GLOBALISATION, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE DESTRUCTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES IN A TROPICAL ISLAND CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT
Recently, destruction of cultural properties has taken on a new dimension and many of the most important archaeological sites around the world are at risk due to the growing development/globalization trend targeting exotic and rare destinations. If investment is inevitable for the survival of third world and small island states, promoters pay little attention to the conservation of natural and cultural resources and projects are often responsible for the disintegration of village and town life.

Destruction of human settlements, culture, heritage and the past is a convenient way of remodeling history and the future. Such actions are now of universal concern and attention is drawn to a far more insidious process for achieving this, than that represented by ethnic conflict and war.

We look at prevention measures, alternative solutions available to us through application of law, international conventions and how to ensure interaction between the community, governments and intergovernmental institutions.

FOREWORD
Prehistoric settlement patterns in the Caribbean often correlate with estuaries and coastal zones. In certain micro islands, such as those of the Grenadines, sites remain unexplored and represent the region’s chronological memory over a period of several thousand years. These sites are valuable indicators of the earliest human migration patterns from the different continents.

In the past decade, the destruction of the region’s cultural property has taken on a new dimension as globalisation trends reflect a growing number of multinational development projects targeting exotic and rare destinations. Many of these are located in the Caribbean island chain where, due to economic fragility, little attention is given to the socio economic impact and the need to conserve the coastal zone, and the natural and cultural assets for the future. Large scale projects are often responsible for the disintegration of the past, village and town life. Frequently islanders are alerted that a major development is to take place on their territory by the arrival of bulldozers, which will ultimately reshape their island landscape and their lives.

Many of the most important archaeological sites around the world are at risk due to the growing development/globalization trend. Prevention measures exist through application of law and international conventions but these are often difficult to implement if a government feels its own survival depends on development. This points to the need for interaction with governments and intergovernmental institutions and promoting solutions that are based on consultation and education and are backed up by well balanced alternative proposals for growth of the economy.

In the Caribbean the EU have co-funded a 3 year programme based on one such alternative strategy, proposed by the Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness (ECCEA) A regional initiative for community based nature and heritage tourism, environmental education and the conservation of island ecosystems. ECCEA uses an integrated approach by promoting the reconstruction of archaeological sites, monuments and fortification routes as part of nature trails and interpretation
centres. The concept is to ensure local employment and benefits together with carefully controlled attractions and appropriate natural and heritage learning stations for children, adults and visitors. Education programmes are supported by UNESCO.

In this way the preservation of cultural and natural heritage assets, can be alternative mechanisms for economic development if they are able to illustrate their sustainability.

(1) **A BRIEF HISTORY OF MIGRATION PATTERNS**

Opposing yet interacting cultures of the Americas, the Caribbean islands, Europe, Asia and Africa have share forced destiny’s for centuries. The Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea have played a major role in the region’s migration patterns.

Tupi-Arawakans landed on Grenada, 90 nautical miles to the North of Venezuela, in 200BC. They crossed the channel in “dug outs” that measured 60ft. and resembled Noah’s Ark as they were loaded with familiar mainland plants, parrots, iguanas, morocoi and small mammals such as armadillos, agoutis and coati. Hot coals were placed in ceramics resembling open ended bells (troumassée cylinders), so that the villagers would arrive in their new land with ready made fire. They lived here peacefully for more than 1000 years.

Carib/Galibi war parties arrived in the Lesser Antilles from mainland South America between 800 and 1200 ad. The Caribs surprised and conquered the Arawaks who had little if any practice in warfare. Only the women were spared. They were integrated into Carib society as secondary wives.

**Colonial structuring of Caribbean society:**

Christopher Colombus arrived in the Northern Caribbean at the Bahamian island of San Salvador in 1492. Within a hundred years 3 000 000 indians, the near totality of the Caribbean population would be decimated by slavery, torture, sickness and suicide.

Partisan groups of indians fled to the forested areas of the rugged islands of Dominica, St. Vincent, the Grenadines and Grenada. They resisted slavery until the 18th century.

**The slave trade:**

The colonies in need of a new labour force, entered into negotiations with empires such as Ghana, Mali, Senegal, the Congo and Angola during the 16th century.

These Empires had strict social structures and an established trade in human beings. The Europeans encouraged the extension of this commerce further afield, between Europe, Africa and the Americas from 16° latitude north and 16° latitude south in the Atlantic.

A number of slaves escaped from the plantations and those who owned them, by either swimming or hitching rides on barrels and tree trunks to attain islands inhabited by free Caribs and eventually intermarried with their hosts. Indentured labour was encouraged from Asia and India at this time. It is the Diaspora of these people and the African slaves liberated in 1848 together with descendants of early settlers that inhabit the Caribbean islands today.

(2) **CASE STUDY: THE CANOUAN ISLAND PROJECT**

This brief study illustrates how the loss of culture and heritage, an issue of universal concern, can be a far more insidious process than the one represented by ethnic conflict and war. IACA together with international and regional counterparts could play an important role in the mediation process by monitoring and inventorying cultural properties and sacred sites under threat, proposing solutions to both public and private sectors.

**Geography**

The Grenadine Archipelago was once an oceanic island. Today they are dependencies of St. Vincent and Grenada and form an Archipelago of some 82 dry islets and micro islands in the Southern Caribbean. The population depends on rain water. and villages are protected by both offshore and frin-
ging coral reefs, factors that have played a major role in the conservation of the territory’s exceptional prehistoric heritage.

Canouan is a crescent shaped, hilly tropical island, with dry rain forest vegetation; twenty five miles south of St. Vincent. It is 3 1/2 miles in length and 1 1/2 miles wide, its highest peak is 855 ft. Until recently it was considered the most pristine of the Archipelago, with a high marine biodiversity, (devastated by Hurrican Lenny in November 1999).

**Economic base**:
The present population is made up of some 250 villagers of mainly African origin. Lands are either privately or government owned. Ownership is complex due to the large size of families and absenteeism. The economy is based largely on fishing and trading. In the 19TH century the islanders launched the Archipelago’s boat building industry. Natural marine architects they designed and built 65ft top masted schooners on the beaches and hand launched vessels that would become famous throughout the Caribbean.

**Development**
Canouan was targeted by transnationals for major development in 1996. Construction plans included condominiums, marinas, casinos, time share homes, villas and an 18 hole golf course. The island’s cemetery, prehistoric settlements and mangrove forests were to be bulldozed.

The project dove tailed with the collapse of a $US 300 000 000 multinational investment on the micro territory of Union, 3 miles to the south of Canouan. The dredging, dynamiting and cement capping of the barrier reef and lagoon had left the coastal community in difficulty. A Carib settlement on an offshore islet was destroyed.

**Consultation process and impact studies**
An environmental and socio-economic impact study outlining the probable long term effects of the project on the community and their natural resource bank was carried out by a national non governmental organisation, for review by government. The report was overshadowed by a public sector document which made little reference to the need to bulldoze the land to bedrock. The project proceeded and new boundaries, enclosing the development zone, were defined.

Guards were employed to control entry and eventual conflict. Key posts were filled by an overseas workforce.

The XVIII century Anglican church now within the boundaries of private land served as a cement depot. Within 6 months the windward section of the island had been transformed and laid to bedrock.

**Cultural identity**
During the formulation stages of the Canouan project, definition of island cultural heritage and national identity were not taken into account; identities which were reflected in the landscapes and constituted the formation of the present.

**Spontaneous action - resolution of conflict:**
Conflict coupled with spontaneous action quickly came to the surface with the destruction of a cemetery which the villagers had attempted to save by lying down in front of the bulldozers. Pastures for grazing cattle were now out of bounds and access to beach fronts prohibited: an ideal recipe for tension and confrontation In retaliation the villagers blocked the road to the small airport and the pass through the lagoon. The project staff responded by ramming and sinking the villager’s boats.

Far from a tragi comedy the situation heralded the destruction of the community’s social fabric.
If protest marches usually fail in the context of a micro island, superstition is a powerful tool. Numerous inexplicable accidents occurred which coincided with the destruction of the prehistoric settlement and the disappearance of the only petroglyph inventoried in the Grenadine Archipelago from its pond setting opposite the church, creating widespread malaise on both sides. Development ground to a halt and the Director of Operations, a Catholic, appealed to the local clergy to exorcise the area.

Making things right -Exorcism?
Exorcism is a far from common practise these days and rarely authorized by the Church. It applies to recurring and extreme cases of supposed possession of a human or creature by the devil or evil spirits. On Canouan the clergy agreed that exorcism could not be applied to the cemetery as a whole, the prehistoric site and its past occupants, or the terrain; they did agree to carry out a prayer service. Consequently a village party was engineered, high level employment was promised, and the project again took off.

The price of development:
Investment is both inevitable and necessary for the survival of third world and developing island states, but in a micro island situation it is clear that community’s are neither involved in the decision making process or consultations that define new activities and rules which will govern their future, create new social relationships and impact on their natural and cultural assets. The focus of the developer is to underline job creation and revenue. The islanders will be designated rolls as hotel or house staff, cooks and gardeners. The community is expected to adapt itself to cultures quite different to their own and be assimilated by them.

Destruction of the past and sustainable development trends
The theme of the World Archaeological Congress (WAC) Intercongress in Croatia in May 1998 was “the destruction and conservation of cultural property”. Presentations reflected on overt destruction through war and the conflict in ex Yugoslavia, at the Ayohda Mosque and other religious centres in Northern India and Pakistan.

Mutation of landscapes in the past has meant the razing of cities, towns and villages to the ground, removal of inhabitants and all trace of their culture. On Canouan the conflict has been far more insidious as the population and their small holdings were part of a broader plan, initially imperceptible, and a remodeling process that would ensure that the remaining islanders would fit into the needs of the new landowners.

They were not technically armed or in a position to negotiate terms or oppose the project and a precedent was set.

(3) WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?
Within the framework of alternative solutions what must be resolved is WHO will be responsible for them, conserve material evidence and record what is to be lost? or gained
In any alternative strategy, community initiative must be supported by volunteer professional advice; technical assistance is, therefore, essential. Initially it is the strongly motivated inhabitants of the islands who have revealed their talents for decision making who will eventually direct such operations. They will already have demonstrated their ability to take on the different temperaments of public service, administrative hierarchies and understand how these articulate with regard to conservation, historical and pre-historical preservation. At a later date they will apply these and other skills to creation of protected areas and archaeological reserves, rescue or salvage archaeology mechanisms in tandem with the conservation and sustainable use of the surrounding natural resources.
Courses in environmental and cultural heritage management include office organization, handling of complicated information, creating projects and monitoring seminars and workshops which stimulate and renew community interest. The team leader will hopefully attract and create the awareness of the more reticent members of the town or village, encouraging public participation in the conservation dynamic, in the knowledge that this will benefit future generations.

In micro island communities, very little is needed to spark of interest which facilitates the formation of special interest groups. Their launching is accompanied by films, slide shows, lectures and field trips, all the right ingredients.

**Problems arising in tropical zones**

Communities developing a cultural heritage conservation initiative, will be confronted with difficulties inherent to tropical climates, such as rapid growth and density of vegetation, eroding beach fronts, sand mining and agriculture. In the Caribbean it is usually during the annual drought seasons that archaeological surveys are the most worthwhile. Cultural heritage research and conservation programme directors, must learn to be selective, as their work force will be small. They must recognize the priorities, for example churches, cemeteries, ancient irrigation systems, old wood and stone structures that have survived from the early plantations. Prehistoric sites are usually buried in 50cms. to 6 ft of alluvium and can be turned to at a later date, if they are not threatened by development.

Most of the Archipelago’s inhabitants have worked stone, wood and wattle for decades and are specialist craftsmen. It is important to ensure that workshops and training courses reflect this, are part of an education scheme and that documentation is made available to participants so that these skills are not lost.

(4) **INTERNATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND LEGAL TOOLS**

**Reconstruction after war:**

Although Canouan, as pointed out earlier, is not within the context of war, described by the The Post-War, Reconstruction and Development Unit (PRDU), many of the following recommendations and their basic philosophy are quite relevant to the situation and may be used as a guideline.

The PRDU, York University, ICOMOS and UNESCO clearly outline their policy with regard to reconstruction of the past which is only briefly referred to below:

“**The integration of cultural heritage into national disaster planning is called for as well as mitigation and relief and that physical reconstruction should be carried out in the context of a national plan which determines the distribution of resources and growth between regions, and between urban and rural areas.**

*It is recommended that actions should represent the interests of the community as a whole and preserve, as best possible, the coherence of the social fabric as a basis for reconstruction, calling upon public participation as an absolute necessity in the planning process if we are to prevent demagogic distortion.*”

**Contract Archaeology**

Contract archaeology is not customary, (nor is their funding available to governments for this in the Lesser Antilles) other than in the French and Dutch dependencies, but has been adopted as standard practice in the Greater Antilles, where archaeologists working with developers can expect a high level of employment and good pay. It is suggested that Governments request assistance from the International Association of Caribbean Archaeology (IACA), who are in a position to direct them to officially affiliated archaeological services with experience in conservation of sites, rescue and salvage archaeology.
Wider Caribbean legal frameworks for cultural heritage conservation:
In 1977 IACA published the *Caracas Declaration* for the protection of Caribbean archaeological and cultural heritage. And in 1991 the *Declaration for the protection of sacred sites and sacred peoples in the Caribbean*. These Declarations were adopted unanimously by all Caribbean nations present at the biennial IACA conferences, and were the first step towards inventorying and protecting the region’s cultural heritage assets but success depends on national action.

Legal frameworks for cultural heritage conservation vary from island to island in the Wider Caribbean. Conventions at national, regional and international level are often contentious and in contradiction with development. In turn they tend to be difficult to enforce or are ineffective if they are not signed and ratified by all the interest parties. It is the responsibility of both public and private sectors to lobby for conventions to be ratified, for their articles to be respected and to monitor projects that threaten the natural and cultural heritage of the areas they live in.

**Universal Codes**
During the course of 3 World Congresses WAC has published the Vermillion Accord on Human Remains, specific to reburial issues, Codes of Ethics, referring to archaeological research and indigenous rights, and the New Delhi Accord for Forest Peoples, calling for the protection of these ancient cultures and their lands. All of these codes are expected to be adhered to by the members of the World Archaeological Congress (WAC) and are suggested guidelines for others working in the field of archaeology and cultural heritage.

**Who to refer to for the development of a management plan:**
When national legislation has not been developed and governments would like to proceed in this direction; they usually have too much else to do, so both NGO’s intergovernmental agencies and heritage/environmental lawyers should endeavour to develop legal mechanisms that are taylor made to the situation. Specialist input is available through IACA, WAC, ICOMOS and UNESCO who are well equipped to act as advisory bodies.

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IACA Secretariat
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PO Box 4030
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Fort de France CEDEX
Martinique, French West Indies

**World Archaeological Congress (WAC)**
WAC Secretariat
Department of Archaeology
University of Newcastle
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**UNESCO and the World Heritage Convention:**
UNESCO’s World Heritage Commission is specifically involved in the promotion and protection of the world’s natural and cultural heritage. The World Heritage Convention is a universal tool for the protection and promotion of the world’s outstanding natural and cultural heritage. There are 149 State Parties. For a country to become a “State Party” it must first sign the World Heritage Convention, pledging to protect their cultural and natural heritage, a one page document. This is signed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prime Minister or Head of State. Country’s striving for economic development, such as those in the East Caribbean, pay a minimal annual contribution of some 300$ to the World Heritage Convention office in Paris. The “State Party” can then create a tentative list by selecting national sites they consider to be of “outstanding universal value” and nominate one or two of these for inscription on the World Heritage List.
“Preparatory” funding is available to parties to assist them in the evaluation and establishment of appropriate management plans by experts. Technical reports to ensure that the criteria of the Convention are met are reviewed by ICOMOS for cultural properties and IUCN for natural properties. When the submissions which have been submitted are considered complete by the World Heritage Office they will examine the reports, make recommendations to the World Heritage Committee who in turn will evaluate the importance of the site and may either vote for or refuse its inscription.

Information is available at:
**The World Heritage Centre**
7, Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP, France
Tel: 33 (0)1 45 68 18 76
Fax 33 (0)1 45 68 55 70
Web site: [www.unesco.org/whc/](http://www.unesco.org/whc/)

**Heritage and nature tourism:**

The Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness (ECCEA), an advisory body, working in partnership with IACA and other international funding agencies, focuses its attention on developing alternative sustainable development initiatives through the Africa/Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Programme of the European Union and its Environment and Development budget line.

Programmes focus on an integrated approach to heritage and nature tourism and the preservation of environmental and socio-cultural values. Projects are expected to illustrate sustainability and show how they can contribute to the economy.

This is seen as an important step towards pre-empting further destruction of village culture, coastal ecosystems and archaeological sites. The ECCEA regional programme can be applied to all region’s in the world. Information is available from:
**ECCEA Secretariat**
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&
PO 4111
Rodney Bay, Castries,
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(5) **ACADEMIC COURSES FOR LIKELY CANDIDATES**

*Stewardship and building skills that will ensure the future An example of an available environmental cultural heritage education - MA course*

If outsized development projects threaten micro islands and their cultural heritage, they also represent financial investment and any alternative proposals must be coherent and viable. Access to higher education will strengthen the dedicated individual’s capacity to play the role of negotiator and teacher and will allow him to share his knowledge in cultural heritage, civil engineering and wildlife management with both his government and fellow countrymen. It will ensure the sustainability of public and community based initiatives targeting conservation where income generation is an essential.

Most members of the community see access to academia as a pipe dream and out of their reach. This is not necessarily so, but nationals from developing or a third world country who have already demonstrated stewardship abilities will need guidance and information on funding sources.
Although a formal Academic training is often a necessity for selection to courses, there are exceptions. One example is a new MA that has been developed at Newcastle University and Dr. Peter Stone is acknowledged and thanked for sharing the following information with us:

Initiated for the first time in September 1998. UNESCO arranged to fund five bursaries for students from what they call ‘the Developing World’. In this instance they look for good people from either the heritage or education world who have a commitment to developing the links between heritage and education. The focus is on cultural heritage but will also be drawn from natural heritage issues. Students are usually from lower or middle management (or should be ready to take up such a post on completion of the course). In this way they can begin to make a real difference in the own countries and regions. UNESCO would probably make it a condition of getting a bursary and that students work for their sponsoring organisation in heritage and education for at least three years after graduating.

Course outline:

HERITAGE EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION: NEW POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME

Master of Arts and Diploma in Heritage Education and Interpretation

A new programme specially designed for graduates seeking to work in education, heritage and the tourism industry has been developed with UNESCO providing a number of bursaries for students from the Developing World to attend the programme. The programme can be completed full time over one year or part time over a longer period in negotiation with the Course Director.

Aims

To provide a basic understanding of the philosophies behind, and the practicalities of, heritage education and interpretation (including public history, archaeology, and environmental interpretation) at site, national and international level and the relationship between heritage education and interpretation on the one hand and tourism, the media and general heritage management on the other.

Syllabus

The programme consists of modules to a value of 180 credits (MA) or 120 credits (Diploma).

The taught modules are: heritage education and interpretation: an introduction (10 credits), heritage education (40 credits), heritage management (20 credits), heritage interpretation (10 credits), heritage and tourism (10 credits), heritage and the media (10 credits), and a study tour of World Heritage Sites (such as Ironbridge, Stonehenge and Avebury, Westminster and the Tower of London), museums and other heritage attractions (10 credits). All students will also take a faculty research training module (10 credits).

The modules are heavily inter-related and cover the history of, and present practice in, archaeological, historical, and environmental interpretation and the role of heritage in contemporary society. All modules include a number of specific case studies drawn from around the world that address issues such as: what is `heritage?'; ownership of the past; the conflict between conservation and presentation of heritage sites and buildings; management of the past, including public access, Cultural Resource Management, and site assessment and evaluation; issues in heritage tourism, including ecotourism; the relationship between heritage and formal- and informal- education; and the uses/abuses to which heritage sites have been put.

Teaching will be carried out by staff of the Department of Archaeology as well as a number of colleagues who already work in heritage education and interpretation including, for example, staff from UNESCO's World Heritage Centre, the English Heritage Education Service, and a range of local heritage and museum sites. Teaching will emphasise case studies, concentrating on project successes and failures, and on the practicalities of working in this area including, for example, fund-raising, grant application, volunteer management, lesson and curriculum planning, evaluation and assessment of potential projects.

Candidates for the MA undertake a piece of supervised research on an approved topic leading to the completion of an 18,000 word dissertation (60 credits).
Teaching and assessment

The programme combines traditional lectures and seminars with practical work, site visits and tutorials. You will also use some audio-visual resources. The taught modules are assessed through a variety of written, practical and oral assignments. The study tour is not assessed, but requires the submission of a report. MA students will also be assessed on their dissertation.

Entry requirements

You should normally have a degree in a relevant subject although we will consider non-graduates with suitable experience and qualifications.

Ideally you should have experience of working at a heritage site or in a museum in an education or interpretation section and have a genuine interest in the role of heritage education and interpretation within contemporary society.

For further information contact::
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(6) WHAT MARKERS SHOULD WE USE?

• To be informed
  To limit destruction of both natural and cultural heritage resources, we have to develop our ability to be informed at all times, sharing our knowledge with others.

• The human element
  Each human being or individual must be recognized as a vital link in a successful decision making process. Although this may seem a complex task, (one where modern technology and communications could serve a purpose) it is an obligation if economically threatened territories are to survive.

• To be educated
  Taylor made education and training programmes in natural and cultural heritage management are mandatory in third world and developing country’s and must be facilitated for promising candidates. Funding agencies should attempt to simplify procedures and limit bureaucracy.

• Acting responsibly
  Governments, private sector, archaeological and cultural heritage institutions who recognize the challenges of globalization and technological change should adopt policies that ensure honest and independent viability analysis of medium and major investment projects on continents, small island states and micro territories. Natural and cultural resources have a high value at economic diversification level. Long term alternative proposals are often the wiser choice. Socio-economic/environmental impact assessments are critical and must ensure that any development process addresses first and foremost the survival of human and cultural needs.

• Advisory Bodies
  The International Association for Caribbean Archaeology, the World Archaeological Congress, UNESCO and ICOMOS are seen as the appropriate negotiating bodies.

(7) CONCLUSION

Globalisation favours development and sustainability is often an afterthought. Anything and everything is possible. Official or unofficial, multilateral or bilateral agreements between states can as easily approve and encourage war inasmuch as they can promote peace. Its dynamic is as easily human rights as it is corruption, money laundering or the expansion of the five most powerful worldwide organized crime syndicates.

Two world wars, cultural disputes and the horrors of ethnic cleansing have marked the 20TH century.
Globalisation creates an increasingly complex world, with new and disturbing trends, agendas and unruly forms of governance. In the new millennium many communities could become lonely pilgrims in a widening desert. It is for those of us who have the necessary experience and knowledge, to be vigilant and watchful for them.

Specific to Latin America and the Caribbean Basin are the forest cultures of the Amazon Basin who have been subjected to decades of destruction, their populations decimated for the price of gold. They are now the most endangered species in the Universe. The preservation of their remaining territories and legal rights should be the focus of urgent international attention, if they are to survive the next two decades.

Economically fragile states such as those in the Caribbean, Africa and the Pacific, attempting to define strategies for the future, are especially under fire. In the Caribbean the maritime situation of insular states makes them ideal locations for a diversity of “global” projects, proposed by holdings or agencies in Europe, Asia and the United States.

If globalisation promises mass employment, 3rd world and developing nations are more likely to become victims of the consumer world, exposed to alcohol, narcotics and loss of identity rather than the strengthening of traditional values, preservation of heritage and recognition of the past. We are all equally responsible for how the globalization mechanism evolves and at the end of the day whether we are prepared to accept the responsibility of keeping it in tight check.

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Illustrations:
1) and 2) The Cannouan development project with XVII century church in the background (slides)
3) The only petroglyph known from the Grenadines, found by Kees Dubelaar which was removed from its pond setting on Canouan during the construction period
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