm, with many unexpected turns of events and a five-year vigil before the actual Nobel Prize ceremony?

d'où je vous ai écrit en Septembre dernier.  
 J'en conclus que je puis l'inclure, avec  
 Erik Lindegren, dans le cercle vivant du  
 Magicien dont j'ai déjà éprouvé la  
 mystérieuse bienveillance. C'est assez,  
 je tiens à vous le dire, pour que j'accorde  
 sans hésiter l'autorisation demandée.

Croyez, cher Monsieur, à toute  
 l'attentive et curieuse proutée que j'ouen  
 vers vous ma bien sincère reconnaissance.

Alexis St-Leger

Although Hammarskjöld was to remain an attentive guide along the way, it is fair to say that Erik Lindegren would be at the centre of things, always called upon, relied upon, and to whom both Hammarskjöld and Leger would write regularly. (Hammarskjöld's letters were mostly about the translation work itself, while the ones Leger wrote were mostly to ask



SECRETARY-GENERAL

21 Nov. - 55.

Dear Mr St Leger Leger,

Just a line of thanks for your kind letter of Nov. 16. I have sent the three volumes straight on to Mr. Lindgren and thank you, on his (and my own) behalf, most warmly for your kind assistance.

I wish with the greatest pleasure that I may have a chance of seeing you here, and I am looking forward to a word from you as soon as your plans are fixed.

With kind regards  
Yours sincerely

Dag Hammarskjöld

Saint-John Perse Archives

Lindgren to translate his poems.) It is to Lindgren that we owe *Jord, Vindar, Hav*, his translation of Perse's poems, in 1956, and 'La Thématique d'Amers' (a translation of Leger's interpretation of his poem *Amers*) in *Bonniers Litterära Magasin*, in 1959. Lindgren was like Hammarskjöld's personal 'ambassador' in Sweden, defending Saint-John Perse, 'le vieux

maître' (the old master), and introducing his poems to the Swedish Academy and the Swedish public. Erik Lindegren's reward finally came when the Swedish Academy chose him to fill the seat left vacant by Hammarskjöld in 1961.

On 4 March 1960, Leger wrote to Lindegren, asking if he would translate a new poem, *Chronique*.<sup>14</sup> Lindegren did start the translation, but was unable to continue because of poor health. Hammarskjöld took over and ended up doing most of it, despite his busy schedule, so it could be sent to the Nobel Committee in time for their deliberations. He sent it out on 8 August, the very day the Security Council demanded the withdrawal of Belgian troops from Katanga. This seemed significant to Hammarskjöld, who always thought literature was at least as important as the international crises he was facing, and specifically that Leger's poetry profoundly reflected the current state of the world. On 23 August, he wrote to Leger:

Even though for now this translation should remain 'secret', I did circulate it among my colleagues at the Academy, although, very frankly, that interests me less than the fact that, as I wrote to the Academy's permanent secretary, your poem has expressed with a divinatory clarity my profound reactions as one of the actors in the great ongoing crisis.

Unfortunately, that very crisis in the Congo would later prevent Hammarskjöld from attending the Nobel Prize ceremony.

The bilingual edition of *Krönika* was published in December, just a few days before Leger's arrival in Stockholm. The Swedish press mentioned Hammarskjöld in connection with that publication, expressing surprise that under such circumstances he could have found the time to translate Leger's poem. Although some criticised the translation, others suggested that he might even be a poet himself.<sup>15</sup> Such an idea was not new to Hammarskjöld, who had already compared his role as Secretary-General with that of a poet in his speech on 'The Arms Race and Disarmament' in April 1958, after which he wrote to the friend who had inspired him:

I include a copy of an impromptu intervention by me the other day at the Security Council. Your ear will no doubt detect hints of great distress. It is, alas, the only kind of 'poem' at my disposal to express a deeply felt reaction. I have chosen the expression that you will find at the beginning, in quotation marks [to 'speak for man'], to help indi-

cate the ideal role of the Secretary-General, and I am sure you will find there an echo of the very proud phrase with which, in 'VENTS', you have defined your role as a poet.

He used a similar expression in his telegram congratulating Alexis Leger on being awarded the Nobel Prize: 'You speak to man about man: may you be heard and may the tribute you have received help open hearts to receive your message.'

Those two roles, and political events as well as literary ones (including, of course, the Nobel Prize), always seem to be interwoven in Hammarskjöld's letters, as if part of the same fabric. Working on difficult texts was very much a part of his daily life, but comments were often made regarding the complexity of many of them, as though he should only have directed his attention towards complex situations in the political arena. Certainly there were good reasons for his choices of texts to be translated and read, and there were often connections between those texts and current events.

Each crisis, it seems, was accompanied by a poem. In 1955, China (and particularly Peking) had reminded Hammarskjöld of *Anabase*. In August 1956, in the middle of the Suez crisis, it was a fragment of the poem *Amers* that inspired him:

What I hesitate to put on paper concerning my reactions to Étroits  
sont les Vaisseaux, I may have a chance to tell you when we meet.  
This great incantation has been a counterpoint to what I have had to  
deal with recently, maintaining a balance which we too easily lose  
without the firm hand and the open eye of great art.

Later in the fall, Hammarskjöld received a copy of the poem, which touched him 'as a breath of fresh air in a world of miasma and madness'. Then, in 1960, *Chronique* reflected events in the Congo, or *was* the Congo. Hammarskjöld even said that the poem influenced the decisions he made during that crisis.

It was a similar situation with his Swedish translation of *The Antiphon*, by Djuna Barnes. He had already started working on that play when *Chronique* came along in the summer of 1960, and finished it for the Stockholm premiere in February 1961.<sup>16</sup> Some members of the press again criticised the translation, while admitting that 'the task was overwhelming, almost like bringing order to the Congo'.<sup>17</sup>

To the ‘overwhelming task’ of the Congo would soon be added a new crisis, in Tunisia, and there, things seemed quite hopeless. ‘The result is that we are now witnesses to a tragedy that is not only Tunisia’s, or Bourguiba’s, but the tragedy of France and of the West’, Hammarskjöld wrote on 31 July, after the worst events in Bizerte. For him the situation was clear:

Now we have to face a very dangerous crisis of confidence, on three levels. There is a loss of confidence in the African world vis-à-vis France. Added to that, there is a crisis of confidence vis-à-vis the West in general. There is still a third crisis of confidence because the developments at the United Nations seem to demonstrate that if a rather powerful member of NATO follows a policy hostile to a small power, the small power can expect no help from the United Nations. I can’t rule out that a fourth crisis might be added if the African countries of the ex-French community were pressured into supporting the French policy on Bizerte. It would lead to a new rift in Africa that could further accentuate most of the existing divisions.

And he ended his long and poignant letter<sup>18</sup> with:

This time around, I have not found any encouragement or any way to escape towards a purer world by translating another *Chronique*, but how visionary your poem remains, assuming new perspectives with each new phase of development of the real crisis of Europe in our time.

In Leger’s letters, comments on such crises and other important events were often made in a poetic style.<sup>19</sup> The following passage from a letter of October 1956, for example, resembles scenes from *Anabase*:

This unbelievable sandstorm of the Suez crisis, which the political caravaneers have blundered into with so little foresight and so much confusion and irresolution, is surging too late under the arches of the UN.

Earlier that year, in March, Leger had described his first visit to ‘the arches of the UN’ with images from the sea, evocative of his poem *Amers*:

I have quite a vivid memory of your welcome in New York, and of going through the great Assembly room with you. I still hold to my ear that huge conch, beautifully structured, whose Nordic style I liked. (I forgot to ask you what those magnificent bronze-colored

ridges or inner ribs are made of, arched, there, like the gills or baleens of a Leviathan.) I think also of the seagulls I saw far below on the East River, from your very high floor.

On the other hand, it is not surprising that many of the passages about France were more sober, especially in 1957 when, after 17 years, Leger ended his exile:

France certainly has every right to be confident in its destiny. It is not her vitality that is at stake; far from it. It is simply the political coordination that is lacking, terribly lacking. And the country's commitment to its political life. Terrible also is the absence of Elder Statesmen, as well as of competent Younger Ones. But virtually everything is there, ready to receive the igniting spark. And the people always true to themselves, full of resources and of the rarest human qualities.

Passages about de Gaulle (for whom Leger felt no great affection) were even less likely to have poetic overtones. Most of the time, in fact, as in the following passage, he would not even mention de Gaulle by name:

However distressing the horrible degradation of our public life and its governmental expression may have been to me for a long time, or whatever leverage one could expect from a new regime for the strengthening of our foreign policy, I will never resign myself to the prospect of a dictatorship in France. I would rather renew, morally, the lease on my voluntary exile.

This was on 15 May 1958. Two weeks later, de Gaulle was appointed *Président du Conseil*, and in September of that year, he became the new President of France. On 30 September, Leger wrote:

And here we French are, under a monarchical regime masquerading as 'constitutional', for we were really faced with a 'charter granted from above', and the 'take-it-or-leave-it' vote on this specious document was really only a vote on one person, or on the immediate convenience of a certain system. I did not have to vote, thank God, as my primary residence is in America.

When Hammarskjöld met de Gaulle a year later, in August 1959, he described him as an enigma:

In one way he surprised me – by a kind of warm simplicity which was in no way immediately visible, but could be elicited by a refusal from my side to treat either him or myself as an official personality. In



everything he struck me as a very lonely man, far more used to listening to himself than to others. This left me with a great uncertainty regarding the extent to which I managed to get across to him what I wanted to say.

He also referred to a 'thin line of mutual human sympathy' which he sensed between them, not fully realising how unpredictable de Gaulle would prove to be later on. In the meantime, Hammarskjöld was very much aware that de Gaulle disapproved of UN intervention in colonial affairs, particularly in Africa. Hammarskjöld had taken up issues concerning Africa during his meeting with de Gaulle in Paris in July 1959. The role of the UN in assisting developing countries would be brought up again during de Gaulle's visit to the US in April 1960. On 1 March 1960, Hammarskjöld wrote to Leger:

The African development puts the international community to the test, and I worry at the thought of the lack of unity and the lack of vision which characterises the Western approach to this new continent. In the United Nations we have to fight against heavy political odds, and with very meager resources, to do the very minimum necessary and fervently requested by the African leaders. The ex-colonial powers look at us with disapproval, others with jealousy, and the result is the same in both cases.

For Hammarskjöld there were, in fact, two worlds: the 'third world' (especially Africa and Asia), and the West.<sup>20</sup> His desperate desire to unite these two worlds was his main reason for involving the Security Council in the Bizerte crisis.

It seems probable that de Gaulle assumed that with the support of the United States and Great Britain, one could avoid any decision from the Security Council. On this basis, he could say again that the United Nations is no good for anything, and he would have a chance to settle things as he pleased. Circumstances were such as to make me the guilty party by leading the Security Council to a decision. I did it, not to thwart this somewhat too simplistic plan, but to put an end to the meaningless slaughter that was erecting a wall between our world and the Afro-Asian world.

For Leger, retired from public life, the distinction was perhaps more personal. There was exile in 'the new world' and there was 'the old world' before exile, World War II having made a sharp division in his public as well as his private life. While Hammarskjöld was constantly facing the



Photo: Saint-John Perse Archives  
Alexis Leger at Monhegan Island, Maine, 1954.

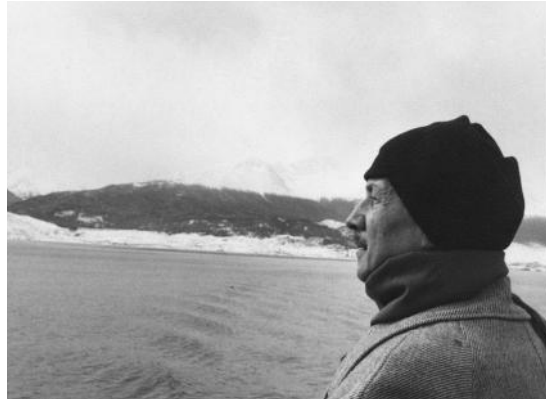


Photo: Saint-John Perse Archives  
Alexis Leger on his way to Cape Horn, 1960.



Photo: United Nations  
Dag Hammarskjöld on Sinai, 24 December 1958.



Photo: Gösta Lundquist/The Swedish Touring Club  
Hiking in the Sarec mountains.



Saint-John Perse Museum in Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe.

Photo: Marie-Noëlle Little

future, Leger was still coming to terms with the past – *his* past – but in a healthy way.

In exile, Leger found refuge in his poetry, and most of all in nature, which had been such an important part of his childhood. He became ‘the Linnaeus of poetry’, as Lindegren called him, a characteristic that must have attracted Hammarskjöld, too, as a fervent admirer of the Swedish naturalist. But then, wasn’t Hammarskjöld himself, in a way, the Linnaeus of diplomacy? One can, indeed, detect the strong influence of Linnaeus in some of Hammarskjöld’s articles, especially his publications for the Swedish Touring Club. The difference was that Hammarskjöld was particularly attracted to the mountains, while Leger, ‘son of the Atlantic’ (as he liked to call himself), was drawn to the sea.

It is not just a coincidence that their personal accounts of those two worlds can be found in posthumous publications. In 1961, the Swedish Touring Club published *Från Sarek till Haväng*, a collection of Hammarskjöld’s writings about Swedish nature (especially the mountains). In 1987, the year of the Saint-John Perse centennial, Gallimard published *Croisière aux îles Éoliennes*, a collection of detailed notes taken by Leger during a Mediterranean cruise around the Aolian islands in 1967.

In their two worlds, both men reached the limits: Hammarskjöld when he flew over the Himalayas in 1959, photographing Everest, Annapurna and



The Backåkra Museum.

Photo: Gunnar Harnesk/The Swedish Touring Club

Gauri Sankar, and Leger when he reached Cape Horn, ‘fulfilment of a very old dream that must have haunted your childhood as it did mine’ (as he wrote to Hammarskjöld from Tierra del Fuego on 7 April 1960). While both men have been pictured carrying cameras on their trips, Hammarskjöld was the more serious photographer. He had even written ‘Kameran kan lära dig att se’ (‘The camera has taught me to see’), an article for the Swedish magazine *Foto*, in 1958, and ‘A New Look at Everest’, an article with his photographs of the Himalayan peaks, for a 1961 *National Geographic*.<sup>21</sup>

‘You will soon need, in New York, the breath and patience of the Alpinist to handle Gurka’s ice pick on the slopes of the UN’, Leger had written to his friend in 1959, alluding to Sherpa Tenzing Norkay’s gift to Hammarskjöld after climbing Mount Everest with Sir Edmund Hillary. Leger had seen that ice pick on the mantelpiece in Hammarskjöld’s New York apartment, next to a mysterious little statue of an Egyptian god who is mentioned in many of their letters.

Those objects had been mentioned for the first time in a letter Leger wrote on the West Indian island of Nevis in March 1956, with the closing wish: ‘May the gods be with you, personally and at the helm that you hold in your hands!’. From then on, this eternal sailor would often wish his friend some respite on his ‘Swedish bluff’, and he always hoped that Hammar-

skjöld could someday visit him at the ‘Vigneaux’ on the Presqu’île de Giens, where another small statue was patiently waiting.

At that ‘farthest point of the French South’,<sup>22</sup> 40 years ago this September, a small flag at half-mast ‘on a rocky bluff’ showed the sorrow of an old French poet who had just lost his travelling companion.

## Notes

1. Adapted from *A Traveler in Two Worlds*, the autobiography of Maurice Hindus. Raised in a Byelorussian peasant village and, as a teenager, working on a small dairy farm in New York State, Hindus became a prize-winning author-lecturer-war correspondent who (like Hammarskjöld and Leger) always felt a profound connection with his native land and with his roots in the earth.
2. ‘Saint-John Perse’ (or ‘Perse’) is generally used for the poet and ‘Alexis Leger’ for the man himself, both poet and diplomat (who always made a distinction between his two roles and his two names, not to mention his various pseudonyms and nicknames).
3. Martinson shared the prize with the Swedish writer Eyvind Johnson.
4. I analysed Lindegren’s and Blomdahl’s works in a paper, ‘*Anabase*, oratorio de Karl-Birger Blomdahl, métamorphoses du texte mis en musique’ (‘metamorphoses of the text as set to music’), delivered at the International Conference ‘Saint-John Perse and the Arts’ in Washington DC in 1984, and later published in *Saint-John Perse et les Arts*, Minard, Paris, 1990, pp. 43–57.
5. The state of the collection is described in detail in Larry Trachtenberg’s ‘Bibliographic Essay on Dag Hammarskjöld’ in *Dag Hammarskjöld Revisited: The UN Secretary-General as a Force in World Politics*, Carolina Academic Press, Durham, NC, 1983.
6. See also ‘The Dag Hammarskjöld–John Steinbeck Correspondence’ by Carl F. Hovde in *Development Dialogue* 1997:1–2, pp. 97–129.
7. Bonniers, 1981.
8. When I saw those lithographs, I hoped to put together an illustrated edition of *Chronique*, but that project had to be abandoned when Beskow died in 1989.
9. I hope to write a biography of Bo Beskow, similar to Ingvar Holm’s book on Martinson: *Myter, Målningar, Motiv* (myths, paintings, motifs), which had inspired me in my comparison of Perse and Martinson.
10. My paper ‘Exile et promesses d’îles’ (exile [ex-isle] and promises of islands), delivered at the 1987 Saint-John Perse Colloquium in Aix-en-Provence, mentioned the possibility that Leger may have returned to Guadeloupe, or perhaps may at least have seen the island again from a distance.
11. T’ien-Tsin, a leading port in northern China, occupied in 1853 by the French and the British, had become a treaty port with foreign settlements and garrisons.
12. Details on those troubled years can be found in the recent publication of daily notes taken by Raymond de Sainte-Suzanne (Alexis Leger’s secretary) be-

- tween 1938 and 1940, *Une Politique Étrangère*, edited by Henriette and Philippe Levillain, Viviane Hamy, Paris, 2000.
13. He was then replacing Admiral Georges Robert (my great-uncle), who was High Commissioner of Martinique.
  14. Leger's letters to Lindegren can be found in an appendix to the Gallimard edition of the correspondence.
  15. 'Poeten H.' (H., the Poet) was one of the headlines in *Expressen* (5 December 1960).
  16. It is certainly not just a coincidence that the first two 1961 entries in his diary *Markings* are quotations from *Chronique* and *The Antiphon*.
  17. As quoted by Sherrill E. Grace in 'About a Tragic Business: The Djuna Barnes/Dag Hammarskjöld Letters' in *Development Dialogue* 1987:2; and as Sherrill Grace said, referring to the story line of the play and the events unfolding in the Congo, 'both "theatres" were deeply tragic', p. 95.
  18. That letter could almost be a chapter in a history book. More than fifteen years after first reading it, I can still feel its impact, and wonder if that wasn't, unconsciously, a determining factor in my deciding to work on the correspondence.
  19. That aspect itself made the translation of the letters into English a formidable task.
  20. 'Asia, Africa and the West' was the title of his May 1959 address at the University of Lund, Sweden.
  21. See *Development Dialogue* 1987:1, pp. 17–32.
  22. As Leger described the Presqu'île de Giens (and its 'rocky bluff') in his letter of 25 September 1957.

# Dag Hammarskjöld – Nature, Landscape, Literature

*By Bengt Thelin*

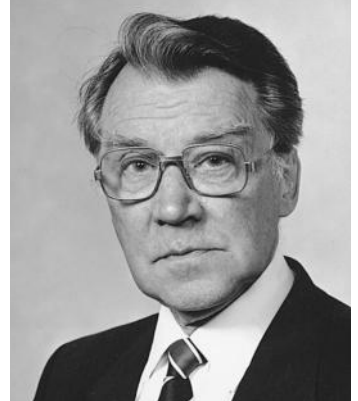
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*It is likely that most people who have read and learned about Dag Hammarskjöld are familiar with his interest in nature. When and how this interest – not to say love – arose and how it was nurtured is less known.*

*This short essay aims to throw some light on this matter, although, of course, with no illusion or pretension to give an exhaustive description and interpretation of this significant feature of Dag Hammarskjöld's rich personality. It simply presents some facts and findings from my newly published book in Swedish, Dag Hammarskjöld. Barn – Skolpojke – Student ('Dag Hammarskjöld. Child – Schoolboy – Student').*

*Bengt Thelin, Ph.D. and L.Th., started his career as a teacher and also worked at the Teacher Training College in Uppsala. From 1969 to 1989 he held a position as Director of Education at the Swedish National Board of Education. He has been a member of different committees at The Council of Europe, Unesco and the International Baccalaureate Organization in Geneva. Since retirement he is occupied by history research and free-lancing for some Swedish newspapers.*

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It is tempting to attribute a symbolic meaning to the fact that Dag Hammarskjöld grew up on a hill. Wide views from high hills and mountains were to form part of his feeling for nature and landscape all his life. Wide views were what he became used to, from his first conscious days. From the windows of the old castle, which was his home, he could gaze out over the old university town of Uppsala with its monumental buildings, its streets, squares and houses, and the River Fyris, still dividing the town into an academic and a more 'ordinary' part.

However, at the turn of the 19th century – before the small town with its 25,000–30,000 inhabitants had begun to grow outside its old boundaries – it was also possible, from the castle, to see a long way over the surrounding countryside with its farmyards and churches, fields, cattle and brooks. Town and countryside were close neighbours, so there were plenty of opportunities for walking in the country and observing nature – pastimes that had been popular since the time of Carl von Linné, the world-famous Swedish scientist. Such opportunities were highly appreciated by many students, among them the youngest son of the governor.



Uppsala Castle

Photo: Pressens Bild

### **The young biologist**

Castle Hill was also an ideal playground for Dag Hammarskjöld as a small boy, both in winter and summer. The first written indication I have found of the young Dag's interest in nature are some lines in a letter from his brother Åke who was eight years older than Dag and the second-eldest in a family of four boys, in which Dag was the youngest. Åke writes to his father about his little brother Dag, not yet six years old:

Dag has more than ever a passion for flowers and plants and knows a good deal about them. He is familiar with the Latin names of some of them, and sometimes shows off, using completely correct and relevant botanical terms. Every time he comes in from outside he brings with him one or more flowers, the names and peculiarities of which I have to relate to him. Afterwards he presses them and, when it is raining, he pastes them. It would be remarkable if he didn't become a biologist.

Another, somewhat later, example of Dag's interest in the minutiae of the natural world around him can be found in a letter from his mother Agnes to her husband Hjalmar. Seemingly with a sigh of resignation she writes: 'Dag has as usual practically nothing to do. He makes cages for strange larvae that he feeds with green stuff and picks up animals from ditches as always.' Mrs Hammarskjöld was probably wrong in her supposition that



Dag's collecting of all kinds of small creeping creatures was merely a result of idleness; it seems he was genuinely fascinated by beetles, butterflies and other insects.

Dag's interest in the natural sciences continued throughout his school years. In his final examination at grammar school he obtained the highest grades in biology – a distinction he also achieved in some ten other subjects. Although he did not become a biologist his remarkable knowledge and interest in botany and biology remained with him all his life, according to first-hand accounts of several of his friends.

Whether or not the physical environment in which he grew up was the dominant influence on him, it is clear that Dag Hammarskjöld was greatly attracted by free and open landscapes and that these stimulated his intellectual capacity and his existential reflections. His tendency to mystic and religious meditation, bordering on pantheism, hints of which can be glimpsed in his secret diary *Markings* published two years after his death, are discernible quite early in his life. Hammarskjöld, who was a great admirer of Carl von Linnæus, made a speech about him in the Swedish Academy in 1957 – on the 250th anniversary of Linnæus' birth – that revealed the depth of his knowledge about the man and his work. I think Linnæus' well-known words that 'in nature we can, so to say, see God on his back' accords well with Hammarskjöld's own view.<sup>1</sup>

## **The mountains**

As a young student, Dag Hammarskjöld was fascinated by the mountains in the northern parts of Sweden and Norway. In this respect his father had undoubtedly been an important influence. Hjalmar Hammarskjöld was an early member of the Swedish Touring Club (Svenska Turistföreningen, STF) and one of the people in the young tourist movement who as early as the 1890s climbed Åreskutan, a high mountain in the northern Swedish province of Jämtland. For many years during the 1910s and 1920s Hjalmar Hammarskjöld regularly used a tourist station in Jämtland, Storlien, as his autumn retreat for a few weeks' relaxation from his many official and private duties.

Dag's attraction to mountain landscapes can, to some degree, be seen as an inheritance from his father, although there were differences in their ways of experiencing and enjoying this beautiful but desolate part of nature. Dag was more enthusiastic than his father about long and physically demanding walks. Furthermore, for Dag, the mountains had strong religious and lyrical connotations, which does not seem to have been the case for Hjalmar.



Photo: Dag Hammarskjöld

Views from the mountains of the Swedish north (above and to the right).



Photo: Dag Hammarskjöld



Dag Hammarskjöld and his friend Per Olof Ekelöf raise the tent in the Swedish mountains.

It is true that the governor sometimes spent time in the mountains translating Latin American poetry into Swedish, but this was more or less a hobby, without any religious significance. Hjalmar could be characterised as a fairly traditional churchgoer, without the dimension of mysticism that we find in his youngest son. Dag's spiritual inclinations evidently owed more to the influence of his pious mother than to his father, although there are no indications that nature was specifically a subject of her religious reflections.

A contributory cause to Dag Hammarskjöld's lifelong fascination with the mountain landscape was his meeting in Åre with two students of his own age from Uppsala. With them he evidently experienced the beauty of the mountains in an almost romantic way, with a lasting friendship as a consequence. Friendship was another more-or-less holy thing for Dag Hammarskjöld and a fairly frequent subject in his correspondence as a young man. One of the authors often referred to in Dag's letters was the American philosopher Ralph Emerson, who wrote extensively about friendship.

## **Coast and sea**

It was not only the mountains that Dag Hammarskjöld learned to appreciate. In addition to Castle Hill, Uppsala, and its environs, he became familiar from early childhood with several places in the southern parts of Sweden. Almost every summer he spent some weeks, together with his mother and his brothers, on the West coast or in the southern province of Skåne, learning a great deal not only about the coastal flora and fauna but also about the culture and population of this part of Sweden. As a young civil servant he went on a long cycling tour in these provinces. Like his father before him he joined the Swedish Touring Club in his youth, and later on also became vice chairman of its board. Apart from his membership of the Swedish Academy, this was the only commitment he kept up after leaving Sweden for the UN in 1953.

After his appointment as Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld had the idea of acquiring a summer house in Sweden as a retreat for the few times he would have the opportunity to be free from his duties in New York for a week or two. First he bought a cottage on the southeast coast of Skåne. Some years later he found an old farm in the vicinity and began to restore it so as to use it with the intention of living there for half of every year, after leaving the UN. His tragic death in September 1961 cut short this plan and he was never able to see his house in a restored state. In his will Hammarskjöld had decided that the farm, Backåkra, should be left to the Swedish



Backåkra

Photo: The Swedish Touring Club

Touring Club. It is now a popular museum containing objects of different kinds – art, books, gifts and personal belongings, reminders of his life and his work. The old farm and the beautiful, peaceful landscape – with its gentle hills, and the sea in the distance – provide a dignified and tasteful memory of the statesman Dag Hammarskjöld, lover of nature and beauty.

## **The letters**

To the above glimpses of Dag Hammarskjöld's interest in nature and landscape I would like to add some quotations from the letters he wrote to one of his best friends, Rutger Moll. In 1930, on returning from a holiday in the mountains – and envying Rutger, who was on his way to the mountains – he writes:

I am longing to drown in the silence and light of the mountain moors.... My intense yearning is indeed very painful. Can there be anything so edifying, in the deepest sense of the word, as a night spent in the high mountains? When one feels the ancient stillness of



The southern coast of Sweden.

Photo: Dag Hammarskjöld

the earth as much more real than the unrest of mankind. A stillness where all our sounds are drowned 'in thousands of silences' as Bertil Ekman puts it.<sup>2</sup> And so the days: Sun and wind with a fragrance of snow. Limpid air streaming as cold as the water from a brook sweeping through one's fingers. Mile after mile of earth, to subdue by one's own strength. When in the mountains, I feel very young and as much a part of the present as the water in the brook, or the flowers. And yet in a way as old as the earth itself.

On another occasion on leaving Stockholm for the mountains he writes:

... the freedom from people is like a foretaste of heaven... Of course, that old fervour for the horizon is playing with me. The fever at that clear, controlled line that is the reason for my passion, which I have the greatest difficulty in restraining – a passion nourished by the flat

land but not satisfied until I see the *mountains*. I am just wondering if I can ever get Jan<sup>3</sup> to understand this religious worship of the wind, the light and the open spaces.

Dag occasionally went to the mountains in wintertime as well but there is no doubt that he preferred to be there in the summer. Here follow some lines from another letter to Rutger Moll (probably in 1933):

My most pleasant experience of the fells on skis is the descent from Skurdalshöjden,<sup>4</sup> which goes in one sweep in about 15 minutes or so. A sophisticated form of speed intoxication, but hardly an experience of the mountains in the way that I am used to seeing them. It is ridiculous but a fact that I am walking around here longing for the summer mountains. No doubt, the winter mountains here are very beautiful but the beauty is sterile in a strange sort of way, something like a view by moonlight. This winter environment creates in me an enormously strong feeling of estrangement. Especially at twilight everything is so ominous, in a way that gives me the impression that the mountains are turning away from me. As you know, a feeling of solidarity with nature is almost the most important thing for me during the mountain summer.

Having spent his first winter season in Stockholm, Dag (in the spring of 1931) makes a lyrical topographical comparison between the big city and the mountain landscape, a comparison in which he also reveals an element of weariness with civilisation. In a letter to Rutger Moll he writes:

This winter has taught me a peculiarity about myself. In Uppsala I mainly lived the life of the flat land and clouds. That led to my very special reaction to mountains, which we have sometimes talked about. Here in Stockholm I have realised how deeply rooted in my essence this attitude has become. I can be reconciled with the town only when I am able to see it as a product of nature. When, from Danvik's mountain,<sup>5</sup> I look down over the forest, the mountains, the water and the heaven, I see how they are all joined together around it [i.e. the city] and how human beings, the bravest creation of all, try to reshape the earth as proof [of our superiority]. At that moment the correct order of things is, as it were, restored. Earth raises us towards heaven here as in the mountains, and in our fragility we establish a small, small part of earth in order to protect ourselves against the cold and darkness. All this in some way reconciles me with the town. The streets are the creation of nature in the same way as the streams; the stony desert is an episode in nature's pure, joint reality, which is dependant on our work. In this way it loses its terrifying reality as Molech, the conqueror and soul murderer, the destroyer of life and nature.

The meditation site,  
Backåkra



Photo: The Swedish Touring Club

As for literature, one of Dag Hammarskjöld's favourite authors was Joseph Conrad (1857–1924). Conrad often takes his motifs from the hard life at sea and the struggle there against the elements, a struggle symbolising every individual human being's situation. It could be said that Conrad's fascination with the sea has its counterpart in Hammarskjöld's fascination with mountains. Wide open spaces, tempting and frightening, which challenge one to strive and achieve as well as to keep faith with others who take part in the same struggle.

However, Hammarskjöld also notes the difference. The mountain inspires hope more than the sea does. In a letter from Marstrand, a small town on the West coast, where he has just arrived from the mountains, he writes to Rutger Moll:

There isn't much to tell about this place. Of course, it is very beautiful here, enormously beautiful in fact – but at the same time dead in a strange sort of way. The contrast with Sylarna<sup>6</sup> is striking. Conrad's words, 'Who can truthfully say that he ever saw the sea young', are very true. The high mountain, on the other hand, represents permanent rebirth: the birth of rivers, the reshaping of the earth, the first conquering, growing power under the melting ice. This is the day of

tomorrow, with a striving towards goals, towards new destinies. Also, the heavens, which arch over the life of a mountain dweller, are clearer than they are over a fisherman on the open sea. The hardness of the sea is more ferocious than that of the mountains.

Let me conclude these glimpses and quotations of the lyrical and nature-loving young Dag Hammarskjöld with a more prosaic and practical entry from his own hand. We find it in an atlas of larvae and butterflies in the Backåkra library: 'Dag Hammarskjöld 1916, The Castle, Uppsala. The finder is requested to return this book to the address above.' – The owner, who cared for both nature and books, was 11 years old at the time.

#### Notes

1. E.g. that God reveals himself in nature in an 'indirect' way.
2. Bertil Ekman was a student and a poet from Uppsala who died very young during a hike in the Norwegian Alps.
3. Jan Waldenström, another of Dag's friends.
4. A mountain in the province of Jämtland.
5. A high cliff in Stockholm.
6. A high alpine area in the province of Jämtland.

The translation of the letters from Swedish to English is made by the author.



## Some Recent Publications of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation

**African Writers' Handbook**, edited by James Gibbs and Jack Mapanje. African Books Collective Ltd, Oxford, in association with the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, Oxford 1999. 432 pp. ISBN 0-9521269-6-6.

**Reimagining the future: towards democratic governance.** A report of the Global Governance Reform Project. Published by the Department of Politics, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia, 2000, in cooperation with Focus on the Global South, Bangkok, The Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research, Tokyo and Honolulu, and the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation. 101 pp. ISBN 0 646 39994 2.

**Seeding Solutions. Volume 1. Policy options for genetic resources: *People, Plants and Patents revisited***, co-published with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), Ottawa/Rome/Uppsala 2000, 121 pp. ISBN 91-85214-27-2. Also published in French and Spanish.

**Seeding Solutions. Volume 2. Options for national laws governing control over genetic resources and biological innovations**, co-published with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), Ottawa/Rome/Uppsala 2001, 243 pp. ISBN 91-85214-33-7.

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### Dag Hammarskjöld Lectures

**Human Rights: Challenges for the 21st Century**, the first Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture given by Mrs Mary Robinson, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Uppsala 1998, 31 pp. ISBN 91-85214-26-4.

**Between Sovereignty and Globalisation: Where does the United Nations fit in?** Lecture given by Sir Brian Urquhart, former Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs, United Nations, Uppsala 2000, 23 pp. ISBN 91-85214-28-0.

**The Nuclear Age – A Curse and a Challenge: The Role of Scientists.** Lecture given by Sir Joseph Rotblat, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 1995 and founder of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, Uppsala 2001, 31 pp. ISBN 91-85214-34-5.

**Dag Hammarskjöld and the 21st Century.** Lecture given by Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Uppsala 2001, 39 pp. ISBN 91-85214-35-3.

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