

Editorial

Seychelles is a small island state with an ambitious agenda. Once a remote outpost of a far-flung empire it is now in its own right an integral part of the global community, recognized for its social progress as well as its contribution to matters of world importance. When Seychelles talks about issues like the Blue Economy, fisheries management and sustainable development, people listen. To be on the frontline of change, and to excel as a knowledge economy, research must be a priority. The launch of this journal, a forum for ongoing research, is indicative of this recognition.

Although this is the first issue of *Seychelles Research Journal (SRJ)*, it already has a history. With the same objectives in mind, Dr Kris Valaydon, formerly Head of Law and now an Honorary Professor at the University of Seychelles, had the foresight to see how important this kind of publication can be. A lawyer by profession, Kris is also a journalist and an accomplished writer, with extensive experience of working in the Indian Ocean region. With this varied background he was ideally placed to produce his own version of a research journal for the university, entitled *Island Studies: Indian Ocean/Océan Indien*. It was an attractive, hard-copy publication and won many friends. Kris has since left the university and will shortly be making his home in Australia but we are all indebted for his pioneering work as the founding editor of *Island Studies*. Likewise, the contribution of another former academic at the university, Dr Pascal Nadal, is also warmly acknowledged. It is greatly appreciated that both Dr Valaydon and Dr Nadal have agreed to join a team of respected international advisers for this new venture.

Like its predecessor, *SRJ* is produced by the University of Seychelles, itself a source of new ideas and advanced learning. But the journal is by no means confined to the boundaries of the university itself, and will reach out to other places of research in the country as well as to findings that originate elsewhere. In contrast to *Island Studies*, *SRJ* is produced in an online format and, in the interests of the free communication of knowledge, it joins the growing ranks of open access publications.

Another difference is in terms of content, with the inclusion in each issue of an interview with a leading Seychelles researcher. This time the spotlight is on Dr Conrad Shamlaye, renowned internationally for his long-term work on child development. Fittingly, Dr Shamlaye recently gave a public lecture on the subject and a copy of his slide presentation is included as well.

As befits an academic journal, the main body of text is devoted to the inclusion of refereed, scholarly papers. The present selection is largely drawn from a colloquium at the university

organized by Dr Justin Valentin towards the end of 2016. Although the topics vary, one from another, one thing that unites them is a common interest in an interdisciplinary approach. Within this overarching framework, and for all the diversity of subjects, there is a loose pattern of groupings that accounts for the order in which they appear. Thus, we will find two papers (Penda Choppy and Ma Min) on aspects of the Creole language and linguistics; a set of three (Dr Susan Alderson, Susanne Nef and Georges Nicette) on different dimensions of social work; two more (one by Dr Dilum Bandara and Gayanthika Udeshani, the other by Dr Roy Meriton and Dr Gary Graham) on the applications of complex forms of data analysis; and others which explore, respectively, contemporary health problems (Raini Nailer) and the elusive subject of paradise (Emeritus Professor Dennis Hardy). Interdisciplinary research knows no boundaries.

A final section of the journal makes room for conference reports in or about Seychelles, showing the extent to which our researchers are actively involved in specialist networks. In this first issue there is a report by Penda Choppy on the much-acclaimed 16th International Creole Studies Colloquium at the university held during the 2018 Creole Week in Seychelles. Additionally, there are reports on other conferences in which local researchers participated.

The future success of the journal will depend on the quality of contributions received and, for that reason, researchers everywhere are invited to submit their various proposals. Information on the process is included elsewhere in this website.

Dennis Hardy
Editor