

# Humanities

## AZTEC AND INCA: EMPIRES IN THE DUST



Machu Picchu, Peru

The Spanish conquerors were a mixed lot, ranging from the semi-educated, hardbitten conquistadores to the gentle, learned, and idealistic Franciscan friars who came along to convert the natives to the true religion of Christ. Accordingly, the accounts of the Aztec and Inca civilizations that we have from their hands vary widely in quality. These and the stories of the native intelligentsia describing their peoples in indigenous tongues or in Spanish give us a richly documented, albeit uneven, picture of pre-Spanish cultures in Mexico and Peru.

A continuing source of ambiguity in the study of these two civilizations, however, is that the Inca had no real writing; while the Aztec had written documents that were largely pictorial and focused on economic and ritual matters. The surviving Aztec histories, written after the conquest in Spanish or the Aztec tongue, Nahuatl, and using the Roman alphabet, are couched in a chronology of recurrent fifty-two-year cycles. Although one knows exactly on what day in a cycle an event occurred, it is often impossible to determine what particular cycle it was.

Finally, every account has an axe to grind. The Amerindian elites were making every effort to hang onto the lands, tribute payments, and prerogatives that they had inherited from their ancestors; the Spanish conquistadores and land barons were doing their best to separate the nobility from these resources and virtually to enslave the peasant populations; and the friars were trying to root out what they considered idolatry, while attempting to alleviate the sufferings of the natives. Every document we have must be evaluated in this light.

This much is clear: Both civilizations were the last to flourish in their respective areas before the Spanish conquest, both were the creations of late upstarts, and both drew on the rich heritage of much older civilizations.

Civilized life in Mexico goes back to the ancient Olmec of the southern Gulf Coast of Veracruz and Tabasco, who by 1200 B.C. had established great ceremonial centers along the rivers that meander through this rich, tropical environment. The Olmec are famous for their production of gigantic basalt monuments, such as the Colossal Heads that portray their rulers, and for their magnificent jade carvings. The next great civilization was that of Teotihuacan, the New World's first and largest pre-Spanish city, located northeast of Mexico city in its own valley, a side pocket of the Basin of Mexico that was and still is the focal point of Mexican statehood. Teotihuacan, according to the great survey undertaken by René Millon and his University of Rochester team, was founded about the time of Christ as a planned metropolis, and reached a population peak of 125,000 by A.D. 500-600—one of the largest cities of the world in its day.



## Editor's Notes

The theme of this issue is "Ancient Civilizations of North and South America," but we cannot pretend to offer anything more than a brief glance at some of the peoples who inhabited the western hemisphere in pre-Columbian times. Michael Coe explains how various archaeological finds have enabled us to understand the complex societies of the Aztec and Inca empires, while John Hyslop describes how the vast network of Inca roads worked to bind millions of Andean peoples together. (There are still seven million South American Indians who speak the Inca language of Quechua.) We also learn how an NEH-supported *Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions* may finally lead to an unraveling of the mystery of the Maya.

Closer to home, Robert Coles laments the passing of an ancient Eskimo civilization that had remained almost unchanged until the last decade. Jarold Ramsey shows how the formal study of native American oral/traditional literature as literature and the widespread critical recognition of contemporary native American writing are intimately related.

In this issue you will also find an eight-page, pull-out Guide to NEH Challenge Grants, as well as the annual NEH book list. We welcome your comments in the form of a letter to the editor.

—Judith Chayes Neiman

## Humanities

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The city of Teotihuacan seems to have prospered on its enormous production of obsidian artifacts for export, on its advanced craft industry, and on the highly productive agriculture carried out on raised fields or *chinampas* ("floating gardens") under its control. But the *raison d'être* of the metropolis probably took in much of southern Mexico and Central America, for Teotihuacan seems to have been the nexus of a huge empire that included even the advanced Maya. Certainly, all later cultures in the Valley of Mexico, the Aztec among them, rested on the shoulders of Teotihuacan.

Following the violent destruction of Teotihuacan around A.D. 700, there was a political hiatus in central Mexico. This was soon to be filled by the Toltec, a people of generally barbarian heritage who had intruded into central Mexico from the northern deserts, around A.D. 900. They founded their capital of Tula in the modern state of Hidalgo, and soon established hegemony at Chichén Itzá. Although much of their history is shrouded in myth, excavations have established that there really was a Toltec civilization, at least until A.D. 1200. The Aztec considered the Toltec the most polished and civilized of their predecessors, a great nation of artists and artificers for whom nothing was impossible. The Aztec emperor even claimed descent from the Toltec kings. This is all somewhat of a mystery, because archaeology has failed to reveal anything remarkable in Toltec art and architecture, which might almost be described as shoddy. Perhaps to the barbaric Aztec in their early years, the Toltec seemed wonderful.

The "people whose face nobody knows" is what the horrified, civilized denizens called the wild, uncouth peoples who arrived in the Valley of Mexico on the heels of the Toltec state's demise. Guided by four priests, and by their tribal god Huitzilopochtli, the ancestors of the Aztec had left their legendary home in northwest Mexico around A.D. 1168; after a long

peregrination, the various descent groups that made up the tribe settled down on the shores of the Great Lake that once filled the Valley, first becoming serfs of one of the powerful local kingdoms, then forced to wander because of their penchant for war and human sacrifice. Finally, in the early fourteenth century, the Aztec established their capital on the island of Tenochtitlan in the midst of the lake, fulfilling their tribal god's prophecy. Their destiny, he had told them, was to rule the world from that place. In the next century and a half, with the exception of the Maya, force of arms had brought much of Mexico under Aztec sway.

Aztec society on the eve of the Spanish conquest was no democracy. At the top was the emperor, Motecuhzoma II, a hereditary ruler with absolute power, "elected" by a council drawn from the royal house. Under him were the nobility, then the land-holding commoners. At the bottom were serfs who worked the lands of the nobility, and slaves, mostly war captives. Vast quantities of tribute were received semiannually from conquered provinces, while a special guild of merchants traveled to foreign markets for luxury goods.

Aztec politics and society can be understood only by understanding their religious life. Basically, the Aztec believed in cyclical time, that the universe had undergone repeated creations and destructions, each new world being called a "Sun." Our own Sun was to be destroyed by great earthquakes, a terrible fate that could be avoided only by the continual sacrifice of war captives and the offering of their hearts and blood to the Sun. The taking of captives for this purpose was thus a major preoccupation of Aztec tactics in battle, a factor that greatly aided the Spanish conquistadores. The multiplicity of Aztec deities boggles the modern mind, but we know the Aztec religious philosophers had reduced all of the surface phenomena of the universe, both real and occult, to a basic, almost Hegelian, "unity of

opposites": life vs. death, male vs. female, etc., conceptualized as an androgynous creator divinity known to them as Lord Duality.

The Aztec received a very bad press from their conquerors, who had every reason to falsify the record. They were probably no more prone to sacrifice than any other Mexican or Central American people, including the supposedly peaceful Maya. The bittersweet, decidedly pessimistic Aztec mindset is reflected in their poetry, much of which has survived. The great poet-king Nezahualcoyotl, lord of Texcoco, wrote:

Even jade is shattered,  
Even gold is crushed,  
Even quetzal plumes are torn . . .  
One does not live forever on this earth:  
We endure only for an instant!

Perhaps his pessimism prophesied the day in April 1521, when the great capital of Tenochtitlan, was ground to bits by the white-faced, bearded conquerors.

Like the Aztec, the Inca who were their contemporaries, were latecomers in the full historical sweep of New World civilizations. The exact counterpart to the Olmec civilization of Mexico is the Chavin culture of Peru, which dates to the period 1000-400 B.C.; of possible Amazonian origin, it is presaged in both the Andean highlands and dry, coastal valleys by a long development of ceremonial architecture and religious art. Chavin art in sculpture, ceramics, textiles, and other media centers on an awesome cult of jaguar, harpy eagle, serpent, and crocodile, a cult that unified the highly diverse Andean ecological zones for the first time. The second period of unity originated in Bolivia on the north shore of Titicaca, where the Tiahuanaco civilization arose around the time of Christ; its stylized art was transmuted by the Wari kingdom of Peru, which seems to have constituted a veritable empire by about A.D. 800.

Perhaps the most important development in the pre-Inca world was the Chimu kingdom on north Peru's desert coast. This is one of the most dessicated environments in the world, and the only possibility of agriculture consists of the coastal valley plains which have been subject to intensive irrigation for over two thousand years. Settlement has always been confined to the bone dry, rocky deserts that flank the bottomlands, where such usually perishable objects as human mummies, textiles, feather capes and head-dresses, wood, and so forth beckon to the archaeologist. From about A.D. 1100 on, the Chimu capital was Chan Chan, an enormously rich city of mud-brick walls, which now lie in ruin. The Chimu were expert in statecraft and in craft production, including advanced techniques of metallurgy,



These Mamaconas, or quarters of the Sacred Virgins at Pachacamac, are the holiest shrine of the Inca Empire.

photograph by Michael D. Coe



long a Peruvian tradition. When they were absorbed by conquest into the Inca state, the Chimu played a civilizing role similar to that of the Toltec vis-a-vis the Aztec.

The story of the Inca ascendancy to sudden power over the rest of Andean South America centers on the Valley of Cuzco, lying at an altitude of over 11,000 feet in south-central Peru. The Inca began in this valley and its environs as a small, warlike tribe at constant odds with its neighbors, eventually subduing them in a series of battles, largely under the great ruler Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui who reigned from 1438-71. The successor to a line of legendary Inca chiefs, he established Cuzco as the capital and center of the future Inca empire. In only a few decades, the Inca expanded over much of the western part of the South American continent; at its height, the empire extended from northernmost Ecuador down to central Chile, a north-south distance of about 2,500 miles. The Inca had much less success extending their power eastward into the tropical forests of western Amazonia and contented themselves with establishing a network of defensible trading posts connected by roads in the headwaters of the rivers that drain into the Amazon. The renowned site of Machu Picchu, discovered by Yale University's Hiram Bingham in 1911, was one such post.

The secret of Inca imperial prowess was excellent communications, a network of roads, and a highly developed political organization. Theirs was a far more secular outlook than that of the Aztec. Unlike the Aztec, Inca warfare was not waged for largely religious ends, but for conquest. Subdued native populations were quickly subordinated to state ends. If insubordinate, they were moved to unfamiliar areas so that they would learn Inca ways and the Inca language of Quechua, still spoken by 7 million Andean peasants.

The Inca empire was one of the greatest and most tightly organized bureaucracies ever seen in world history. At the very top was the emperor, who was considered a descendant of the Sun. So holy was he that his principal consort could only be his own full sister. Under him were the noble bureaucrats who administered the needs of the state, which were paramount. The Inca realm was a vast "welfare state," as the late J. Alden Mason noted. All land was public; the Inca motto might well have been the famous dictum, "to each according to his needs." Some products of the land were destined for the state, some for the religious establishment, and some for the needs of the peasants, who lived in *ayllus*, or kin-based land-holding corporations.

As with all intricate bureaucracies, the Inca kept records. In spite

of their lack of a script that records linguistic information (the absence of this throughout Andean prehistory continues to puzzle archaeologists), they had a highly developed system of knotted-cord records called *quipus*, under the control of special officials trained in their manufacture and use. Like our own system of writing Arabic numbers, the *quipus* were based on decimal, positional notation, with different categories of things classified by a complex color code. This enabled the Inca bureaucrats to organize the entire state by tens and multiples thereof, for taxation, communal labor, military service, and the stockpiling of foodstuffs and other items in storehouses.

Unfortunately, we know very little of Inca religion and ceremonies, because the Spanish missionaries, in contrast to their counterparts in Mexico, seem to have been little interested in this subject. The Temple of the Sun in Cuzco was at the exact center of the empire at the intersection of the north-south and east-west lines that divided the Inca realm into quarters. There was an organized priesthood dedicated to the elaborate monthly ceremonies; and a special group of virgin women, the *mamaconas*, who became concubines of the Inca emperor or of his nobles, unless they remained "Virgins of the Sun."

The Inca had inherited from their predecessors, particularly the Chimu, a highly developed technology. This was a Bronze Age civilization with both copper and bronze tools, as well as the silver and gold that so dazzled the Spaniards. Inca textiles are justly famous for their refined technique, but it must be admitted that much Inca art is repetitious and boring; it looks machine-made. Where the Incas excelled was in architecture; there is not its equal anywhere in the prehispanic New World. The renowned stone walls along the streets of Cuzco give an idea of Inca mastery of the stonemason's craft. The old line in the tourist

brochures that "you can't slip a knife blade between two Inca stones" is often literally true. The polyhedral stones of immense size erected in the Inca fortress of Sacsahuaman, defending the high ground above Cuzco, represent an incredible feat of engineering. In fact, the entire Andean landscape was transformed by the Inca through their stone-walled terracing to retain agricultural fields along steep mountain slopes. The Andes have, in a sense, been transformed into an Inca artifact.

To the student of the New World's indigenous cultures, there are more differences than similarities to be found among them. Having worked largely in the ancient cultures of Mexico and Central America, I am struck by Andean civilization, especially that of the Inca, as the creation of technocrats and bureaucrats, where perfect organization was the rule. The Inca empire was far more efficient than the Aztec, but on the other hand individual expression was totally submerged in the ethic of the general good. In contrast, Aztec culture was dynamic, even dangerous, but always exciting with the full flavor of a culture in which religious fervor and a knowledge of the precariousness of all human existence was always evident. It is no accident that most Aztec sculpture is considered great, while Inca art is thought barely worthy of the name.

Whatever one's preferences for individual New World cultures, all pales in light of the realization that only about 10 percent of ten million Incas and eleven million Aztecs survived. Both of these empires were thrown into the dust for motives that were base and centered on greed. Their fragmented cultures, societies, and religious systems were doomed in the face of the continuing Hispanic onslaught.

—Michael D. Coe

Mr. Coe is a professor of anthropology at Yale University and curator of anthropology at the Peabody Museum.

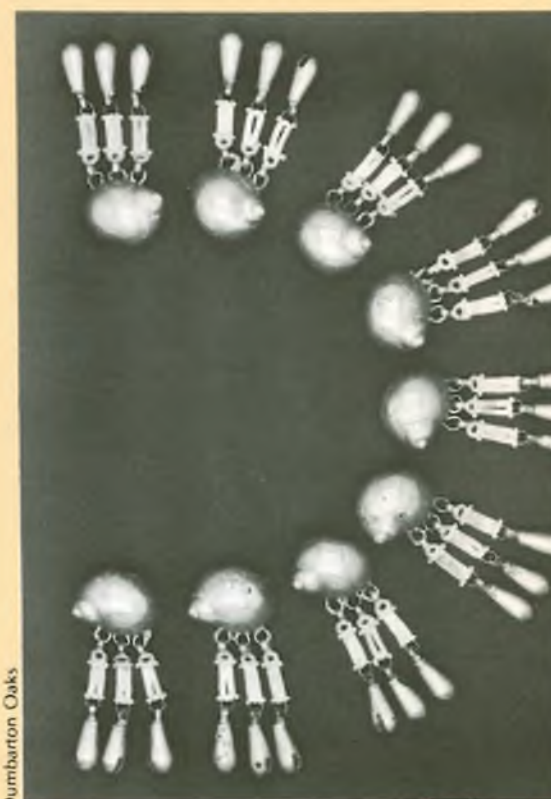


The Brooklyn Museum



photograph by Anna Benson-Giles. The Odyssey Project

(top to bottom) The jaguar was a prominent cult object in the Aztec religion. Although the great cat depicted here is reclining, its carefully delineated musculature and alert head effectively express its latent ferocity. The line in the tourist guides that "you can't slip a knife blade between two Inca stones" is illustrated by this great arch at Machu Picchu. An Aztec necklace, modeled of snail shells.



Dumbarton Oaks



# The Largest Inca Monument

The first Europeans to see and use the Inca roads were so extraordinarily impressed by them that several accounts praised them as superior to the roads of Europe. What was the cause of their admiration?

The Inca roads were a vast network binding the empire that ruled the Andes mountains for the entire century before the Spanish conquest in 1532. They were constructed with features exotic to European eyes, such as great sets of stairways. Moreover, the roads spanned rugged landscapes that awed Spaniards seeing for the first time deserts, mountains of the magnitude of the Andes, and long stretches of high plateau.

Because it was impossible to see much of the complex of roads at any one time, the earliest European witnesses could not realize that they were seeing what might be pre-Columbian America's largest prehistoric monument. We know from their accounts, however, that early conquerors, priests, and bureaucrats traveled great distances over the Inca highways. It was known in the sixteenth century that one could traverse a major north-south route for a distance of 1,100 leagues (about 3,400 miles).

The Europeans must have known then what we now know in part from surveying and studying Inca roads: that the Incas were a civilization with a sophisticated and efficient organization of power, that they recognized the importance of a system of communication, and that they had amassed an immense labor force.

The extent of the Inca organization is demonstrated by a comprehensive set of state-managed installations along the routes that are as impressive as the roads themselves. At intervals of a day's walk or less, waystations called *tampu* served as lodgings for travelers and as storehouses for storage of supplies. At less frequent intervals, the state maintained administrative centers, which served as links between the Inca capital, Cuzco, and the many ethnic groups governed by the empire. On main routes the state maintained small posts for messenger runners, *chaski*, who, according to a few early European observers, could relay a message from Cuzco to Santiago in about eight days, a distance of almost 2,000 miles. Thus the Inca roads

were crucial to state administration and were in many ways responsible for the strength of the empire.

The emperor required local lords, or their sons or daughters (kinship determined succession not only in the central administration but in the satellite locales), to visit Cuzco for a period of months annually to make sure that Inca culture was known and practiced in all the districts of the empire. The emperor also traveled widely, establishing and defining boundaries and reaffirming alliances. In this way, the roads abetted expansion of the empire through peaceful assimilation; in other cases, through conquest. The roads enabled the rapid movement of armies and, together with the corps of messenger runners, made it possible for the central administration to know in a matter of days about trouble in the outlying districts.

How were the roads built?

The Inca tax system, *mita*, was based on labor. The empire required tribute from its subjects not in goods or in currency, but in the performance of labor service, often annually. Thus, the Inca road system is not only an Inca but an Andean phenomenon, because peoples from many different subject ethnic groups actually built and maintained the roads, albeit under Inca supervision. Because peoples from throughout the Andes helped construct and keep up the roads, the existence of the massive system becomes more comprehensible.

The Spanish viceregal administration of the Andes attempted to maintain at least some of the major Inca routes during the period from the conquest through to the early nineteenth century. It was unable to make the system function on the scale, and with the efficiency, of the Inca empire, and many of the roads were abandoned, or at least not kept up as the high-priority public works they had been in Inca times. The road system continued to decay into the republican period of the nineteenth century, and now in the twentieth century has been partially replaced by new roads for motorized vehicles. Nevertheless, throughout the Andes many Inca roads are still intact and still serve local needs, even long-distance pedestrian travel.

Many interested travelers, explorers, archaeologists, and scholars of Andean affairs have published

reports of sightings of Inca roads. Two books, one by a Peruvian and the other by an Argentine, have attempted to reconstruct the Inca network primarily on the basis of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century historical accounts that detail the locations of the roads and/or their *tampu*. In the Andean republics today Inca roads are a subject of considerable popular and scholarly interest as well as national pride, and thus it was not difficult to organize a pan-Andean survey of segments of Inca roads with the cooperation and support of museums and universities in Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile.

Working with Andean archaeologists, students, and other scholars, I reconnoitered twelve segments of Inca roads, a project under the general sponsorship of the Institute of Andean Research in New York City with funding from NEH, Mr. Leon Pomerance and the Stella and Charles Guttman Foundation. Because our comprehension of the Inca road system had been based primarily on early historical sources, the purpose of the surveys was to clarify and enlarge knowledge of the road system with archaeological tactics. The expeditions over the roads, often undertaken on foot, recovered data on such matters as engineering techniques, bridges, *tampu*, *chaski* posts, local influences on the system, and so forth. The results and analyses of the surveys have been recently published in a book (John Hyslop, *The Inka Road System*, Academic Press, 1984).

One of the more important observations resulting from the surveys is that some of the segments of the system were already established by pre-Inca civilizations, particularly in the territory now governed by Peru, which has been for 3,000 years an area of complex civilizations. It is still impossible to judge what percentage of the Inca system predated the empire, a topic rarely addressed in the early written sources. Only much more careful survey of individual routes will clarify the question. The Inca road system is so large that I was able to survey less than 5 percent of it.

Another useful insight produced by the surveys is that Inca roads are not built in any standard way, but are constructed according to dozens of varying criteria which affect their appearance, width, and

course over the landscape. We observed at least twenty different types of road construction forms ranging from simple paths to broad, paved thoroughfares with retention walls and/or curbs. There is a tendency for Inca roads to become narrower when passing through valuable agricultural terrain, or over steep slopes. When the same routes continued over flat grasslands or deserts, they were often built with widths that must have exceeded the needs of the traffic on them. A few desert roads approaching coastal valleys exceed seventy-eight feet in width.

Because there were no wheeled vehicles in the Inca Empire, the roads were built for foot and animal (llamas) traffic, which meant, among other things, that the road could pass over surprisingly steep slopes. They are often remarkably direct, ascending mountain slopes with thousands of stone steps, or steep sequences of zig-zags. Many other characteristics typify certain types of Inca roads: sidewalls of stone or adobe, stone paving (primarily in wet areas), bridges with stone or wood superstructures, causeways over lakes and bays, retention walls, curbing, and stone pile route markers.

Although the Inca Empire maintained more than 1,000 roadside lodgings (*tampu*) at frequent intervals along its routes, only a few of these have ever been studied in any detail. The survey project was able to locate and map many new *tampu*. The new information about them indicates that they were highly varied. As a matter of fact, perhaps no two in the empire were identical. All of them appear to have housed travelers and goods, and often served other purposes, but each one reflects a special relationship between the varying needs of the state and the different local cultural and environmental circumstances where it was located. In some cases, non-Inca, local buildings or villages were incorporated into the *tampu* system. In isolated areas passed by the roads, the Inca Empire built its own *tampu*, and Inca architectural characteristics are found in these *tampu*, even those thousands of kilometers from the Inca capital.

The administrative centers on Inca roads are also highly varied. In the densely populated Andes of Peru and Bolivia, these were often



large urban settlements, loosely called cities. Sometimes they were built by the empire, and in other cases they were pre-existing settlements incorporated into the Inca administrative network, often with Inca additions or modifications. The road surveys in the southern part of the Inca Empire found the administrative centers to be smaller than in the north—evidence that the Incas were able to govern large territories without the large urban settlements traditionally regarded as characteristic of states and empires.

Finally, it is interesting to note how roads in Inca culture assumed symbolic importance beyond that assumed by roads in our own culture. The roads became a symbol of the state, or "flag" of the empire, as the ethnohistorian John V. Murra has put it. Roads were also used to conceive the cultural geography of the empire. One early written source reports that the Incas located peoples by recalling their locations on sequences of place names on main roads. In many places roads were used to conceive and define spatial divisions, large and small. Each of the four main routes leading out of the capital Cuzco, for example, was named for one of the four main divisions of the empire, and provided access to that division.

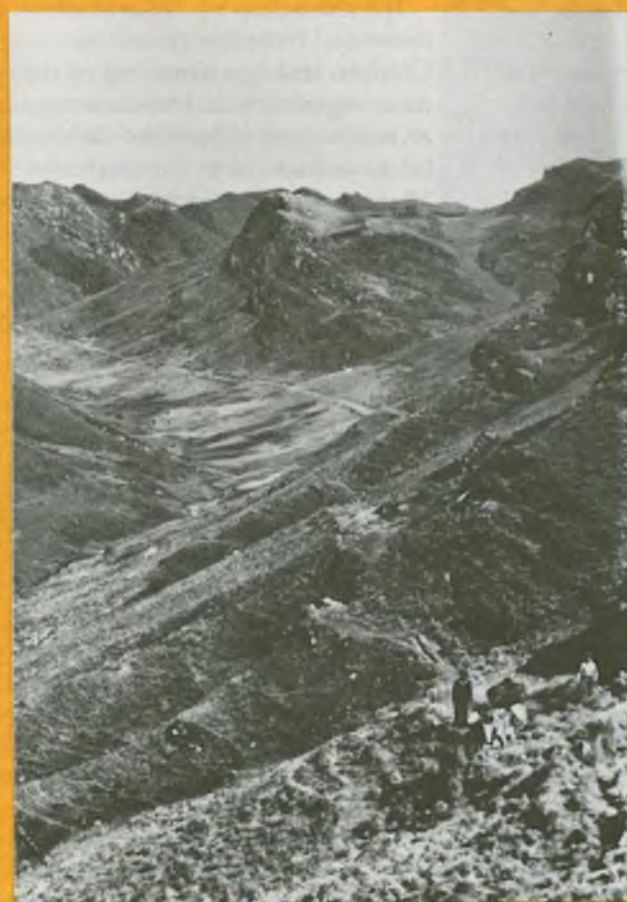
Many questions remain to be clarified about the Inca road system. There are many roads yet to be located, and the nature of the state installations on them requires further study. This is because only a small part of the system has been carefully studied by archaeologists and because new information about it will continue to emerge as additional early historical sources are discovered and published. Our understanding of the scope and significance of this monumental network will continue to develop, as in the past, because of the research of many different scholars working in diverse parts of the empire.

—John Hyslop

Mr. Hyslop is an archaeologist with the Institute of Andean Research and has been working as a research fellow at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

"An Archaeological Investigation of the Inka Road Systems" / John Hyslop, Institute of Andean Research, NYC / \$13,000/1981-82/\$3,000/1982/Basic Research

(counterclockwise) A map showing the surveyed segments of the Inca Road System. Low stone sidewalls define this Inca road in a desert region of the north coast of Peru. Another Inca road in Peru's department of Huanuco passes along a mountain slope. The segment remains generally intact despite 450 years of neglect. Stone sidewalls define a road passing along the southwest shore of Lake Titicaca, near the Peruvian/Bolivian border.



photographs courtesy of John Hyslop



# TREASURES FROM A SACRED WELL

Submerged for centuries in the water and silt of a sacred well and then hidden away for more than seventy years in museum store-rooms, Maya treasures from one of the most dramatic archaeological discoveries of the century are finally coming to light.

"Cenote of Sacrifice: Maya Treasures from the Sacred Well at Chichén Itzá," a traveling, interpretative exhibition of 300 artifacts from Harvard's Peabody Museum, will be on view through spring at the Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul, and will then travel to six other cities in the United States.

The exhibition presents the great Maya-Toltec city of Chichén Itzá and its sacred cenote as a case study in Maya history and culture. From A.D. 750 to 1250, Chichén Itzá was the political, economic, social, and religious capital of a powerful expansionist Mayan state dominating the Yucatan. By this time, technically known as the Terminal Classic and Post Classic periods, Maya civilization was a thousand years old. Chichén Itzá, ruled by a political and religious elite supported by a vast peasantry in the outlying areas, is representative of this fully developed Maya culture and its hierarchical society.

Beyond these general descriptions, we know very little about the people who lived at Chichén Itzá. According to exhibition curator Orrin Shane III, the site is "the best-known and the least-known of the Maya cities." It has become a favorite site for tourists, but there has been little concentrated study of its archaeology.

We cannot be sure of its origins, says Shane, but there is evidence to suggest that a militarist populace there wrenched power from a rival city, probably Uxmal to the north. "We don't know how many people lived there," says Shane, "or who their leaders were, or very much about the origins of the city. Many of the great classic cities, such as Tikal, grew from tiny farming communities, and we have been able to trace that gradual growth." But life

in Chichén Itzá before A.D. 750 remains a mystery. After that time, the burst of construction demonstrates the prominence of religion.

The Great Cenote at Chichén Itzá was "one of the most important religious sites in Mesoamerica," according to Shane. "Cenote" is the Spanish equivalent of the Yucatan word *ts'onot*, a natural well eroded in the limestone shelf forming Mexico's Yucatan peninsula. In addition to being a permanent source of water for the ancient Maya, these cenotes were considered portals to the underworld where important gods resided. Imbued with sacred significance, certain cenotes became places for religious rituals where offerings were made to the gods.

Fortunately for archaeologists studying Maya civilization, the religious rites included hurling precious objects into the cenote as sacrifices. From the Great Cenote at Chichén Itzá, 30,000 sacrificial objects have been recovered and studied for information about the people who placed them there.

Known to the Spaniards and popularized by nineteenth-century travelers, the cenote at Chichén Itzá was first successfully excavated early in this century by Edward H. Thompson. On March 5, 1904, Thompson lowered a steel bucket into the sacred well. After more than a month of inconclusive results, Thompson dredged up a wooden object, which he described as "beautifully carved into the figure of a personage richly dressed and ornamented," with a mask of beaten gold. Thompson continued to dredge the cenote for seven years, amassing the collection of 30,000 artifacts which he sent back to his sponsors—the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago and the Peabody Museum at Harvard.

The exhibition of 300 artifacts recovered from the cenote at Chichén Itzá is a sampling of the most significant of Mesoamerican archaeological collections. In the exhibit, artifacts from the Peabody Museum are grouped by medium: gold, copper, jade, wood, textiles, stone, ceramics, copal, and rubber. Graphic panels show the sources of materials imported from outside the Yucatan and explain methods of production, such as jade carving and Mesoamerican metallurgy.

Unique conditions in the deep water-filled cenote preserved a remarkable assemblage of wood objects and textile fragments, which have survived at no other Central American archaeological site because they normally succumbed to the accelerated process of decay in the tropical jungle. Thus, Shane points out that the Peabody Museum's comprehensive collection reveals information about Maya culture that is not evident from other archaeological excavations. Although contemporary Maya texts described an elaborate textile industry, for example, the only tangi-

ble proof ever found of this craft is in the fragments of cotton textiles, including delicate brocades and lace, recovered by Thompson. A small, companion exhibit of modern Maya textiles organized by Louis Casagrande, curator of ethnology at the Science Museum demonstrates a striking direct descent of design motifs from the ancient textiles.

Casts of sculpture from Chichén Itzá were specially made and placed in the exhibition to give visitors a sense of the monumental character of Maya sculpture and architecture. A model of the central portion of the religious center, which encompassed a dramatic complex of immense open plazas, low palace-like structures, and temples atop high pyramids, shows the cenote and the post-and-lintel architecture of the shrine. Visitors enter the exhibition between two twelve-foot, plumed-serpent columns against a photo mural recreating the Temple of Warriors.

During Chichén Itzá's era of greatest power, the sacred cenote was a kind of "state church where official offerings were made," says Shane. There, the most powerful political and religious leaders in the land offered precious gold and jade objects to the deities, perhaps to avert disaster or divine the future. Eclipsed by the ascendancy of Mayapan, Chichén Itzá ceased to be a major political capital after A.D. 1250, but its cenote continued as a pilgrimage shrine into the post-Spanish Conquest period, particularly for the common people who made humble offerings of wood and copper.

Artifacts in the exhibition are divided into two phases of cenote ritual reflecting the prominence and abandonment of Chichén Itzá. An exquisite gold figurine acquired from lower Central America as an offering by a powerful Maya lord or priest in the early phase is a vivid contrast to the simple wood idol offered by a peasant in the late phase. Many of the objects recov-



Cast copper bells are among the treasures retrieved from the Sacred Cenote.

Miniature gold masks, approximately A.D. 900-1100.





(top) Female figurine made of pottery found in the Sacred Cenote at Chichén Itzá. (bottom) A gold monkey bell is just one of more than 300 Maya treasures from the Sacred Well at Chichén Itzá. The exhibit, drawn from the collections of Harvard University's Peabody Museum, will feature a representative selection of the 30,000 gold, jade, wood and other artifacts recovered from the Yucatan well.

ered from the cenote appear to have been damaged intentionally, or ritually "killed" before thrown into the sacred well. Gold sheet was crumbled, jade was shattered, and wood was broken. Copal, a resin incense, was used extensively in the cenote cult. Molded into figurines, it was burned in blue-painted ceramic bowls to summon the *chacs*—rain deities that were essential to the prosperity of Maya society, which was based on a slash-and-burn agricultural system with corn as the staple crop.

In his sixteenth-century account of Maya life in the Yucatan, the Spanish Bishop Diego de Landa described the sacrificial ritual that he witnessed at the cenote of Chichén Itzá.

Into this well they have had . . . the custom of throwing men alive as a sacrifice to the gods, in times of drought, and they believed that they did not die though they never saw them again. They also threw into it a great many other things like precious stones and things which they prized.

When Thompson began dredging the cenote, he established the area to be searched by throwing logs of approximately human weight into the well from the shrine on the south side.

Evidence of human sacrifice is indicated by the embossed gold plate depicting a scene of heart removal and a sacrificial knife included in the exhibition, as well as human skeletal remains found in the

cenote (not exhibited). Human sacrifice was a more common tradition among the ancient Aztec and Toltec peoples of central Mexico than the Maya and may have been brought to the Yucatan by the Toltecs ca. A.D. 800.

Artifacts recovered from the cenote tell us about the military and political activities of the Maya. For example, rituals related to warfare and conquest are suggested by the complete weaponry of a typical warrior—spear thrower, darts, stone spear points, and clubs—assembled in the exhibit. Valuable objects like the carved jade head from Piedras Negras may have been sent in tribute to Chichén Itzá by foreign cities as depicted in murals.

The vast Maya trading empire is evident from precious gold and jade objects in the exhibition, such as a gold frog from the area we know today as Panama. Great trade networks linked the Maya with the peoples of central Mexico and southern Central America.

Even before Chichén Itzá's ascendancy, the Maya had invented a complex system of calendrics that integrated a ritual calendar of 260 days with the cycles of the sun, moon, and Venus, observed by Mayan astronomers. They probably devised their arithmetical system to keep track of the days. By studying Maya calendrics and mathematics, archaeologists have translated recorded Maya dates into our equivalents, thereby establishing a chronology for archaeological sites.

In the exhibition visitors will be introduced to these complex systems by a mechanical model of the Maya calendar and an interactive computer enabling them to calculate with Maya numbers.

Shane believes that "it is important for the public to realize that the Maya were a literate people who recorded their history, politics, and religion in books." To emphasize this aspect of Maya culture, the exhibit includes a facsimile copy of the Dresden Codex, one of three Maya books Cortez sent to Charles V of Spain. It was a book of prophecy and divination with a religious almanac, based on astrology and probably consulted before offerings were made at the cenote. Maya hieroglyphics and papermaking techniques are the subject of demonstrations regularly scheduled at the museum during the exhibit.

An interpretative audiovisual program gives visitors to the exhibit an overview of Maya culture and introduces them to Chichén Itzá. The Science Museum of Minnesota uses its Anthropology Through Theatre program to interpret nonmaterial aspects of the Maya culture. Based on primary sources demonstrating the clash between Christianity and the Maya religion, one drama reenacts a confrontation between Diego da Landa and Cocom, an aristocratic Maya priest who was arrested, interrogated, and executed by the Inquisition. Another scenario depicts an ancient Maya legend, and two monologues based on autobiographical accounts portray Edward Thompson recounting his excavation of the cenote and giving his impressions of Chichén Itzá.

Shane notes that the discipline of archaeology is graphically inter-

preted for the public as a process of "reconstruction and explanation of the past." A series of ten interpretative panels illustrate the story of the individuals and institutions who pieced together the history of Chichén Itzá and its sacred cenote.

"Cenote of Sacrifice" was organized as a cooperative project between the Science Museum of Minnesota and the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard, supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The idea for the exhibit grew out of the Peabody Museum's Collections Sharing Program. Through this NEH-supported program, a portion of the vast research collections in storage at the Peabody is being made available to institutions for exhibits that can be seen by a large audience for the first time. In preparation for exhibition, these irreplaceable artifacts receive sorely needed conservation treatment.

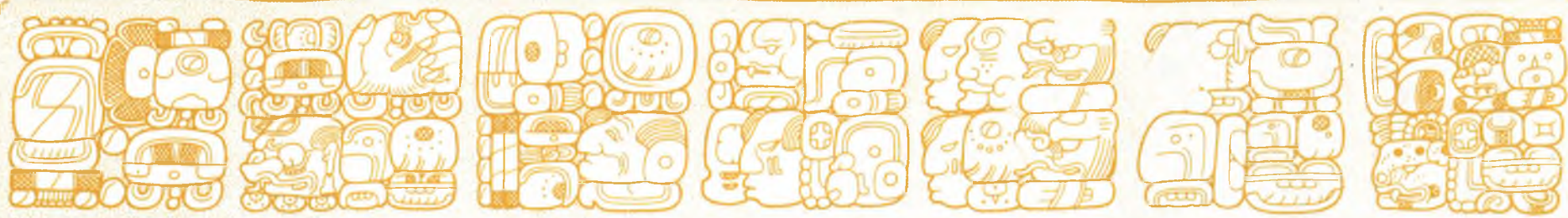
"Cenote of Sacrifice" will be on view at the Science Museum of Minnesota through the spring of 1985. After closing in St. Paul, it will travel to the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, the Oakland Museum, the Houston Museum of Natural Science, the IBM Gallery in New York City, and two other cities not yet confirmed.

—Suzanne B. Schell

*"The City of Chichén Itzá and Its Sacred Well as a Study of Maya History and Culture"/Orrin C. Shane III, Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul/\$15,000/1983/"Interpretation of the History of the Maya-Toltec City of Chichén Itzá"/\$350,000/1984-85/Humanities Projects in Museums and Historical Organizations*







# MESSAGES FROM THE MAYA

Certainly one of the most unusual expenses ever subsidized by NEH is the "mules for hire" item in the Peabody Museum's grant to prepare the *Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions*. Why mules? They're still the only way to reach many of the ruins half-buried in the luxuriant jungles of the Yucatan peninsula, the Peten region in Guatemala, and parts of Belize and Honduras, where the Maya civilization once flourished.

The *Corpus* is a massive effort to catalogue and publish photographs and drawings of all the known Maya hieroglyphic inscriptions along with their accompanying artwork. Over the past century, many different archaeologists have made drawings at some of the several hundred Maya sites, but the *Corpus* represents the first collected edition, the comprehensive reference

work that uses a uniform system of documentation and incorporates material from newly discovered sites. "Alfred P. Maudslay [the first to document Maya ruins] was a giant of his time, one hundred years ago," explains Ian Graham, the project's principal researcher. "I'm a fanatical admirer of his, but let's face it—mistakes were made."

Adding piquancy to Graham's task is the fact that just in the last twenty years have Mayanists begun to decipher the meaning of most of the inscriptions. The Maya were the only culture in the New World to develop a system of hieroglyphics—a form of writing based on pictorial symbols. At twenty-year intervals during their classic period between A.D. 300 and 900 the Maya erected *stelae*, monumental stone slabs carved with bas-reliefs, in the courtyards of their elaborate

temples. The hieroglyphic symbols and drawings on a given *stela* seem to be related to each other in much the same way as a photograph and caption in *National Geographic*. Unfortunately, no one has unearthed a Maya Rosetta stone, offering a parallel inscription in Greek.

Many of the inscriptions concern the complex astronomical calendars the Maya had worked out to govern their religious life and the closely related cycle for planting and harvesting maize. Chiefly because numbers are easier than words to translate—dates can be checked for internal consistency—scholars managed to unravel the calendrical parts of the inscriptions first. "By 1960, we had a splendid skeleton of dates, but very little idea of what happened on those dates," Graham recalls.

Part of the difficulty resulted from the shadow cast by the theories of Sylvanus G. Morley (1883-1948), the predominant Mayanist of his generation. Morley saw the Maya as astronomers above all. Thus if a drawing depicted what looked like five soldiers, he was likely to interpret these symbolically as five planets, not as military men. In Morley's view the *stelae* contained no historical or personal information.

Then in the early 1960s, Tatiana Proskouriakoff, a scholar who

worked with Morley on many expeditions found a new way to read the inscriptions. Proskouriakoff noticed that the dates on a single group of monuments fell within the span of a human lifetime and that many of the same signs and scenes appeared on other sets of monuments. For example, a carving that showed a warrior holding a captive by the hair often included a particular hieroglyphic on the captive's thigh, and one could find the same hieroglyphic in the text of the accompanying inscription. Her conclusion: that hieroglyphic meant something like "captive of." Proskouriakoff's view, which quickly became the accepted one, was that the drawings and inscriptions on the *stelae* gave an account of a ruler's life, a history of events.

Stimulated by this discovery, scholars of the Maya have made a series of breakthroughs. In recent years they have compiled a dynastic history of certain cities and made linkages between their ruling families; perhaps three-quarters of the hieroglyphic signs can now be given some reading. Part of the aim of the *Corpus*, then, is to supply this mini-hive of scholars—there are about forty serious Mayanists in the United States—with slightly refined material for further studies. "There is probably no such thing as an indispensable project in Maya (or



Archaeologists Graham and Mathews map each site they visit and photograph any objects with inscriptions. They then draw the designs and texts under strong lights to bring out all the weathered features. Their drawing from the lintel in the photograph at right shows the wife of a Maya ruler engaged in ritual self-sacrifice. She is passing a rope studded with thorns through her tongue. Her sacrifice is a voluntary offering to the gods.



photographs from the *Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphics*



other) archaeology," comments Mayanist Richard E. W. Adams, of the University of Texas at San Antonio, "but the *Corpus* comes close."

In essence, by publishing cleaned-up legible versions of this material, Graham and his fellow investigator, Peter Mathews, are saving Mayanists the great expense and painstaking effort required to gather it in the field.

A number of the archaeologists who visited Central America in the early days wrote melodramatic accounts of their travels that read in places like scripts for the next Indiana Jones movie. There was Edward H. Thompson's encounter with a rattlesnake at the bottom of a stone cistern in the ruins at Labna and Morley's description of being ambushed by government troops during a revolution—an attack that took the life of his expedition's doctor.

Graham, who has been spending about four months in the field each year since 1959, downplays the boy's adventure side of his field work. "It's true that you still can't get to most of the sites by Land Rover, but the hacking-through-the-jungle aspect is overdramatized," he says. "The jungle is not hostile, not terrible; it's really rather peaceful, and I feel at home there."

The major difficulties are mundane, centering on the weather. Field work is confined to the dry season—the months of February through May, when a Land Rover can get across the region's many swamps and the logging trails are at their most passable. Occasionally Mathews or Graham will slog through a swamp to get to a site only to find all the waterholes in the vicinity dried up.

Over the years Graham has managed to discover sixteen new sites, mainly through talking with local chicle gatherers and loggers. "I can question them more effectively in the local dialect now," he says. "A woodsman will tell me about a site, and I'll say, 'Let's go,' trying not to get too excited. Since I plot the trail with my compass every sixty seconds, I've accumulated my own maps of trails and campsites. The chewing gum gatherers use local names, not the ones you find on standard maps. Part of the reason I've spent most of my time in Peten so far is to make full use of this detailed geography."

"Often, however, the sites turn out to be uninteresting, or somebody else has been there before, although there's always more information to be gotten out of any site. Part of the point of this project is to extract more detail from already published material."

In addition to mapping each site and photographing any objects with inscriptions, Mathews and Graham make drawings of the designs and texts under strong

lights directed at various angles to bring out all their features. Certain details of the weathered and sometimes defaced bas-reliefs become visible only under this kind of scrutiny.

What makes the task one for experts is the puzzle-like difficulty of matching pieces from the many sites that have been looted. For several reasons—stepped-up enforcement of laws to keep pre-Columbian art within the country of its origin and the simple fact that most first-rate objects have been taken already—little looting goes on nowadays. In the 1960s, though, when word got around among the local people that collectors would pay well for pieces, many sites were carved up.

A section of the Peabody Museum's performance report to the NEH for 1982 gives a good idea of the problems researchers face in the field:

Then Graham returned to the important site El Peru (badly damaged by looters in the late 1960s), where he had begun systematic work in 1980. This year, again, part of his effort was spent in mapping the very numerous mounds, and part in recording the surviving pieces of sculpture. One task undertaken was to examine and try to recover useful data from a scattered collection of about thirty blocks of stone, all of them showing several faces cut with saws, these being the remains of two *stelae* that had been cut into chunks to facilitate a further slicing with saws to remove their carved front surfaces. As a first step, all surfaces of the blocks were scrubbed clean of moss and a measured drawing made of each face. Then an attempt was made on the basis of these drawings to establish the original place of each block within the *stelae*—a jigsaw puzzle in fact—the fit sometimes being checked by dragging a block into contact with its supposed mate. By this means not only were the original dimensions of the *stelae* and the pattern of saw-cuts established, but also most of the inscription on the sides of one *stela* was reconstituted. On return to Cambridge the project files quickly yielded clear proof that the missing front surfaces of these *stelae* are now on exhibit, neatly restored, in art museums in Cleveland and Fort Worth.

This particular piece of detective work had a larger consequence. The name of the ruler recorded on one of the El Peru monuments is the same as that on other monuments whose source was unknown. Epigraphers, those who make a career of deciphering ancient inscriptions, had referred to these as coming from Site Q. It now appears that the mysterious Site Q could well be El Peru.

Although Mayanists have been aware of the need for a comprehensive reference source almost from the beginning, Proskouriakoff's discoveries and the looting of the sixties added impetus to the idea. With seed money from the family foundation of Washington lawyer and amateur archaeologist Charles Guttman, Ian Graham launched

the *Corpus* in 1968 sponsored by Harvard's Peabody Museum, but the project really picked up speed in 1976, when NEH began major funding.

The 51-year-old Graham is something of an oddity among the small fraternity of modern-day Mayanists. An Englishman who took his B.A. in physics at Dublin University, he became fascinated with field research while working in the conservation department at London's National Gallery. Annual expeditions in single-minded pursuit of Maya sites have left him no time for such traditional academic ambitions as earning a Ph.D. and rising along the tenure track in a university. His work schedule follows a nearly unvarying cycle: four months in the field followed by eight months of working up his notes and drawings into publishable form.

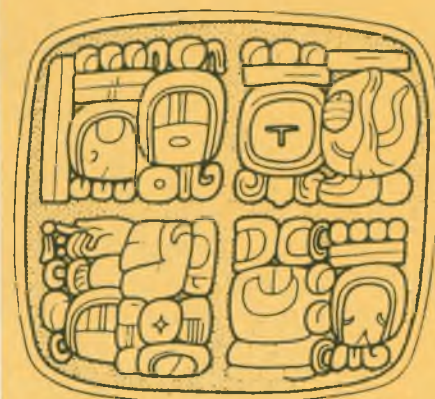
Three years ago Graham took a six-month sabbatical to work on a biography of his great predecessor Alfred P. Maudslay after the MacArthur Foundation awarded him one of its no-strings-attached-to-"genius" grants. The foundation's \$250,000 also enabled Graham to build a combination house-base camp on a Guatemalan lake and allowed him to bring on board as his coresearcher the young anthropologist Peter Mathews, who is working on his Yale Ph.D. dissertation. In October, Mathews too won a MacArthur prize. Despite his MacArthur windfall, Graham remains reluctant to leave the jungles where "it's hard to tear away from an enticing ruin you've just heard about."

So far six volumes of the *Corpus* have been published by the Harvard University Press. The volumes are organized on a site-by-site basis, and the Peabody researchers have informally circulated photocopies of field drawings among other scholars. Because of the deteriorating condition of many ruins, Graham has given priority to the fieldwork over publishing his backlog of notes. He estimates that perhaps 75 percent of this work is now complete, although one gets the impression that for a true Mayanist no site is ever completely documented. The only Maya inscriptions the *Corpus* does not take up are those on pottery, which deal with a different subject—life in the underworld.

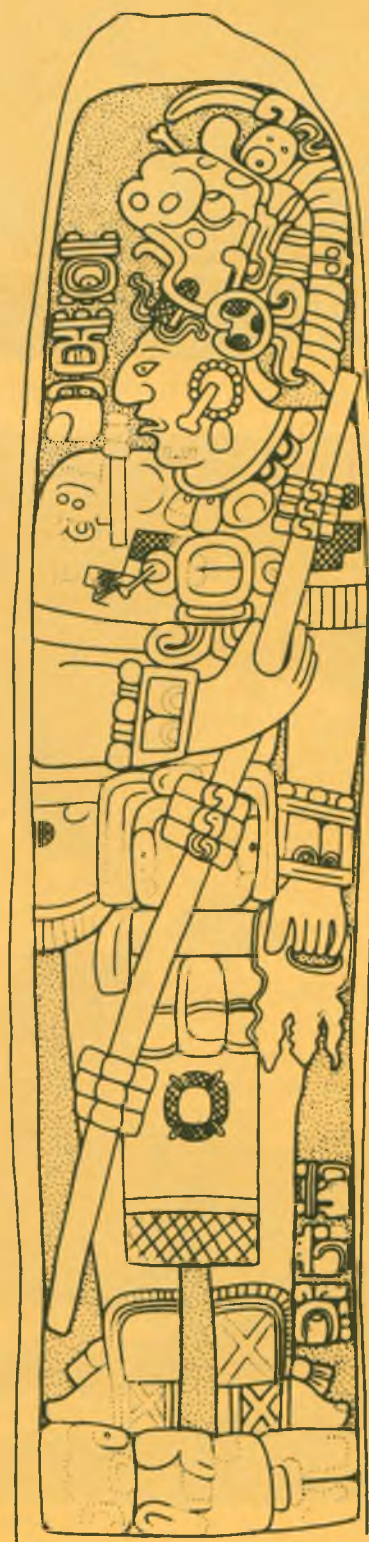
Each volume is published in an edition of 1,500 for sale at \$12 each; surprisingly enough, two volumes have sold out. Obviously, the work has implications beyond the hardcore Mayanist—for art historians, anthropologists, and epigraphers studying the patterns by which written language emerges.

Graham and Mathews have established readings for many of the inscriptions they are documenting, but have refrained from publishing their own interpretations for

(continued on page 27)



(top) The drawing and photograph show inscriptions on the risers of stairways leading to a palace or holy place. They are part of a series of calendrical calculations recording the history of a ruling family. (bottom) The stela, showing a warrior, is from the same site.





# Stoic S



*Nina Manegak, from the village of Tununak, on the southern Bering Sea.*

hope, would concentrate the energies of our ambition on securing a quick departure, and the sooner the better. In contrast, an old Eskimo told me this about her life, her continuing struggle—and dreams: “We know what to expect, so it is not so bad to be here; visitors worry about us; our own people who have gone to the cities want to rescue us; but we are doing all right here and maybe some of them need to be rescued! I won’t say we can always sit and drink coffee and laugh and be sure there will be plenty to eat and no danger to us! We have to keep ourselves ready to go—there’s always something that we must do if we expect to eat, and if we expect to be around here for another season. My children learn one big lesson: Your sleep has to earned!”

“But I’m not complaining! From what we hear about our people in other parts of this country [Alaska] there is no reason for us to complain. Imagine—Eskimo people who can’t find food for themselves, or even cook it themselves. Imagine—Eskimo people who wait for the airplanes and wait and wait. I wouldn’t mind being able to fly, but I wouldn’t want to sit around hoping a plane would bring my meal to me. I’d be ashamed!”

She and her husband virtually envelop their children and grandchildren in the colder months, and both are wonderful storytellers. They also have a wry ironic side; they can smile at their own mistakes and notice them in others without becoming pompous or self-important.

As I sat with them, walked with them, over a decade ago, I began to realize that I was in the company, alas, of a dying breed of Americans—as they well know themselves. Soon enough snowmobiles and hi-fi technology and small planes and maybe some oil drilling equipment would herald, for them, “civilization.” Meanwhile they held fast to their old ways—a nearness to the rhythms of Arctic life. I remember, with special fondness, those trips that enabled me to see breaks in the ice, the emerging warmth begin to wear away the heavy grip of a tenaciously severe Arctic winter. I also remember the exuberant delight of summer—flowers bursting forth, water everywhere free of ice, birds and insects as casual as if they would never be threatened by a first blast of chill air, by the sudden silent fall of the first snow.

But it is the people I cannot forget during these times: their

I went to Alaska for the first time in 1973, when it was easier than it is now to witness the old Eskimo virtues—aspects of the everyday life lived by a proud, stoic people, at once amiable and fiercely self-reliant. In rural villages my son and I met elderly men and women who were not at all interested in oil wells and Coca-Cola and pizzas and the arrival and departure schedule of cargo planes with their load of liquor or rock music records or video cassettes. They were men who hunted and fished. They were women who had a keen eye for changes in the sky’s light, a ready ear for the wind’s shifting messages. They were, really, stoic survivors, anxious only to keep on being alive, to see their children or grandchildren also stay alive.

Not that they lacked hope and ambition. Anyone who has accompanied an Eskimo on his or her daily rounds, to find food, to strengthen a particular home’s structure, even to have the fun of a game, knows that these are people who stand up long and hard for themselves against considerable odds. Most of us, confronted with their circumstances, would lose



*Eskimo Catholic deacons in training to become priests.*



# THE Humanities GUIDE

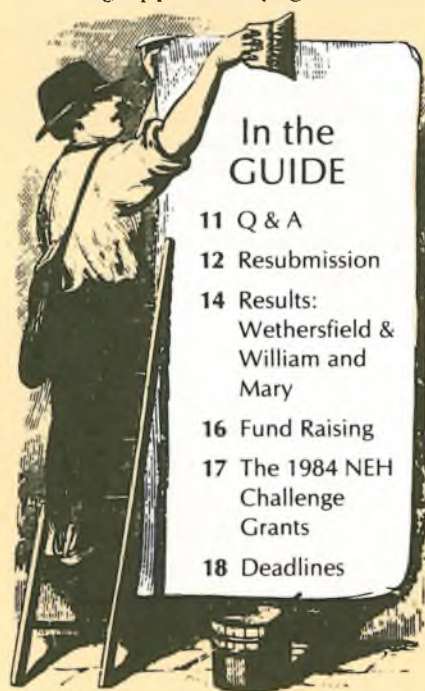


## What is a Challenge Grant?

This year the Endowment offered \$15.8 million in Challenge Grants to 45 institutions, grants that will work to prime the pump of private support for humanities organizations. In a challenge grant, each federal dollar is awarded for every \$3 dollars that an institution has raised from private sources, so that the \$15.8 million is expected to generate more than \$47.4 million of private-sector support.

The Challenge Grant program is the only NEH program that does not support particular projects in the humanities; rather, the program offers a humanities institution the opportunity to strengthen its financial base in a number of ways. Challenge funds can be used to establish endowments or cash reserves; to renovate, repair, or add to existing facilities; defray continuing or cumulative debts or mortgages; purchase equipment; or augment acquisitions. In each case, the expenditure must be used for the study or preservation of the humanities.

Descriptions of how this year's grantees propose to use their funding appear on page 17.



## NEH Challenge Grants: Questions and Answers

**Q** Must an institution be devoted entirely to work within the humanities to be eligible for an NEH challenge grant?

**A** No. An institution may apply for a challenge grant to provide long-term enhancement of that portion of its activities involving humanities programming.

**Q** May an institution request a challenge grant for more than one purpose?

**A** Yes, institutions frequently request funding for several purposes. An institution may require money for both renovation and endowment to cover increased operating costs, for example, or may need acquisition funds as well as equipment for cataloguing or conservation.

**Q** May the challenge grant and matching funds be used for general operating support?

**A** No. Challenge grants are awarded to help institutions build long-term capital resources for activities in the humanities. General operating support does not fulfill this purpose.

**Q** What are some examples of eligible expenditures?

**A** Endowments or cash reserves restricted to the support of programs, personnel, or activities within the humanities; renovation of existing facilities; purchase of equipment; library acquisitions or the purchase of collections or other materials pertinent to the humanities; costs for cataloguing, restoring, or conserving humanities texts and materials, reduction or defrayment of continuing or cumulative debts, notes, or mortgages, to

the extent that such payments bear upon expenses within the humanities.

Note that there is a distinction between "eligible" expenditures and a competitive or compelling plan of expenditures. Does the application illustrate why this proposed plan is the best way for this institution to use its NEH challenge grant at this time?

**Q** What makes a proposal strong?

**A** A strong proposal contains specific demonstrations of the following criteria for funding:

- a clear sense of the institution's mission and priorities;
- high quality for programs and activities in the humanities;
- long-term impact of the challenge grant on the quality of the applicant's programs, resources, and services in the humanities;
- impact on the applicant's financial stability and capability to use resources more efficiently;
- demonstration of financial and programmatic need;
- effective long-range planning about programs, finances, and management;
- probability that the fund-raising plan will prove successful, will broaden the base of support, and will develop sources likely to continue contributing beyond the grant period.

**Q** What are the major reasons that proposals are rejected?

**A** In a word, vagueness. Very often, an unsuccessful proposal failed to describe the actual nature or role of the humanities within the organization or institution. Next, and often related to the first reason, the proposed expenditures appeared to have

little long-range impact on the quality of its humanities activities, programs, or resources. The brochure of program guidelines, available on request from the NEH Public Affairs Office, provides additional information and examples of the common pitfalls in unsuccessful applications.

**Q** How does NEH determine which proposals will receive funding?

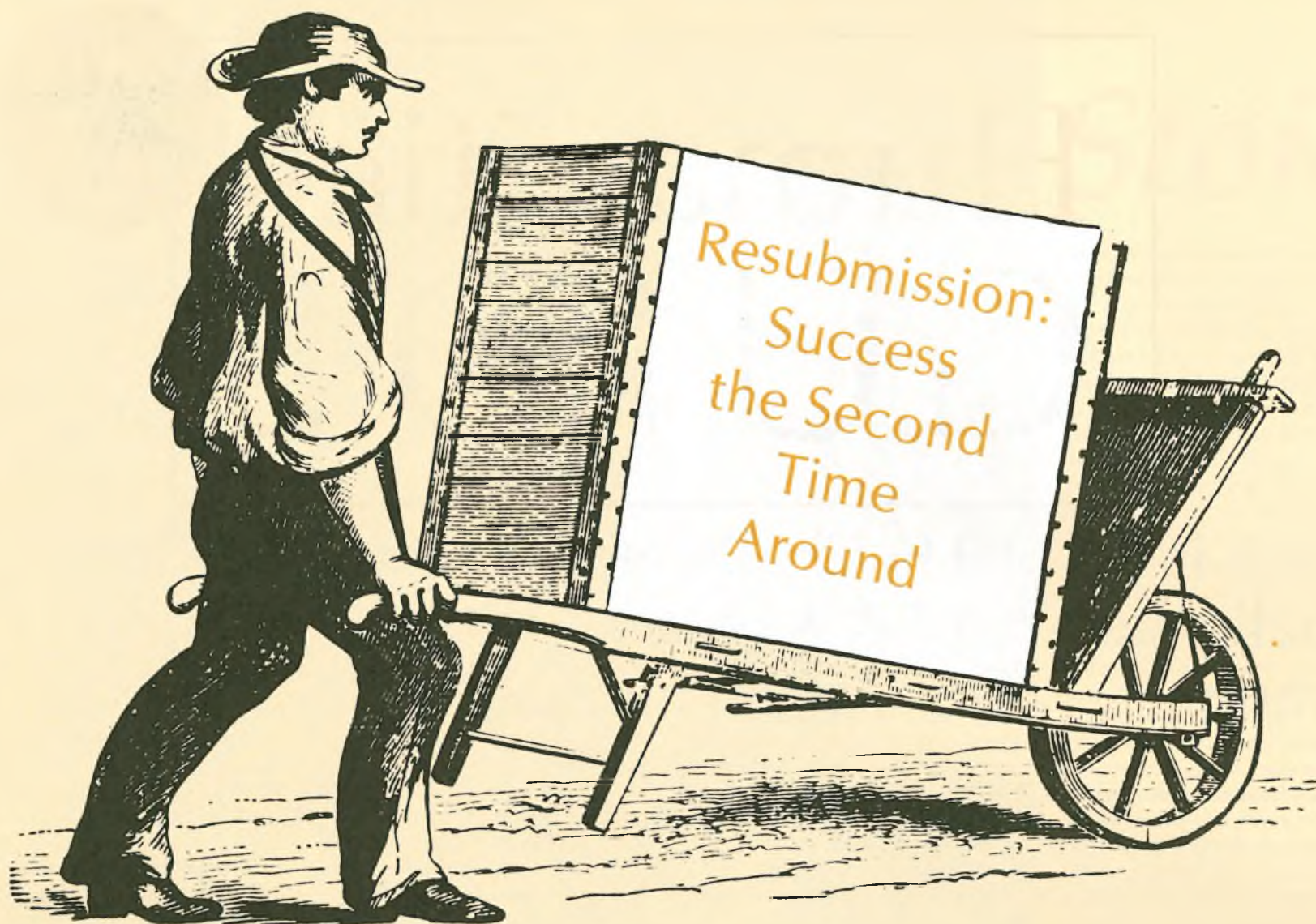
**A** Applications are first reviewed by staff to ensure technical eligibility. The staff verifies, for example, that the institution or organization is itself an eligible applicant and that the application package includes all the required materials, such as the necessary number of copies of the proposal. The applications are then reviewed by outside panels, according to the criteria listed above, and the panels make recommendations to the National Council on the Humanities. The NEH chairman, taking into account the advice provided by the council and the panels, makes the final award.

**Q** Who serves on these panels?

**A** Panelists are people who are familiar with the work of the various kinds of institutions submitting applications. Applications are organized for panel review according to institutional type, such as four-year colleges, public libraries, museums, etc. A panel reviewing applications from four-year colleges, therefore, might include a college president, academic deans and/or provosts, a humanities faculty member, a development officer or a senior financial administrator, and a representative from a grant-

(continued on page 13)





In September 1982, Gettysburg College, a small liberal arts college in Pennsylvania, submitted an application to NEH for a \$750,000 challenge grant that would leverage \$2,250,000 in nonfederal matching funds. The college proposed weaving its challenge grant campaign into the fabric of an advancement campaign for \$14 million, including renovation of two campus buildings to provide a complex for the study of art, music, and drama; endowment for faculty development and the humanities curriculum; and an annual fund in support of the humanities.

The application was not recommended for funding by the National Council on the Humanities in February 1983.

After reviewing the reasons why the project was not recommended for funding and consulting with staff of the Office of Challenge Grants, the college resubmitted a revised application in June 1983. That application received unanimous approval by panelists and was recommended for full funding by the council and chairman in November 1983.

What differences between the first application and the resubmission turned failure into success? According to Gary Lowe, associate vice president for college relations at Gettysburg College, "NEH saw our first application as buckshot. The reviews enabled our second application to be rifle shot."

The original application pre-

sented a comprehensive, well-developed fund-raising plan for Gettysburg to develop a broader base of support than that generated by student fees, charges, and tuition. However, the application failed to explain how an NEH challenge grant would promote work of recognizable merit in the humanities.

One panelist commented that the proposal "appears to have been rather hastily prepared" and not conceptually developed. There was little description of the actual content of humanities programs and courses; therefore, it was difficult for panelists to assess the impact of the challenge grant on Gettysburg's humanities program. Another panelist did not find a sufficiently detailed and explicit description of how enrichment of the curriculum and faculty development would occur. Others noted that part of the proposed expenditures for renovation included refurbishing a building devoted almost entirely to the performing arts—a purpose with merit but with no direct relationship to the humanities.

Although the original request was rejected, Gettysburg College was encouraged to resubmit an application that specifically related its funding needs to strengthening humanities programs at the college.

According to Gary Lowe, "The panelists' evaluation was very just and painfully discerning of our application's weaknesses as well as its strengths. That

evaluation was highly valuable in causing us to articulate a much tighter case for how we would use the challenge grant to advance work in the humanities."

Lowe says that the effort involved in preparing the resubmission was considerably less than that of the first application. The "quick and definitive" feedback from NEH staff, he says, helped the college focus more on the aspirations and potential of its humanities programs and on how a challenge grant from NEH would help bring about beneficial results beyond the term of the grant period.

The resubmitted application also requested considerably less money: \$300,000 (instead of the original request of \$750,000), which would require the college to raise \$900,000 in nonfederal matching funds.

"The amount of money requested by Gettysburg in its first application was not one of the reasons why the panel recommended against funding," says Edythe Manza, program officer in the Office of Challenge Grants. "The Endowment has awarded a number of sizeable challenge grants to small liberal arts colleges. Rather, the first application failed to make a convincing case for the relationship of the amount requested to the college's programs in the humanities and to the long-range plans for strengthening the quality and financial stability of those programs. A small request is not necessarily better or more com-

elling than a large request. Gettysburg's second request was smaller for all the right reasons: It was targeted much more carefully to the college's own convincing assessment of its critical needs in the humanities."

The project description in the resubmitted application set forth a specific and compelling case for how the challenge grant would strengthen Gettysburg's humanities programs:

The \$300,000 Challenge Grant sought in this application will enable the College to raise at least \$1,200,000 in endowment funds specifically devoted to the humanities (45% of the institution's courses and faculty). Of the total amount, \$650,000 will help meet the growing need and demand for faculty and curriculum development funds. A sum of \$450,000 for a Professorship in Civil War Studies will subsidize institutional aspirations to gain prominence as a center of Civil War scholarship. And \$100,000 will provide restricted humanities endowments to undergird a distinguished Civil War Lecture Series and the Senior Scholar's Seminar or a successor honors program.

The resubmitted application got rave reviews from all panelists. One member explained that the appeal of the application was its promise of building on the historical humanities strength of the college: its program in American Civil War history. The proposal's clarity of focus, the thoughtful long-term planning it described, and the qualifications of the scholars merited a recommendation of full funding.



The Office of Challenge Grants uses the resubmitted application as a model for small liberal arts colleges for the following reasons:

1. The application clearly shows the quality of humanities programs at Gettysburg College and how a challenge grant will maintain and enhance the quality of these programs.

2. The application demonstrates the comprehensiveness of the college's long-range planning as an integral part of the college's management and shows how the challenge grant fits into an ongoing process.

3. The application stresses the importance of the challenge grant in a financial sense by showing how the grant will broaden the base of support and result in

continuing support for humanities programs after the grant period has ended.

4. The application shows the impressive qualifications of the college's scholars.

5. The application focuses on the central humanities program, including faculty development and curriculum planning over the long run.

Resubmission is encouraged either because an institution itself is worthy of support but its application is not (as was the case with Gettysburg College the first time) or because an application is found to have merit but is not sufficiently strong to merit funding. Approximately 25 percent of applicants are encouraged to resubmit on that basis. In fact, the Office of Challenge Grants

reports that these second-time applications have a higher rate of success, primarily because they tend to make a stronger case for the humanities.

Panelists are instructed not to make comparative judgments between institutions. Rather, all institutions are encouraged to make a case for their ability to achieve a high level of quality in humanities programs and to show the long-term impact of a challenge grant on these programs.

Grants to improve a college's humanities program are also awarded by the Division of Education Programs for projects related directly to improving the humanities curriculum and faculty. If the project requires funding for a short period (one to three

years), the proposal should be submitted as a conjoined application to the Division of Education Programs. A challenge grant, on the other hand, is meant for the development and strengthening of an institution's financial base over the long run.

For Gettysburg College, the road to resubmission was a painful, but profitable, experience. "If I had but one sentence of advice to other applicants," says Lowe, "I would tell them: Take full advantage of NEH's advice to submit a draft application and to consult with staff before the final application deadline."

—Caroline Taylor

Gary L. Lowe, Gettysburg College, PA/\$300,000/1983-87/Challenge Grants

### Challenge Grants Questions and Answers continued from page 11

making foundation. All panels have seven members to ensure a breadth and depth of expertise.

**Q** What is the timetable for review of applications?

**A** Panels are convened to review applications throughout the summer and early fall; the National Council on the Humanities considers panel recommendations and the chairman of the Endowment reviews the council's recommendations in November. Decisions are available about December 1.

**Q** Is assistance available from the Challenge Grants Office?

**A** Yes. The staff encourages potential applicants to phone or write well in advance of the application deadline. If a draft application is submitted at least six weeks before a deadline, the staff will review, and comment on it. Samples of successful proposals are available from the office lending library.

**Q** When is the next application deadline?

**A** May 1, 1985. This deadline is the same annually.

**Q** Is the minimum match always three to one?

**A** Yes. This requirement is in the legislation governing the program.

**Q** Must an applicant raise all gifts prior to applying?

**A** No. Institutions may do advance fund raising in anticipation of a successful application if they wish, but there is no requirement for raising *any* money prior to the submission of an application. Institutions receiving awards will be required to meet certain minimum matching requirements on an annual basis during the life of the grant. The matching amounts required are indicated by the amount of federal funds offered during each year of the grant.

**Q** Are there eligibility requirements for gifts or does any gift qualify?

**A** Not any gift qualifies. General requirements are that (1) the gift be given within the approved grant period; (2) the gift represent new or increased nonfederal gift income for the grantee; (3) the gift is given in response to the challenge grant; and (4) the gift be used for the purposes specified in the application.

**Q** What are some examples of eligible gifts?

**A** Cash; gifts of negotiable securities; nonfederal grants; special legislated appropriations, other than federal, i.e. special or increased money from local or state governments; net income from special fund-raising benefits, events, sales, auctions; gifts of property under certain conditions; bequests and deferred gifts under certain conditions; some types of in-kind contributions; membership contribu-

tions, gifts from alumni, donations from friends or other group gifts; and increased earned income.

Reminder: Gifts must be appropriate for the purposes of the particular grant. Not all gifts are eligible for all grants.

**Q** What is the average size of a grant?

**A** Applicants may request grants from \$2,000 to \$1.5 million in federal funds over a three-year period. In recent years, the average award has been about \$300,000.

**Q** What are the chances of success?

**A** In 1983 the Endowment received 210 applications. Of these, 75 received awards.

**Q** Is it possible for a single institution to receive more than one challenge grant at the same time?

**A** No.

**Q** May an institution that has had one challenge grant apply for a second challenge grant?

**A** Yes. In 1983, the Endowment began accepting applications from institutions that had completed a first challenge grant. Eligibility requires that an acceptable final report on the first challenge grant must have been submitted to NEH *two years* prior to the submission of an application for a second challenge grant.

Last year, of the seventy-five awards offered, ten were second-time awards.

An additional evaluation criterion is used in the review of applications for second awards. This criterion states: "What was the success of the first award, the degree to which it fulfilled the purposes of the grant and the program, and the extent to which it helped the organization or institution develop real capital growth? Is there reasonable need for a second award in light of these factors?"

**Q** If an institution currently has a grant from another NEH program, is it eligible to apply for a challenge grant?

**A** Yes. Many institutions have grants from other Endowment programs that run concurrently with Challenge Grants. A special program in the Division of Education Programs (Fostering Coherence Throughout an Institution) accepts joint proposals with a single application to both programs. Plans for this should be discussed with the staff well in advance of submitting a formal application.

**Q** How do I find out more about the Challenge Grants Program?

**A** Write or call for guidelines. 1985 guidelines will be available in February from the Public Affairs Office, Room 409, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506; 202/786/0438.





The renovated Welles Building will serve as a museum and cultural center for Old Wethersfield.

## NEW CHALLENGES FOR CONNECTICUT'S OLDEST TOWN

In 1634 a group of ten men from the Massachusetts colonies, known only as the "adventurers," spent the winter in rude huts along the banks of the Connecticut River and so founded the town of Wethersfield, Connecticut. Within two years, the town was formally established, land was purchased from the Indians, and lots were apportioned. Today the town is a small suburb of Hartford with a National Register historic district containing 116 buildings that predate 1820. The oldest permanent settlement in Connecticut, Wethersfield is celebrating its 350th anniversary.

One of the custodians of this 350-year historical heritage, which includes America's first written constitution (the Fundamental Orders, signed in 1639), is the Wethersfield Historical Society, which is presently at work raising \$375,000 in response to a recent NEH challenge grant. Including the federal grant, a total of \$500,000 is targeted by the society for renovation of two sites, the Captain John Hurlbut House (1804) and the Welles Building (1893), and for increased educational programs that will teach the community and approximately 4,000 visitors a year more about the town's history.

According to Nora Howard, the society's director of education and development, the Welles Building, which served as a public school until 1982, will be renovated for use as a museum and cultural center for Old Wethersfield. The building will house a permanent exhibition tracing the history of Wethers-

field since 1634 along with temporary exhibits constructed in cooperation with community organizations. The museum will also contain classrooms; a large multi-purpose room for workshops, seminars, lectures, demonstrations, and special events; and a museum shop that will help to fund increased society activities.

Howard says, "The Welles Museum and Cultural Center will actually serve as the hub for those visiting Old Wethersfield." For example, school children will be able to visit the center to see a slide show that explains the plot of *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*, a novel by former Wethersfield resident Elizabeth Speare. The slide show uses the story's setting to examine Wethersfield and Connecticut life during the 1600s. The children can then take a walking tour of the town to see some of the sites from the novel, such as the Buttolph-Williams House (1692) and the town's Burying Ground, which is the oldest graveyard in continuous service in the United States, the first headstone having been laid in 1684.

The Captain John Hurlbut House was built in 1804 by Hurlbut, who served on the *Nep-tune*, the first Connecticut ship to circumnavigate the globe. The house, now undergoing paint analysis in an attempt to enhance its authenticity, will be renovated and used by the society for social and cultural events and opened to the public for tours. Refurbished as a Victorian house in the 1860s, the historic structure still retains the Italianate features added in 1852,

such as a square, flat-roofed belvedere that allows a commanding view of the town through eight arched windows. The house is elegantly furnished and is planned to interpret upper class nineteenth-century life.

In addition to the money for renovations, the fund-raising effort will also enhance the society's ability to educate the community and visitors about the history of Wethersfield.

Howard's efforts are supplemented by the work of about thirty volunteers who orient visitors, lead tours, assist researchers and help with educational programs. Such voluntarism is essential to the society because of its small staff and Howard believes that this community spirit "adds tremendously to the appeal of historic Wethersfield. It helps to make it a living town."

For a small fee, the society gives visitors and school or civic groups thirty- to sixty-minute presentations that cover a broad range of subjects.

One example, *Connecticut and Wethersfield in the American Revolution*, is a slide show that follows the history of Wethersfield from the Stamp Act crisis of 1765 through the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1784. During the presentation, visitors are told of the travails of Jared Ingersoll, Crown-appointed stamp agent for the Connecticut Colony, who was intercepted in Wethersfield on his way to Hartford and forced to resign his office. The mob then insisted that Ingersoll shout "liberty and property!" three times before sending him on his way. The slide show also

presents another highlight of the town's history, the Yorktown Conference, held in Wethersfield between George Washington and the Comte de Rochambeau. It was here that the campaign that led to the end of the Revolutionary War at Yorktown was planned.

The 350th anniversary of the town has stirred even greater interest in the town's history with special activities such as a Family Association meeting of Wethersfield's descendants and the 350th Grand Parade sponsored by the town.

During the summer, hundreds of New Englanders participated in a Revolutionary War encampment and battle reenactment that commemorated the action of Wethersfield militia in the war. In 1775, the Wethersfield militia led by Captain Chester played an important role in the Battle of Bunker Hill. One militiaman described the day's fierce fighting in a letter to Wethersfield resident Silas Deane, America's first diplomat. He wrote, "Four men were shot dead within five feet of me but thank Heaven, I escaped with only the graze of a musket ball on my hat."

The society will be host at the year's final event, a preview tour of the unfinished Welles Building, a symbol that the society's efforts to preserve the history of Connecticut's most "auncient" town will continue as Wethersfield enters its 351st year.

—Scott Sanborn

Douglas Alves, *The Wethersfield Historical Society*, CT/\$125,000/1983-87/Challenge Grants



# More Morale for the Money



The presence of the College of William and Mary in the red-brick continuum of restored colonial Williamsburg is not the only feature that removes the college from the realm of the modern. Sheltered in the eighteenth-century landscape of an idyllic, shady campus, William and Mary's undergraduates pursue the liberal arts with a quiet disregard for the current trend of vocationalism in higher education. A recent study of William and Mary and thirteen comparable southern universities conducted by the American Council on Education found that William and Mary students take 20 percent more humanities credits in lower-division courses than students in the other institutions and nearly 100 percent more in upper-division courses.

In the early seventies, however, the College of William and Mary faced some very modern problems

A state-supported institution, committed to its traditional emphasis on liberal education and therefore resistant to pressures to increase enrollment, William and Mary fell victim to formula funding. The state-mandated ratio that funds faculty positions based on the number of student credit hours was changing to demand more credit hours per position. The effect on a college with ambitions for only modest growth was a decrease in the number of funded positions.

Furthermore, state guidelines also required that each faculty position be funded at no more than the average faculty salary of a group of designated peer institutions. In determining this group, the legislature based comparisons on such criteria as the number of degrees awarded or the amount of federal research funding obtained. The state did

not consider admissions standards or such intangibles as educational goals and characteristics of the intellectual community.

Caught in a combination of these and other funding strictures, William and Mary found itself in 1977 paying salaries that were in the bottom twentieth percentile of a ranking compiled by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

"It was a dangerous situation," remembers David Kranbuehl, the director of grants and research administration. "The faculty we try to hire look also at Dartmouth, say, or Brown. Our mission, our student body, the quality of our instructional program were comparable, but not our salary levels."

Kranbuehl was the project director for an NEH challenge grant awarded in 1979. The federal offer of \$500,000 was intended to generate \$1.5 million from private sources to be used mainly for the support of the humanities faculty. The college by 1983 had raised \$2.1 million in response to the challenge.

Kranbuehl attributes this overachievement partly to the widespread and energetic participation of the faculty in the fund-raising effort. He also reports that in addition to the momentum in fund raising that continues to enhance the college's capital campaigns, one of the most important benefits of the challenge grant is the "spirit of cooperation" among faculty and development officers that resulted from this first coordinated endeavor. From the initial ad hoc group of faculty who worked to prepare the proposal and to determine the best long-range use of the award money has grown a network of faculty advisory committees, who have, in the words

of Vinson Sutlive, professor of anthropology and chairperson of the Advisory Committee on University Advancement, "recognized that seeking funding from private sources is imperative and that faculty are in strategic positions to interpret the educational mission of the college to donors."

With guidance from the faculty advisory committees, the college has translated the \$2.6 million result of the challenge campaign into several strategies to keep and to attract talented faculty.

Two endowed professorships in the humanities have been created. This fall Scott Donaldson, who has taught at the college since 1966, was named the first Louise G.T. Cooley Professor of English. Best known for his 1983 biography *Fool for Love: F. Scott Fitzgerald*, Donaldson has edited and written seven other books in American literature, including biographies of poet Winfield Townley Scott and Ernest Hemingway, and is now at work on a biography of John Cheever.

A second endowment, for the Kenan Distinguished Professorship, brings to the college each year a preeminent scholar in the humanities for the primary purpose of encouraging excellence in undergraduate teaching. The first professor to visit the college in this capacity, William Fleming of Syracuse University, is the author of *Arts and Ideas*, a text now in its fifth edition used by more than 600 American colleges and universities in humanities courses. During his stay in Williamsburg, Fleming taught courses in the study of the visual arts and music from the late Renaissance to the present and their relationship to contemporary ideas.

In addition to the endowed professorships (two others were established in the law school),

the administration created a \$700,000 permanent endowment, to be used at the discretion of the dean of the faculty of arts and sciences, for humanities faculty development. Last spring the college used this fund to honor sixteen faculty members with \$1,500 awards in recognition of their excellence in teaching and in scholarship.

The remainder of the fund was used in competitive grants for summer preparation for teaching in the college's honors program or for curriculum and course development over the summer. Government professor Alan Ward, for example, was awarded a stipend to develop courses on "world society," which might be used as the focus of a multidisciplinary concentration in international studies at the college.

Students majoring in international relations can take courses in eleven departments and one school. Ward, who teaches international relations and U.S. foreign policy, spent the summer reading in sociology, political geography, international economics, and other resources in order to begin to create courses to provide majors with more coherence.

Next summer the college will award eight more grants for this kind of independent study and curriculum development, according to Thomas Finn, dean of undergraduate studies. He plans to use the rest of the fund for an interdisciplinary faculty seminar on the impact of technology on contemporary American culture. This proposal reflects the college's resolution to ensure that all areas within the humanities, and not only one or two departments, benefit from the permanent endowment for faculty

(continued next page)



The Yard at the College of William and Mary 1733-47.



WILLIAM AND MARY *continued*

development.

It also reflects a commitment on the part of the college, and Finn's personal determination, to foster a community of scholars where departmental divisions recede behind the goal of a generally enriched intellectual life. Finn sees this summer's seminar, for example, as one way of recruiting faculty for the honors program, which places heavy demands on participating professors.

Developed with an NEH Division of Education Programs grant, which ran concurrently with the challenge grant, the multidisciplinary honors program is based on the close study of texts in the humanities. Next semester, in the eight or nine small seminars of selected sophomores and freshmen, professors will guide students through an examination of the broader notion of nature with such texts as Darwin and King Lear.

Alan Fuchs, chairman of the philosophy department and one of the sixteen recipients of last spring's awards for excellence, is one of the chief architects of the honors program. Citing the requirements of weekly faculty seminars for the discussion of texts and of study in unfamiliar disciplines, Fuchs maintains that the program is focused as much on faculty development as on a challenge for the brightest students. He believes that the community created by the program, now in its third year, is another reason, along with the success of the challenge grant and some indication of increased support from the state legislature, that there has been a change in attitude among the faculty at William and Mary. It has become clear to them that the college intends to protect the humanities, one of its traditional strengths.

"We have more concentrators in philosophy here than there are at the University of Wisconsin," says Fuchs. "We simply wanted the resources to keep our programs strong."

At William and Mary the past is palpable. Even the stone stairs of restored classroom buildings, concave from centuries of students going to and from class, invite speculation about what came before. But the faculty, development officers, and a now-increased number of the college's friends, concerned about the strength of the humanities, are looking ahead.

—Linda Musser Blanken

David Kranbuehl, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA/  
\$500,000/1979-83/Challenge Grants

## Case Studies in Fund Raising

Organizations react to the stimulus of an NEH challenge grant each in its own way. Some things remain constant: motivation, planning, and the ability of the grant to inspire the natural constituency of the group seeking support.

The Monroeville County Public Library serves a rural population of 23,000 in Alabama. A scenic, underpopulated area with fresh air and clean water, many of its residents show some cultural, educational, and financial disadvantage. In the next five years, because of industrial expansion, the population is expected to double.

Monroeville is Harper Lee country, and at the time the grant application was made, the library was housed in a jail—known to the world as the jail that held Tom Robinson in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. As a library it was inadequate.

A committee was formed to raise the funds to liberate the library. The first step was to be the purchase of its future home, the La Salle Hotel.

By April 1982, the campaign kickoff, some major donations were in hand. Since then, the tenacious enthusiasm of the library's board and friends, fueled by the \$100,000 challenge grant, has provided continuing momentum for what has been essentially a grass-roots, small events community effort.

Support came from industry and foundations, but it also came from a luncheon and fashion show ("all sizes, shapes and ages") and a "Spring Fling," a local talent show featuring Anita Bryant. It came from a Christmas tour of homes including a stocking contest. Books and pledges were received on Library Sundays in the churches. Services such as painting, paperhanging and carpentry were donated. On "Coke Day," students donated their soda pop allowance, netting \$859.49.

There was a young folks' dance, and later, there was an "Old Timers" dance. Says Library Director Ann Pridgen cheerfully, "My feet are tired

from dancing, and my hand is always out. We couldn't have done it if everyone hadn't helped. Why, one man donated a truckload of turnips, and we sold every one of them at the Christmas bazaar."

\* \* \*

The American School of Classical Studies in Athens is a respected graduate center that has, for more than a century, prepared scholars for work in classical studies and in the excavation of major sites in Greece.

Application to NEH for a challenge grant came at a time of crisis for the school. Inflation was eroding the endowment, tuitions were small and unlikely to increase. The school's board of trustees and the managing committee provided effective leadership, but they were scattered around the United States. This lack of a centralized office made fund raising an *ad hoc* affair. The school had been very successful in attracting gifts, particularly for its excavation projects, but the lack of continuity made concerted ongoing efforts difficult.

The original modest goal of the Alumnae Centennial Fund was \$100,000. The success of the NEH challenge was such that it was over-subscribed a year ahead of time and resulted in an additional matching grant from the Andrew W. Mellon foundation. The current goal is \$6 million; more than \$3 million has already been raised.

"The grant gave us the necessary encouragement," said Ludmilla Schwarzenberg in the New York office. "We prepared special mailings to our alumnae and friends of the school. Three of four foundations gave us grants solely because they knew they were going to be matched. When the Painted Stoa was discovered in 1981, *Time* did a story on the school. Reprints of the article mailed to corporations in this country and Greece paid off handsomely, producing corporations as a new revenue source. We have been able to lift the level of support and maintain it at the higher level."

A fund-raising office has been

established, former volunteers are now salaried, and a strong, systematic development program is now in place. "Fund raising has become a continuing fact of life."

\* \* \*

The University of San Diego named its major fund drive the Discovery Campaign. The university, having doubled in size in the last ten years, is not the place it used to be. Discover us, said the fund raisers, and then help us provide the new library and the other major improvements our new institution badly needs.

The university was successful in attracting large foundation grants. William Pickett, vice-president for university relations, discussed why.

The first step, said Pickett, is to have a clear sense of institutional direction, which has the full support of those close to the organization. For a Catholic university, this was not difficult.

Next, one must have the active support of the board of directors who will use their business, professional, and social relationships to explain the organization to those outside it. This proved to be the key for the university of San Diego whose board, by itself, provided one half of the \$15 million goal and whose contacts provided most of the rest.

Indeed, the entire \$15 million came from only eighty-two donors. This capital campaign was directed only at major gifts. Donors were sought who would give no less than \$100,000 over a five-year period.

The personal contact, reinforced by the challenge grant, makes a formidable package. For one thing, says Pickett, a grant usually has a dollar value that attracts attention. "It has a dramatic effect, drawing attention to the institution; it enables you to go to new funding sources." Of course, while the large money was being raised, annual giving, planned giving such as trusts and estates, and prospects research went on as usual creating a synergistic effect.

—Edith Schafer





# 1984 NEH CHALLENGE GRANTS

*Some of the items in this list are offers, not final awards.*

## ARIZONA

**Middle East Studies Association**, Tucson, AZ; Michael E. Bonine. NEH: \$84,375/Total: \$337,500. To attain a financially stable and self-supporting status.

**Museum of Northern Arizona**, Flagstaff, AZ; Philip Thompson. NEH: \$415,000/Total: \$1,660,000. To support the museum's programs in the humanities.

## CALIFORNIA

**KTEH-TV**, San Jose, CA; Maynard Orme. NEH: \$340,000/Total: \$1,360,000. To support the establishment of a General Endowment; the development of a Humanities Production Fund; the expansion of the "54 Fund" for local production; and the expansion of the station's Capital Reserve Fund.

**Pomona College**, Claremont, CA; David Alexander. NEH: \$500,000/Total: \$2,000,000. To increase the college's endowment for sabbatical scholarship, summer research ventures, and general research assistance.

**University of California Press**, Berkeley, CA; James Clark. NEH: \$250,000/Total: \$1,000,000. To support publication of scholarly books in the humanities, especially in the fields of classics, music, literary editions, comparative literature, history and related cultural studies.

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

**African American Museums Association**, Washington, D.C.; Byron Rushing. NEH: \$60,000/Total: \$240,000. To cover development costs, build a small endowment, and offset administrative and maintenance expenses in order to stabilize the association's role as a service organization for black museums.

## GEORGIA

**National Humanities Faculty**, Atlanta, GA; Benjamin Ladner. NEH: \$175,000/Total: \$700,000. To retire its accumulated deficit; to fund its nascent development program; and to build sufficient cash reserves to insure future organizational stability.

## ILLINOIS

**WTTW-TV**, Chicago, IL; William McCarter. NEH: \$400,000/Total: \$1,600,000. To expand the program production schedule in the humanities and to continue augmenting its acquisition of humanities-related programming from the Public Broadcasting Service and independent producers.

## INDIANA

**Allen County Public Library Foundation**, Fort Wayne, IN; Rick Ashton. NEH: \$300,000/Total: \$1,200,000. To build an endowment for the support of library acquisitions in the humanities, especially American history and literature of religions.

**Lake County Public Library**, Merrillville, IN; Neil Flynn. NEH: \$75,000/Total: \$300,000. To provide a continuing source of financial support for purchase of materials in the humanities.

**Saint Mary's College**, Notre Dame, IN; John Duggan. NEH: \$375,000/Total: \$1,500,000. To endow a chair in the Humanistic Studies Department and thereby expand both the faculty and courses offered in this department and to increase endowment funds available for faculty development in the humanities.

## IOWA

**Vesterheim, the Norwegian-American Museum**, Decorah, IA; Marion Nelson. NEH: \$100,144/Total: \$400,576. To increase endowment income, allow for greater outreach through traveling exhibitions and media presentations, and strengthen the development program.

## KANSAS

**Bethel College, Kauffman Museum**, North Newton, KS; Harold Shultz. NEH: \$100,000/Total: \$400,000. To provide support for permanent professional staffing; to enhance the museum's educational program within and beyond the college; and to enhance its collection management capabilities.

## LOUISIANA

**Hermann—Grima Historic House**, New Orleans, LA; Lynne Farwell. NEH: \$50,000/Total: \$200,000. To augment the museum's endowment to expand programming in the humanities.

## MARYLAND

**Enoch Pratt Free Library**, Baltimore, MD; James Gary III. NEH: \$1,000,000/Total: \$4,000,000. To be used for renovation, restoration, and an increased endowment fund.

## MASSACHUSETTS

**Goodnow Library**, Sudbury, MA; Charlotte MacLeod. NEH: \$25,000/Total: \$100,000. To join the Minuteman Library Network, a group of fourteen libraries in the local area that have joined to provide a shared computer system to automate library functions and to facilitate resource sharing.

**New England Historic Genealogical Society**, Boston, MA; Lowell Warren. NEH: \$500,000/Total: \$2,000,000. To support a book fund to allow purchase of material to keep the collections current with new resources; to initiate a revolving fund for the publication of sponsored works; and to endow four education programs.

**Springfield Library and Museums Association**, Springfield, MA; John Mann. NEH: \$962,000/Total: \$3,848,000. To restore and renovate buildings, and reinstall exhibits to meet increased public demand for the services of this major humanities resource.

## MAINE

**Victoria Society of Maine**, Portland, ME; Doris Stockly. NEH: \$95,000/Total: \$380,000. To restore the exterior and stabilize the interior of the Victoria Mansion, one of the country's outstanding examples of High Victorian architecture, decorative arts and history; and to increase the society's endowment.

## MICHIGAN

**The Edison Institute**, Dearborn, MI; Harold Skramstad, Jr. NEH: \$1,000,000/Total: \$4,000,000. To make major capital improvements and to restore historic structures and replenish the institute's endowment.

**Ella Sharp Museum**, Jackson, MI; Robert Condon. NEH: \$250,000/Total: \$1,000,000. To enable the museum to renovate and add to its exhibition gallery and to its endowment.

## MINNESOTA

**Hill Monastic Manuscript Library**, St. John's University Collegeville, MN; Fr. Hilary Thimmesh. NEH: \$400,000/Total: \$1,600,000. To enlarge the base of ongoing support for this humanities research center.

**Ramsey County Historical Society**, St. Paul, MN; Gregory Page. NEH: \$137,000/Total: \$548,000. To hire new staff members; to build new programs; and to make the society's collections more accessible through new exhibits.

## MISSOURI

**Missouri Botanical Garden**, St. Louis, MO; Peter Raven. NEH: \$85,000/Total: \$340,000. To expand and renovate space for the research library's rare book collection, archives and bindery.

## NEBRASKA

**University of Nebraska**, Lincoln, NE; Henry Holtzclaw. NEH: \$125,000/Total: \$500,000. To enlarge the endowment of the Center for Great Plains Studies, an interdisciplinary unit of the university.

## NEW JERSEY

**Community College Humanities Association**, Cranford, NJ; Anne Rassweiler. NEH: \$25,000/Total: \$100,000. To establish an endowment to support annual meetings of the regional divisions, publication of the association's journal, work of three standing committees, and program development for improved humanities teaching.

## NEW YORK

**Architectural History Foundation**, New York City; Victoria Newhouse. NEH: \$25,000/Total: \$100,000. To set up a revolving fund to reduce present subsidies and to meet the challenge of timely special projects.

**Bronx Museum of the Arts**, Bronx, NY; Luis Cancel. NEH: \$125,000/Total: \$500,000. To renovate a recently acquired building that is to become the museum's new site.

**The Pierpont Morgan Library**, New York City; Francis Mason. NEH: \$1,000,000/Total: \$4,000,000. To augment the endowment to achieve a base of financial support which is secure and reliable.

## NORTH CAROLINA

**Duke University Press**, Durham, NC; Terry Sanford. NEH: \$150,000/Total: \$600,000. To establish a Duke Press endowment for humanities publishing designed to subsidize ten new publications annually.

## OHIO

**Oberlin College**, Oberlin, OH; Stephen Starr. NEH: \$970,000/Total: \$3,880,000. To endow two senior humanities faculty fellowships, two junior humanities fellowships, a humanities research fund, and a fund for library acquisitions in the humanities.

**The Ohio Historical Society**, Columbus, OH; Gary Ness. NEH: \$500,000/Total: \$2,000,000. To establish an endowment fund for acquisition of additional collection items, conservation work on current holdings, and an on-going visiting scholars program.

**Otterbein College**, Westerville, OH; Thomas Kerr IV. NEH: \$250,000/Total: \$1,000,000. To establish an alumni humanities endowment for a rotating chair in humanities disciplines, library acquisitions and learning resource materials, and faculty development programs.

## OKLAHOMA

**The University of Tulsa**, Tulsa, OK; Thomas Staley. NEH: \$162,500/Total: \$650,000. To build an endowment that will strengthen and enlarge the library collections in the humanities, and fund an annual comparative literature symposium.

## OREGON

**Oregon State University**, Corvallis, OR; Robert MacVicar. NEH: \$700,000/\$2,800,000. To establish a center for the humanities at

the university.

## PENNSYLVANIA

**The Athenaeum of Philadelphia**, Philadelphia, PA; George Vaux. NEH: \$300,000/Total: \$1,200,000. To stimulate the 175th Anniversary Endowment Drive that will help underwrite three professional staff positions.

**Dickinson College**, Carlisle, PA; Samuel Banks. NEH: \$1,000,000/Total: \$4,000,000. To establish an endowment for a regular series of visiting professorships, a stronger Judaic studies program, and an increased library acquisition budget.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Spartanburg County Public Library**, Spartanburg, SC; Dennis L. Bruce. NEH: \$17,500/Total: \$70,000. To build an addition to the library to provide space for library programs and community use.

## TEXAS

**KLRU-TV**, Austin, TX; James H. Lewis. NEH: \$250,000/Total: \$1,000,000. To replace obsolete and nonfunctioning production and engineering equipment at the station, which has a long history of involvement in national and local programming in the humanities.

**Texas Lutheran College**, Seguin, TX; Philip N. Gilbertson. NEH: \$75,000/Total: \$300,000. To strengthen the quality of library holdings in the humanities.

## VERMONT

**Vermont ETV**, Winooski, VT; Lee Ann Lee McLean. NEH: \$180,000/Total: \$720,000. To purchase equipment; to defray cost of increased local humanities productions; and to acquire and produce increased numbers of humanities programs.

## VIRGINIA

**Bridgewater College**, Bridgewater, VA; John W. Cooper. NEH: \$500,000/Total: \$2,000,000. To build a sufficient endowment to support a chair in comparative religion, a chair in international studies, two annual symposia, faculty development, and improvements in humanities resources in the library.

**University of Virginia Law Library**, Charlottesville, VA; Larry B. Wenger. NEH: \$150,000/Total: \$600,000. To establish an endowment to support the acquisition, processing, and maintenance of rare book and manuscript collections of legal materials and to develop related reference and research services.

## WASHINGTON

**Suquamish Tribal Cultural Center**, Suquamish, WA; Carey T. Caldwell. NEH: \$100,000/Total: \$400,000. To increase the financial stability of the Suquamish Museum by underwriting development expenses, accelerating repayment of loans for museum construction, creating a fund for the acquisition of cultural materials, and forming an endowment for the museum.

## WEST VIRGINIA

**Huntington Galleries, Inc.**, Huntington, WV; Roberta S. Emerson. NEH: \$500,000/Total: \$2,000,000. To establish an endowment to develop a reference library, to support interpretative museum tours serving schools in thirty-four counties in three states, and to support interpretative programs for adults.



Please note: Area code for all telephone numbers is 202.		Deadline in boldface	For projects beginning after
<b>DIVISION OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS</b> —Richard Ekman, Director 786-0373			
Central Disciplines in Undergraduate Education—Richard Ekman 786-0373			
Improving Introductory Courses—Donald Schmeltekopf 786-0380		April 1, 1985	October 1985
Promoting Excellence in a Field—John Walters 786-0380		April 1, 1985	October 1985
Fostering Coherence Throughout an Institution—Richard Ekman 786-0373		April 1, 1985	October 1985
Humanities Instruction in Elementary and Secondary Schools—Carolynn Reid-Wallace 786-0377		January 7, 1985	July 1985
Exemplary Projects in Undergraduate and Graduate Education—William McGill 786-0384		May 15, 1985	January 1986
Humanities Programs for Nontraditional Learners—William McGill 786-0384		April 1, 1985	October 1985
<b>DIVISION OF FELLOWSHIPS AND SEMINARS</b> —Thomas Kingston, Director 786-0458			
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS			
Fellowships for Independent Study and Research—Maben Herring 786-0466		June 1, 1985	January 1, 1986
Fellowships for College Teachers—Karen Fuglie 786-0466		June 1, 1985	January 1, 1986
Constitutional Fellowships—Maben Herring and Karen Fuglie 786-0466		June 1, 1985	January 1, 1986
Faculty Graduate Study Grants for Historically Black Colleges and Universities— Eric Anderson 786-0463		March 15, 1985	January 1, 1986
Summer Stipends for 1986—Joseph Neville 786-0466		October 1, 1985	Summer 1986
SEMINAR PROGRAMS			
Summer Seminars for College Teachers—Richard Emmerson 786-0463			
Participants: 1985 Seminars		April 1, 1985	Summer 1985
Directors: 1986 Seminars		March 1, 1985	Summer 1986
Summer Seminars for Secondary School Teachers—Ronald Herzman 786-0463			
Participants: 1985 Seminars		March 1, 1985	Summer 1985
Directors: 1986 Seminars		April 1, 1985	Summer 1986
Undergraduate Fellows in the Humanities—Ronald Herzman 786-0463			
Participants: 1985 Seminars		February 15, 1985	Summer 1985
Directors: 1986 Seminars		May 1, 1985	Summer 1986
Centers for Advanced Study—David Coder 786-0466		November 1, 1985	Fall 1987
<b>DIVISION OF GENERAL PROGRAMS</b> —Donald Gibson, Director 786-0267			
Humanities Projects in:			
Media—James Dougherty 786-0278			
Children's Media		January 30, 1985	October 1, 1985
Regular Media Projects		January 30, 1985	October 1, 1985
Museums and Historical Organizations—Gabriel Weisberg 786-0284		April 29, 1985	January 1, 1986
Special Projects—Leon Bramson 786-0271			
Humanities Programs for Adults		February 6, 1985	October 1, 1985
Humanities Programs for Libraries		March 8, 1985	October 1, 1985
Humanities Programs for Youth			
Youth Projects		June 15, 1985	January 1, 1986
Younger Scholars Program		October 15, 1985	June 1, 1986
<b>DIVISION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMS</b> —Harold Cannon, Director 786-0200			
Intercultural Research—Blanche Premo 786-0200		February 15, 1985	July 1, 1985
Basic Research Program—John Williams 786-0207			
Project Research—Gary Messinger and David Wise 786-0207		March 1, 1985	January 1, 1986
Archaeological Projects—Eugene Sterud 786-0207		March 1, 1985	January 1, 1986
Research Conferences—Eugene Sterud 786-0207		February 15, 1985	October 1, 1985
Travel to Collections—Gary Messinger 786-0207		January 15, 1985	June 15, 1985
Humanities, Science and Technology—David Wright 786-0207			
NEH HST Projects		March 1, 1985	January 1, 1986
NEH-NSF EVIST Projects		February 1, 1985	October 1, 1985
Research Resources—Jeffrey Field 786-0204			
Access—Marcella Grendler 786-0204		June 1, 1985	April 1, 1986
Preservation—Jeffrey Field 786-0204		June 1, 1985	April 1, 1986
Publications—Margot Backas 786-0204		May 1, 1985	October 1, 1985
U.S. Newspaper Projects—Jeffrey Field 786-0204		January 15, 1985	July 1, 1985
Reference Works—Dorothy Wartenberg 786-0210			
Tools—Crale Hopkins 786-0210		October 1, 1985	July 1, 1986
Editions—Helen Aguera 786-0210		October 1, 1985	July 1, 1986
Translations—Susan Mango 786-0210		July 1, 1985	April 1, 1986
<b>DIVISION OF STATE PROGRAMS</b> —Marjorie Berlincourt, Director 786-0254			
Each state establishes its own grant guidelines and application deadlines; therefore, interested applicants should contact the office in their state. A list of those state programs may be obtained from the Division of State Programs.			
<b>OFFICE OF CHALLENGE GRANTS</b> —James Blessing, Director 786-0361		May 1, 1985	December 1984



# urvivors

Text by Robert Coles

Photographs by Alex Harris



Andrew Tommy, one of the last great Eskimo storytellers, entertains his family.



Posters from the 1930s and 1940s adorn this sod house on the arctic circle.

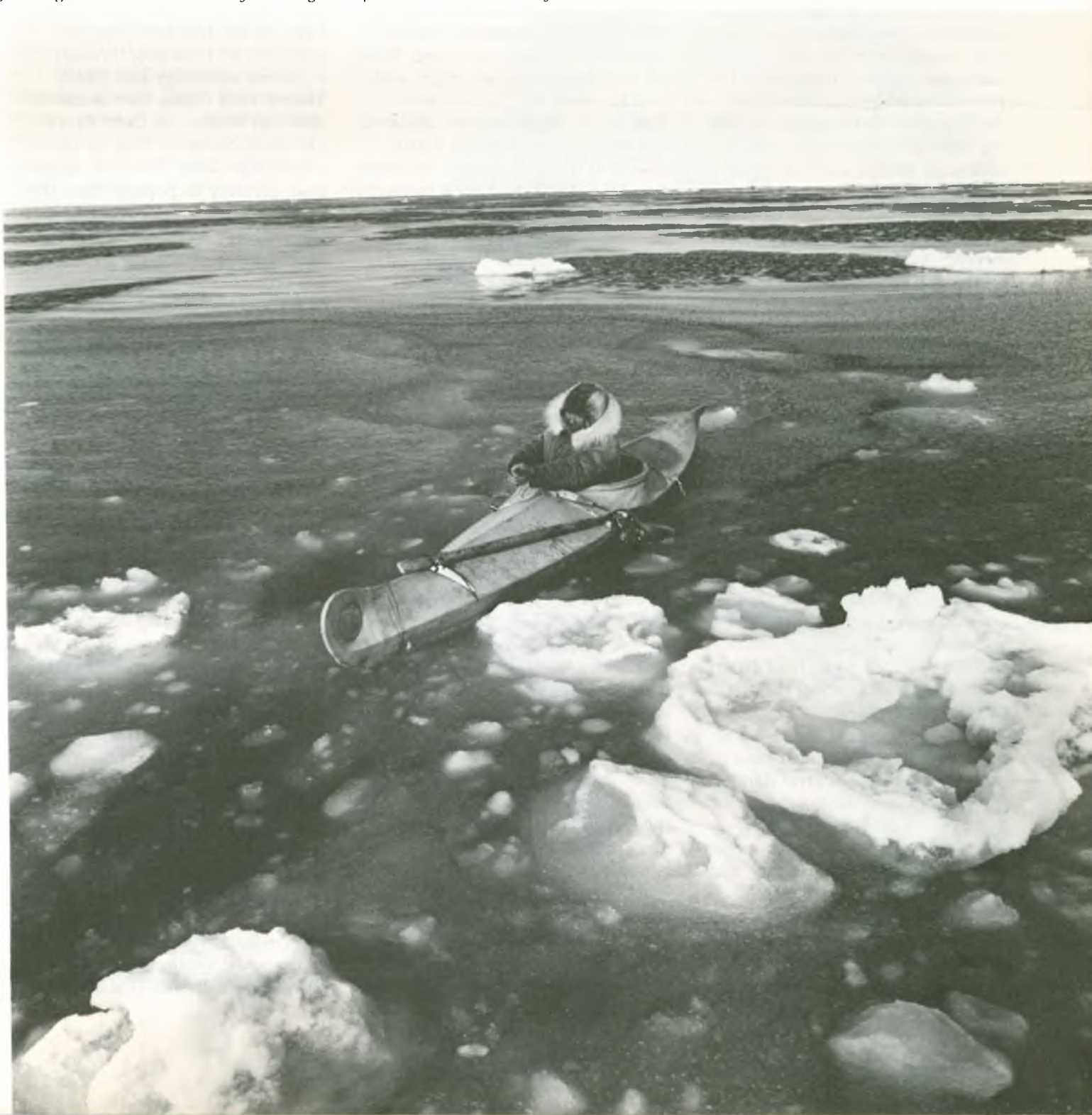
moments of abandon as they, too, break free of winter; their smiling tolerance of the weather's unpredictable ways; their sweetness to their children—but also their determination to teach them how to work, meaning to work with others and on behalf of a particular community; and not least, their self-effacing decency, one to the other. Once my son wondered what will happen when these sturdy, hard-working people, so intimately connected to the natural world, ended up owning television sets. I professed at the time not to know, and though in truth I do have a hunch or two, I'd sooner let my mind stay with the images it has seen of these truly honorable people—the images Alex Harris has enabled so many others, also, to see.

*Robert Coles is the author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning five-volume series, Children of Crisis and the recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship. In addition to teaching at Harvard, Dr. Coles continues his work with children in South Africa, Central America and other troubled parts of the world.*

*Alex Harris is the director of the Center for Documentary Photography at Duke University and the winner of the Lyndhorst Prize, 1984-87, which is given for individual work in the South that has been creative and significant for a number of years.*

*"The Last and First Eskimos"/Exhibition and Symposium/International Center for Photography, NYC/\$83,242 OR; \$17,180 FM/1981-84/Museums*

Jack Angaiak hunts seal in his kayak during the April thaw in Tununak Bay.





# REDISCOVERING NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE

The formal study of native American oral/traditional literatures as literature and the recent appearance and widespread critical recognition of native American writing are intimately related, in that most of today's native American poets and writers are aiming at a rediscovery and adaptation of their tribal traditions for modern purposes. Add to this the active interest in the native traditions on the part of some of our most important non-Indian writers and it begins to look as though the time has come for American literature to embrace what is at once its oldest and its newest lineage.

For Americans to discover a line of imaginative continuity among us that extends from the first human occupation of the Americas to the present could be good news indeed; and in dwelling on the old and traditional elements of that continuity in this brief survey, I do not want to give the impression that the new field of native American writing is any the less noteworthy. Each field promises to energize the other.

As early as Roger Williams, explorers and settlers in colonial America noticed that the natives possessed oral traditions; but for a variety of reasons—ignorance of the languages (more than 200 across the land!), lack of critical concepts wherein native traditions could even be considered as literary art, general indifference on the part of American poets and writers—the repertoires were largely ignored until well after the Civil War. Exceptions like Longfellow and Thoreau tend to prove this rule of neglect and nonassimilation. Longfellow did incorporate elements of Henry Schoolcraft's pioneering translation of Ojibway myth in his *Hiawatha*—but cheerfully mixed the Ojibway material in with Iroquoian, and wrote the poem in a style derived from the Finnish *Kalevala*!

Thoreau's life-long sympathy with the Indians led him to project a major work on their history and culture at the end of his life, and *The Maine Woods* is full of his excitement at hearing the aboriginal Abenaki language ("I felt that I stood, or rather lay, as near to the

primitive man of America, that night, as any of its discoverers ever did")—but clearly he was not willing or able to consider the native stories he heard on literary terms. Nineteenth-century American writing is of course full of images of Indian life—some accurate, most distorted according to the writer's degree of ignorance and bias: We obsessively studied the Indians then as never before or since, but almost never tried to understand them in terms of their own imaginative heritage.

But with the beginning of systematic ethnographic and linguistic fieldwork after the Indian Wars of the 1870s came evidence, tribe by tribe, of richly expressive native repertoires of story and song. Armed with hindsight, we might wish that the early transcribers and translators—most of them affiliated one way or another with Franz Boas and the U.S. Bureau of American Ethnology—had been more sensitive to literary questions regarding native American texts. Such questions were generally passed over in the headlong effort to record and understand native languages and cultures—even as both seemed to be vanishing. Despite the heroic efforts of fieldworkers between the 1880s and the 1920s, much vanished. What now survives in print of the traditional native literatures is both glorious and shameful for us to consider—glorious because so much was recorded, on the whole carefully and responsibly; shameful because even now, fifty years and more after the end of the "golden era" of Boasian fieldwork, records of entire native American oral repertoires lie neglected in government archives and in the pages of academic journals, their full human significance waiting to be examined. But a diverse scholarly effort to do so is beginning in the best tradition of humanistic philology. As Dell Hymes, a leader in this new work, has written, "With texts, as sometimes the myths themselves, what is dead can be revived. We cannot bring texts to life by stepping over them five times, but we can by scholarship. There is much to be done and few to do it." ("In

Wooden finger masks from the Eskimo Indians of Alaska.

*Vain I Tried to Tell You*": Essays in Native American Ethnopoetics, 1982.)

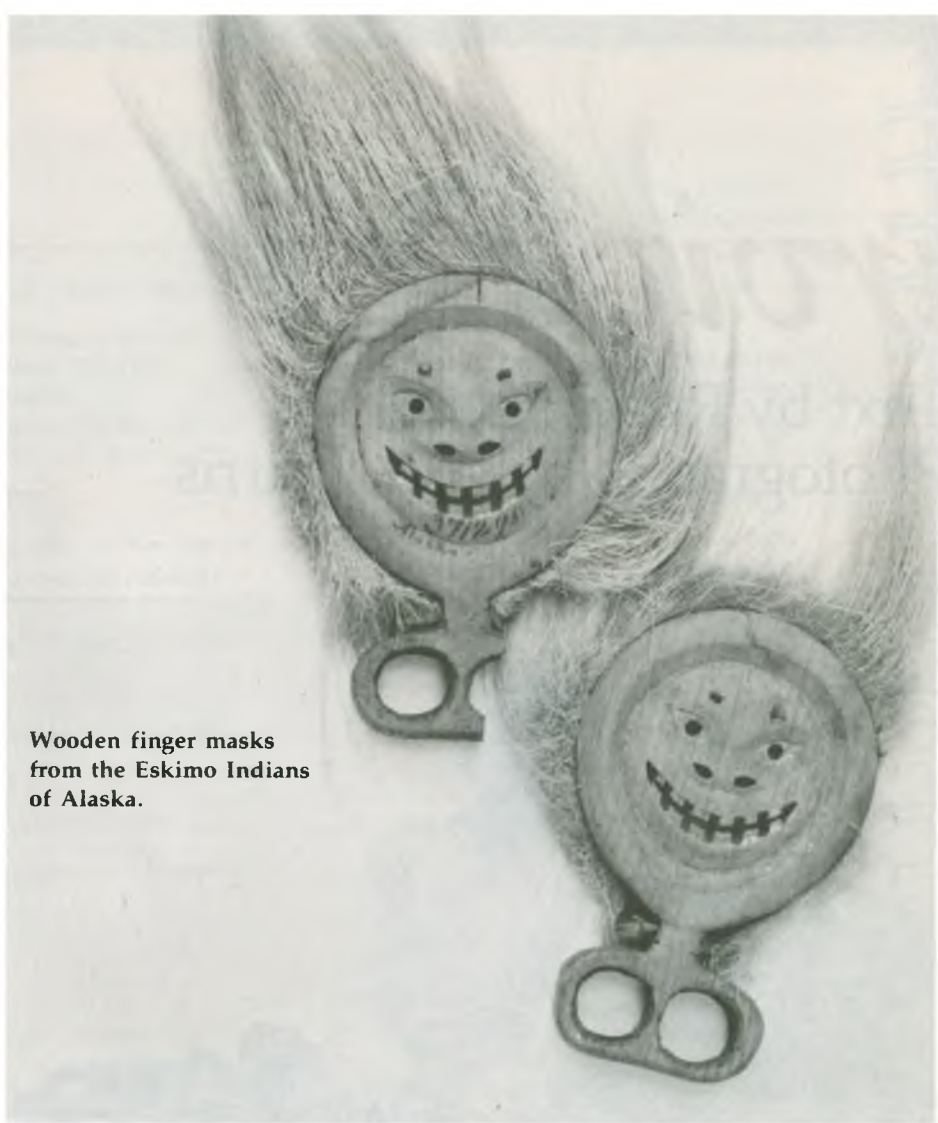
But what—thus philologically reclaimed and maybe revived—does native American traditional literature look like, what claims does it have on us, and how shall we approach it? Browsing through a general anthology like Smith Thompson's classic *Tales of the American Indians*, or Larry Evers's *The South Corner of Time*, or my *Coyote Was Going There* will suggest that, contrary to popular bias, the material is not quaintly childish or "primitive," and does not consist mainly in "just-so" myths about the origins of rivers and mountains and the features of animals. In fact the explanatory element in Indian myth-narratives is much less central to them than are motifs that we expect to find in any literary tradition—dramatic presentation of official moral values under conditions of conflict, imaginative probings of human nature, recovery of the past, speculation about how the earthly and the sacred intersect, and, of course, all the complex motives of entertainment, including the pleasures of language.

In place of the simple fables of popular misconception, one finds in native American repertoires cycles of Trickster tales, rather like picaresque novels; pedagogical narratives aimed at "chartering" tribal customs and rituals; problem stories that dramatize conflicts between social norms and the purpose and impulses of individuals; hero stories, like fragments of epics; songs (often integral to narratives, like the dramatic songs and lyrics in Shakespeare's plays); prophecies; ceremonial texts; mythopoetic syntheses of native and Anglo materials (Indianized

Bible stories, for example), and so on. What Bronislaw Malinowski said about myths among the Trobrianders, that they were not idle tales but a hard-working active force, is certainly true of native American mythologies in relation to their tribal cultures. The interpretative task of placing the stories in an adequate cultural context is therefore formidable, but not forlorn, given the wealth of ethnographic information now on record.

In a Chinookan story from the Columbia River, for example, a young man is visited by a spirit-guide, an elk, who promises him great success as a hunter if he will honor the spirit and never kill more than he needs to. The hunter accepts—but his status-hungry father urges him to kill more and more wastefully, telling the young man (falsely) that in his youth he was a far greater hunter. At length the young hunter is driven to slaughter a whole herd of elk—whereupon he is denounced and rejected by his spirit-guide, who also exposes his father's lie. The hunter goes home and dies, but not before he publicly reveals his father to be a liar. Note that this bleak little narrative (only about twenty-five sentences!) is neither an origin-myth nor a beast-fable, nor is it at all childlike. It centers on two issues that were, we know from ethnographic studies, of grave importance to the Chinookans—the possibility of conflict between obedience to human and to spiritual authority, and the uncertainties of trying to subsist in harmony with nature.

Reading such stories in a well-edited text, one discovers that they are genuinely artistic in literary terms—but the terms of their verbal art are mostly alien to our scheme



Smithsonian Institution



of things. First of all, they come to us at two removes: (1) having been translated from a native American language into English, and (2) having been transcribed from their native mode, oral performance, into solid print. Native stories testify eloquently to their long passage through the lips, ears, and memories of their possessors. That is, they consist largely of vivid *scenes*, with terse dialogue and very little exposition and description. In the Chinookan elk-hunter story, for example, when the poor hunter returns home from his shattering encounter with his spirit-guide, he meets his father, who, all unknowing, is described as "talking, feeling well." This detail may seem odd to us for being so laconic—but the effect it creates of dramatic irony is very powerful in context, and the narrative art it exhibits is surely more than "primitive."

Here, of course, we come up against another puzzle: how to claim a high degree of artfulness for such stories when, in fact, they are authorless and do not allow us our familiar recourse to an author's life and writings. The puzzle in fact reflects more on our aesthetics than on the stories themselves. They are works of verbal artistry that in the fullest sense belonged to the tribal group, cherished and kept alive in performances by skilled raconteurs whose audiences already knew the individual stories in a repertory, and prized not authorial invention but rather the teller's ability to dramatize the material and to weave stories into sequences and cycles. As in any folk literature, they show a high incidence of conventional and formulaic elements—stock characters and standardized episodes appearing and reappearing.

Taking these formal features point by point against the equivalent features of our own author-

centered, print-based, innovative, subjectified literature can be a mind-stretching experience, notably for readers who have come to assume that the conventions governing Western literature are the only ones capable of producing literary art of a high order. In case anyone is growing worried here about literary priorities, I have not found it necessary to give up my devotion to Yeats and Shakespeare in order to study the aboriginal literatures of the Senecas, the Nez Perce, and the Wasco Chinookans: on the contrary. In my experience, looking back at Hamlet, say, from the native convention of the Trickster (Coyote, Raccoon, Crow), is guaranteed to challenge and extend one's ideas about the Prince of Denmark.

Like their cousins throughout world folklore, native American Tricksters are wily, aggressive, outrageously self-centered creatures who always seem to be in the *middle* of predicaments, caught between all sorts of existential polarities: nature and culture, the way of the tribe and the way of unfettered individualism, impulse and appetite as opposed to rational intelligence, sacred and profane, and so on. Philosophically speaking, they are mediative figures, defining vividly the relations between polar opposites, much like the terms of Hamlet's famous complaint: "What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and Heaven? We are arrant knaves all; believe none of us." As compelling imaginative figures, philosophically akin for all their literary differences, Hamlet and Coyote deserve to know each other.

An especially fruitful line of interpretative work on the native literatures is being followed in the name of "ethnopoetics" by Dell Hymes, Dennis Tedlock, Joel Sherzer, William Bright, J. Barre

Toelken, and others who combine literary and anthropological interests with a working knowledge of native languages. Tedlock's work with contemporary performances of Zuni narratives has convinced many that most native narrative literature is in fact *poetry* and should be translated and presented as such, with an aim to render performance features—pauses, pitch, volume, and the like—faithfully. Hymes's monumental study of Chinookan-language texts has led to the discovery of intricate three- and five-part grammatical and syntactical "measures" embedded in the texts, and an organization of them from the level of individual lines to the level of whole episodes. In all its rigor and diversity, the work of ethnopoetics promises, I believe, to enrich not just the way we understand native literature, but the way we attend to all literature.

Other scholars are studying the formal narrative strategies of native storytelling—the often subtle use of foreshadowing, for example, and the elaborate doubling of events and characters in some traditions. Still others, following the structural analysis of Claude Lévi-Strauss, are delving into the genealogy of the story-texts, the complex ways they

seem to have been generated in innumerable versions and analogues, both within and between tribal groups. And the knotty theoretical questions about how to accommodate oral/traditional material to the canons of Western literature without utterly misrepresenting the former and misinterpreting the latter are being addressed systematically by theorists like Arnold Krupat and Karl Kroeber.

As Dell Hymes says, there is much to do—but in articles, critical books, anthologies, periodicals, conferences, university courses, the long overdue recognition of native American traditional literature as part of an expanded and enriched American literature does seem to be under way. Again, it is paralleled, and reinforced, by the growing recognition of modern native American writers. Taken together, the traditional and the modern achievements of the native American imagination promise to give us an intellectual purchase on the American land that we have surely needed, a truly native naming and storying of the places where we live. —Jarold Ramsey  
Mr. Ramsey is a professor in the department of English at the University of Rochester.



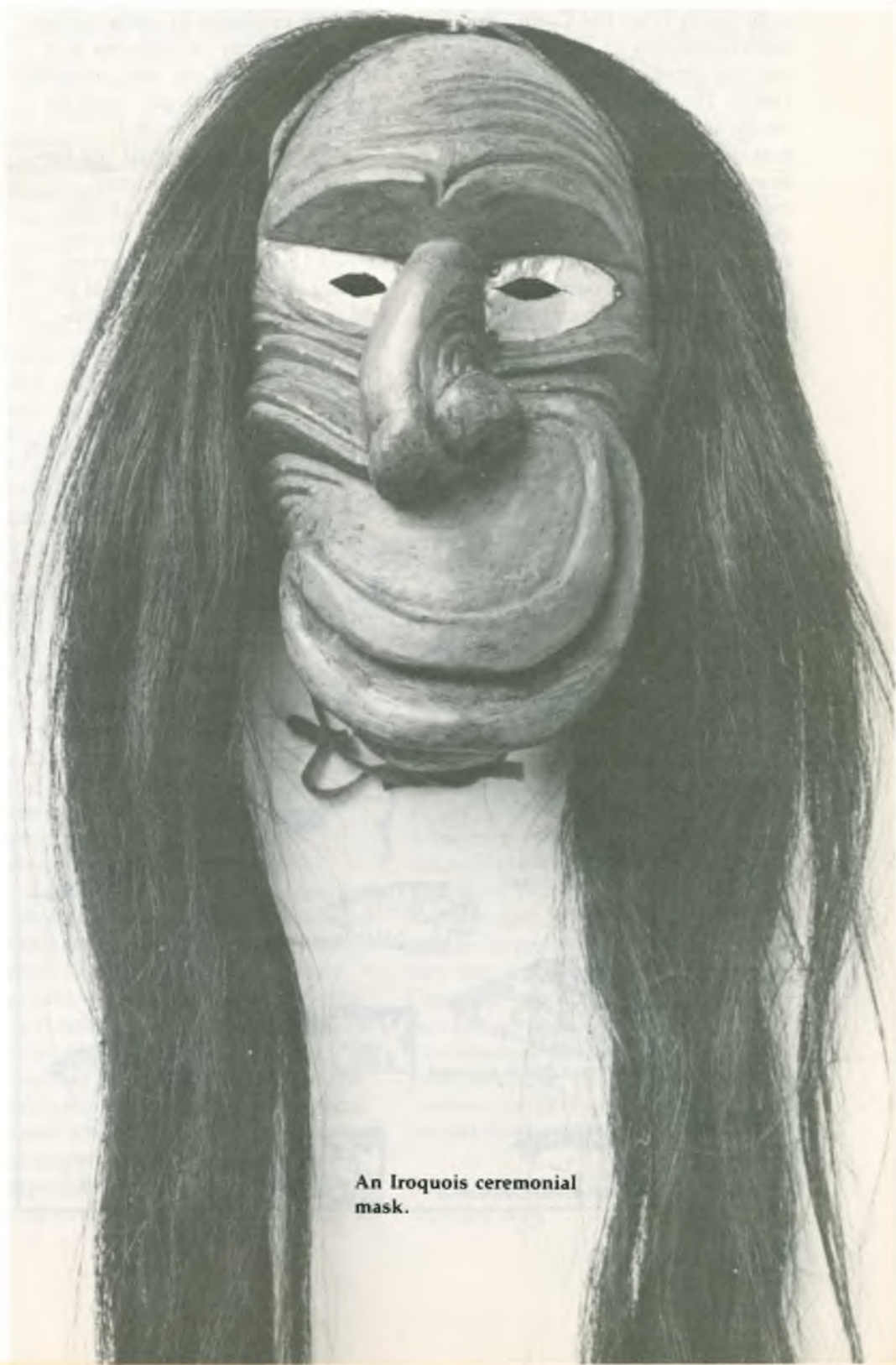
## A SHORT READING LIST

**Anthologies and collections of traditional works:** Stith Thompson, ed. *Tales of the North American Indians*. Larry Evers ed. *The South Corner of Time*. Jarold Ramsey, ed. *Coyote Was Going There*. John Bierhorst, ed. *Four Masterworks of American Indian Literature*. Dennis Tedlock, *Finding the Center* (Zuni).

**Critical studies:** Melville Jacobs, *The Content and Form of an Oral Literature* (Clackamas Chinook). Dell Hymes, "In Vain I Tried to Tell You": *Essays in Native American Ethnopoetics*. Jarold Ramsey, *Reading the Fire: Essays in the Traditional Indian Literature of the Far West*. Karl

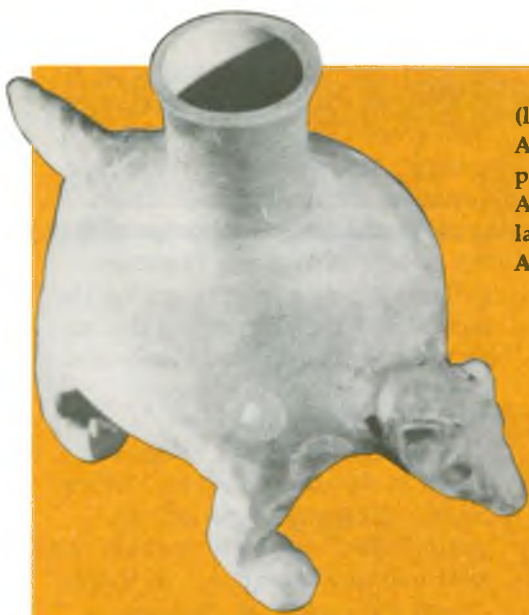
Kroeber, ed. *Traditional Literatures of the American Indian. Studies in American Indian Literatures* (journal).

**Native American writing:** N. Scott Momaday, *The Way to Rainy Mountain* (memoir), *House Made of Dawn* (novel). Leslie Silko, *Ceremony* (novel), *Storyteller* (memoir). James Welch, *Winter in the Blood: The Death of Jim Loney* (novels). Simon Ortiz, *Going for the Rain; A Good Journey* (poetry). Duane Niatum, *Ascending Red Cedar Moon; Songs for the Harvester of Dreams* (poetry); *Carriers of the Dream Wheel* (anthology of native poets). D'Arcy McNickle, *The Surrounded* (novel).



An Iroquois ceremonial mask.





(left) Between A.D. 1000-1400, native Americans in Mississippi made decorative pots called "effigies." Almost sixty feet tall, Alabama's temple mound is one of the largest man-made earthworks in North America.



# Lost in Time

"It is not the easiest thing in the world to find a buffalo," says Maryanne Culpepper of Auburn Television, at Alabama's Auburn University.

Nor is it a simple matter to come up with Paleo Indian hunters or Spanish conquistadors. But Culpepper and her colleagues found them all—including a buffalo—to create the cast for *Lost in Time*, an hour-long, award-winning documentary that traces the story of Alabama's first inhabitants, from their crossing of the Bering Straits land bridge to the arrival of Hernando de Soto.

Developed by Auburn Television, with funds from the Committee for the Humanities in Alabama (CHA) and the private Linn-Henley Trust, *Lost in Time* and its companion study and viewer guides show not just the history of Alabama's earliest Indians but also the methods modern scholars use to interpret the past. From first draft to finished film, the project represents a near total collaboration between humanities scholars and media producers.

The idea for the film came from Birmingham publisher John Henley III. "He was really concerned about the way Alabama history is taught in public schools, particularly prehistory," says Walter Cox, ex-

ecutive director of the CHA.

Although Alabama has one of North America's richest archaeological records (state borders enclose a region that has been occupied by humans for at least 11,000 years), Henley knew there was a dearth of materials that dealt with the subject.

Henley, who also represents the Linn-Henley Trust, approached the state's public television network about producing a film on Alabama prehistory. Not long afterward, Auburn Television producer/directors Maryanne Culpepper, Bruce Kuerten, and Joseph O. Vogel, an associate professor in anthropology at the University of Alabama and former director of the state museum of natural history, began work on the eighteen-month project.

Vogel, who has studied the fortifications that once enclosed Moundville, Alabama's famous prehistoric site near Tuscaloosa, helped Culpepper and Kuerten prepare the funding proposal for *Lost in Time*, served as the filmmakers' emissary to the state archaeological community, and consulted on the film script.

"We worked with Joe daily," says Culpepper. "He would review the script and it would be just red. He'd bled all over it. And we'd

rewrite it."

Vogel counters, "Bruce and Maryanne and myself submerged our egos. We would buck ideas around without anyone saying, 'I'm going to the wall on this.'"

The collaboration paid off in such honors as the Golden Eagle award of the Council on Nontheatrical Events, a CINDY from the International Film Producers Association, and an INTERCOM certificate of merit from the Chicago International Film Festival.

"In terms of thematic content," adds Vogel, "I felt we were successful in depicting what I call the long flow of prehistory. We tried to show the continuity of Indian cultures and how they worked."

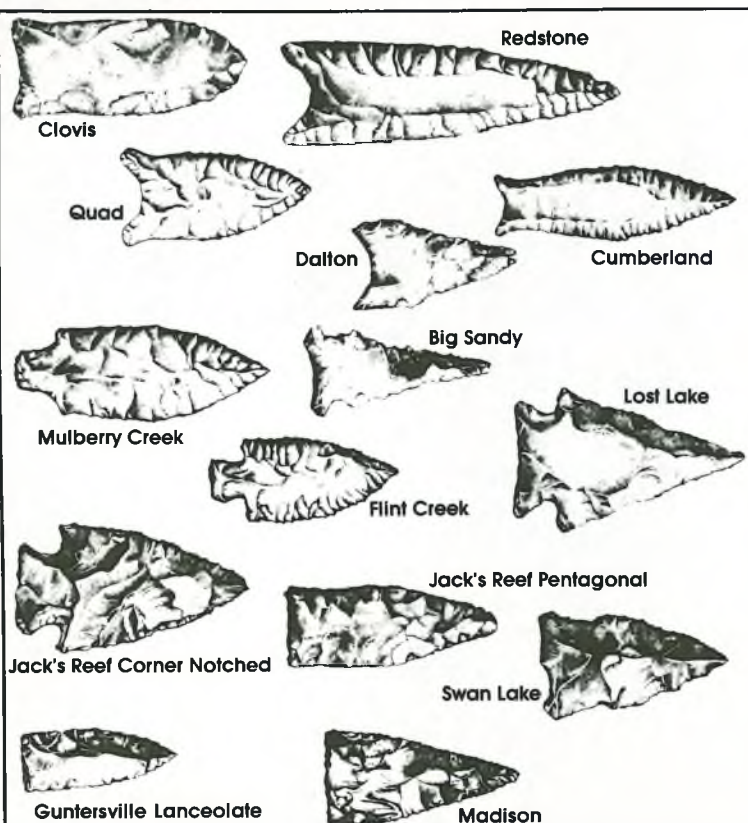
*Lost in Time* roams across three prehistorical eras: the migration of Paleo Indians from Asia to North America (10,000-8000 B.C.); the development of Archaic culture (8000-1000 B.C.); and the rise and fall of Mississippian society (A.D. 800-1500). The story begins when mammoths, saber-toothed cats, and camels trod what is now Alabama soil. But one of *Lost in Time's* first images is of a modern camper losing his pocket knife in the Alabama woods—a clue to how some artifacts have come into the hands of archaeologists.

Scenes of early Alabamans (portrayed by students from Auburn University) hunting buffalo and crafting spear points are followed by a visit to an archaeological excavation. Joseph Vogel links past and present by explaining, on camera, some of the analytical techniques scholars use to "make suggestions" about the life of ancient Americans.

*Lost in Time* tells viewers how a warming climate led to the development of new hunting and food-processing methods that characterize the 7,000-year period of the Archaic tradition. A demonstration of pottery making ushers in the succeeding Woodland tradition, when Alabama's natives—equipped with lightweight and durable cooking and storage containers—turned from hunting and gathering to simple farming and settled in small villages. An anthropologist discusses burial sites and explains how scientists, by studying human bones, form conclusions about persons long dead.

The final segment of *Lost in Time* presents details about the sophisticated Mississippian culture that developed 1,000 years ago along Alabama's Black Warrior River. Through aerial photography, Moundville, the largest preserved

## PALEO



(left) Prehistoric spearpoints of Alabama show that native American culture continually changed over thousands of years. The spearpoints are placed in the time period in which they seemed most prevalent. (right) An actor portrays a native American of the Archaic period, using a spearthrower or atlatl.

photographs courtesy of Auburn Television



Mississippian site in North America, is shown. The 300-acre site is named for the large earthen mounds that were constructed as burial places and building platforms. Today an Alabama state park, fourteenth-century Moundville was home to 3,000 Indians, the administrative center for villages housing another 7,000 inhabitants of the lower Black Warrior Valley. In the film Vogel explains the kin-based social structure and three-tiered chieftain system that enabled Moundville to dominate politics, trade, and ceremonial affairs over a 240-square-mile stretch of Alabama.

Present day Alabamans have responded enthusiastically to the story of their state's earliest inhabitants. More than 50,000 people watched the film's two broadcasts over the Alabama public television network. Prints of *Lost in Time* have been purchased by universities, and the film has been incorporated into public-school curricula.

A viewer guide, providing further information on archaeology and native American history, has been sent to more than 2,000 libraries, museums, and study clubs throughout the state.

The sixty-minute film itself has been worked into a variety of formats. Three twenty-minute videocassette programs were developed for classroom use. A slide-tape version was produced to make *Lost in Time* accessible to groups without film projectors or video recorders. Moundville State Park has incorporated the slide-tape program into its permanent display, and *Lost in Time* is being seen by more than 20,000 park visitors each year.

"We really wanted to do it well," Culpepper says. Producing a first-class film on Alabama Indians required more than scholarly collaboration. There was also physical labor. Video equipment, lashed to medical stretchers, was hauled through forests and up mountain-sides. "The crew looked like a M.A.S.H. unit," says Culpepper.

One portion of *Lost in Time* was filmed during a snowstorm, says director Bruce Kuerten, to avoid the appearance "that all 12,000 years of Indian prehistory occurred from 12 to 2 on a sunny afternoon."

Finally, that buffalo Culpepper located for a *Lost in Time* hunting sequence misread the script, and charged after the film's crew chief. "He almost vaulted an eight-foot fence," Culpepper says.

Culpepper and Auburn Television will be embarking on another collaboration with Alabama humanities scholars. *Lost in Time* leaves Alabama's mound-builders in the 1540s, when Hernando de Soto explored the Southeast. The success of the film has led to plans for a sequel, which will examine the impact of European arrival on the earliest Alabamans.

—Michael Lipske

## Hello, Columbus!

*In fourteen hundred ninety-two  
Columbus sailed the ocean blue.*

—old nursery rhyme

And in 1992 the United States, along with most other countries of the western hemisphere and also Italy and Spain, will observe the 500th anniversary of this momentous event. In August 1984 Congress established a national commission to coordinate planning for the quincentenary, as the anniversary is coming to be called. In Spain a similar royal commission has been operating for several years, as have committees in a number of Latin American nations and in the Organization of American States. Private organizations have also been established, including Hispanic and Italian-American citizens' groups. Chicago will observe the occasion with a major World's Fair. The original Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1892, celebrated "progress," the watchword of turn-of-the-century America. It seems likely then that the Columbian quincentenary will be a significant public occasion in 1992. But its significance for American scholarship is not immediately apparent.

Samuel Eliot Morison once wrote that no subject has been so productive of spurious scholarship and doubtful claims as the subject of Columbus and the European discovery of America. Consequently, the NEH divisions of Research Programs and General Programs decided to take steps at this relatively early stage to talk to our colleagues in the academic world—in scholarly associations and research libraries, in public broadcasting and museums and historical societies, and in other interested organizations—to explore with them the potential significance of the occasion for the practice and dissemination of historical and cultural studies relating to the Age of Discovery, broadly construed. The consultation took the form of a series of five regional conferences which met in Chicago, Santa Fe, Gainesville and St. Augustine (Florida), Berkeley (California), and Washington between September 1983 and June 1984.

The idea behind the conferences was that NEH's appropriate role in the quincentenary is catalytic rather than directive. No special NEH grant-making category is envisioned. Rather, we hoped to elicit

project ideas which, after percolation through the appropriate networks of scholarly interchange and association, will return to the Endowment in the form of mature project proposals to existing NEH programs during the next several years.

Some projects relating to the quincentenary have already been supported by NEH. *New Iberian World* (Times Books, 1984), a five-volume documentary history of the discovery and settlement of Latin America, was translated with NEH support. And one of the segments in the acclaimed television series *Odyssey* surveyed the current status of archaeological research on the Inca civilization.

The ideas put forward during the conferences range widely across the full range of humanities disciplines and embody ideas for research projects, reference works, scholarly editions, bibliographies, microfilming projects, public lectures, films, television series, conferences and exhibitions. Within this diversity, three integrating—but not wholly complementary—themes emerged that seem likely to persist in scholarly discourse on the quincentenary over the next few years.

One theme concerns the contributions of the Spanish crown, church and people to the development of new civilizations in the New World. The Spanish government's focus on the processes of discovery, exploration, and settlement in its preparations for the quincentenary was echoed by many specialists in Latin American studies. Many scholars, along with Hispanic citizens groups in the United States, see 1992 as an opportunity to counteract the "Black Legend" of Spanish cruelty to the indigenous people of the Americas, which they see as a distortion of historical truth growing out of English, Dutch, and American patriotic and religious propaganda of the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries.

Not surprisingly, native American scholars evince little enthusiasm for the notions that Columbus "discovered" America or that the demographic catastrophes which befalls its inhabitants should be de-emphasized in favor of more cheerful themes. They nevertheless see the quincentenary as a chance to focus more attention on historical issues of importance to Indian people, especially upon the archaeological and ethnohistorical record of the in-



Christopher Columbus as shown in *The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* by Washington Irving.

ital period of contact with Europeans. A related emphasis stresses the importance of the early African presence in the New World, especially in the Caribbean Basin, and of the African contribution to the cultural amalgams that emerged there and in North and South America after 1492.

Finally, there is the figure of Christopher Columbus himself. Scholars today tend to be more interested in studying the process of change rather than specific men or events. Some Spanish spokespeople see Columbus as a foreign mercenary no more, or less, deserving of credit for Spain's achievements than is Werner von Braun for the American space program. Canadians and Brazilians insist that Columbus share credit with Cabot and Cabral, whose explorations along their coasts occurred in 1497 and 1500, respectively.

Nevertheless, for most Americans, Columbus will remain the hero of 1492—and of 1992. Columbus was the first American hero, a symbol of national identity during the early years of the United States. His later years, full of difficult relations with the Spanish crown, made him also a symbol of anti-monarchist sentiment among the American patriots who first celebrated Columbus Day in 1792. From other standpoints, Columbus was a visionary celebrated for his scientific learning, navigational skill, Catholic piety, and personal courage and perseverance. Italian-Americans revere him as the symbol of Italian national identity, something that their immigrant ancestors, who left Italy during the formative years of the modern Italian nation, were otherwise unable to provide. The name of the new commission created by Congress—the Christopher Columbus Quincentennial Jubilee Commission—is likely to keep the great navigator's memory in the forefront of 1992 observances in the United States.

—John Williams

Mr. Williams is a member of the Endowment staff.



## AWARD WINNERS

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF HUNGARIAN HISTORY AWARD**  
Lee Congdon, *The Young Lukacs*. The University of North Carolina Press, 1983.

**AMERICAN BOOK AWARD**  
Judith Thurman, *Isak Dinesen*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982.

**ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN PUBLISHERS' PROFESSIONAL AND SCHOLARLY PUBLISHING DIVISION AWARD**  
Karl Pribram, *A History of Economic Reasoning*. Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984.

**AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION RALPH J. BUNCHE AWARD**  
John Armstrong, *Nations Before Nationalism*. The University of North Carolina Press, 1982.

**BERKSHIRE CONFERENCE OF WOMEN HISTORIANS AWARD**  
Margaret W. Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940*. Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984.

**CHOICE AWARDS**  
Paul Debreczeny, *The Other Pushkin: Study of Alexander Pushkin's Prose Fiction*. California: Stanford University Press, 1984.

Gordon K. Lewis, *Main Currents in Caribbean Thought: The Historical Evolution of Caribbean Society in its Ideological Aspects, 1492-1900*. Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984.

Leonard Neufeldt, *The House of Emerson*. The University of Nebraska Press, 1984.

Maximilian E. Novak, *Realism, Myth, and History in Defoe's Fiction*. The University of Nebraska Press, 1984.

Karl Pribram, *A History of Economic Reasoning*. Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984.

Aleksandr Sergeevich Pushkin, *Alexander Pushkin, Complete Prose Fiction*, translated by Paul Debreczeny, verse passages translated by Walter Arndt. California: Stanford University Press, 1984.

Anthony Trollope, *The Letters of Anthony Trollope*. ed. by N. John Hall, with Nina Burgis. California: Stanford University Press, 1984.

Richard White, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change Among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos*. The University of Nebraska Press, 1984.

Virginia Woolf, *Melymbrosia: An Early Version of "The Voyage Out"*. ed. by Louise A. DeSalvo. New York Public Library, 1984.

**CHRISTOPHER BOOK AWARDS**  
Stephen B. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1982.

**DUTCH TRANSLATION AWARD**  
*The Poison Tree: Selected Writings of Rumphius on the Natural History of the Indies*, translated by E. M. Beekman. University of Massachusetts Press, 1984.

**FRIENDS OF THE DALLAS PUBLIC LIBRARY AWARDS**  
David Weber, *The Mexican Frontier: 1821-1846: The American Southwest Under Mexico*. University of Mexico, 1982.

**JOHN BEN SNOW FOUNDATION AWARD**  
Lois G. Schworer, *The Declaration of Rights, 1689*. Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981.

**JULES F. LANDRY AWARD**  
Fred O. Hobson, Jr., *Tell About the Southern Rage to Explain*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983.

**OHIOANA BOOK AWARD FOR BIOGRAPHY**  
R. David Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet*. The University of Nebraska Press, 1984.

**OHIOANA BOOK AWARDS FOR HISTORY**  
Lawrence J. Friedman, *Gregarious Saints*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

**PFIZER PRIZE**  
Richard S. Westfall, *Never at Rest: A Biography of Isaac Newton*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.



"Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are."  
—Milton, *Areopagitica*

The booklist that *Humanities* publishes every year at this time might be regarded as *our* progeny—as well as that of the many NEH grantees who have worked to produce these scholarly works.

There are 197 in all, each one containing a "potency of life" that will be useful to other scholars or general readers in advancing knowledge of the humanities. The author's research or time off for writing began either with a grant from Fellowships for Independent Study and Research, the Basic Research Program, or the Translations Program. Some of the books were published with the aid of a grant from the NEH Publications Program.

We hope you will enjoy scanning the list of books and their authors, as well as the twenty-five award-winners who have been honored during the year for their books published in 1983. —JCN

**SARAH H. KUSHNER MEMORIAL AWARD FOR SCHOLARSHIP**  
Jeremy Cohen, *Friars and Jews*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982.

**THOMAS WILSON PRIZE**  
Robert N. Watson, *Shakespeare and the Hazards of Ambition*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984.

**WESTERN BOOKS EXHIBITION FOR EXCELLENCE IN BOOK DESIGN AND PRODUCTION**  
*Alexander Pushkin: Complete Prose Fiction*, translated by Paul Debreczeny, verse passages translated by Walter Arndt. California: Stanford University Press, 1984.

**WESTERN HERITAGE BOOK AWARD FOR NONFICTION**  
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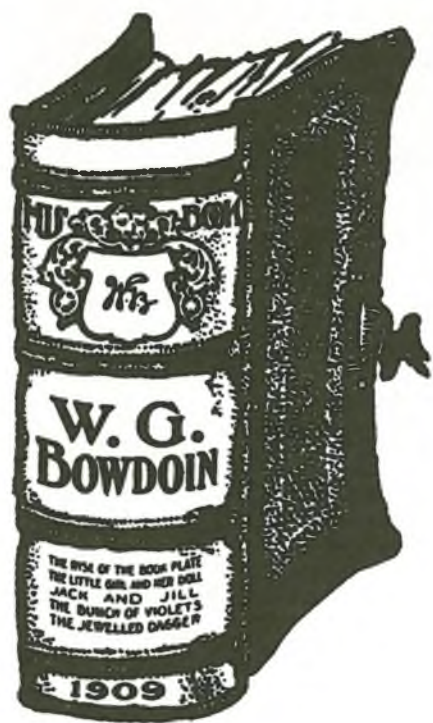
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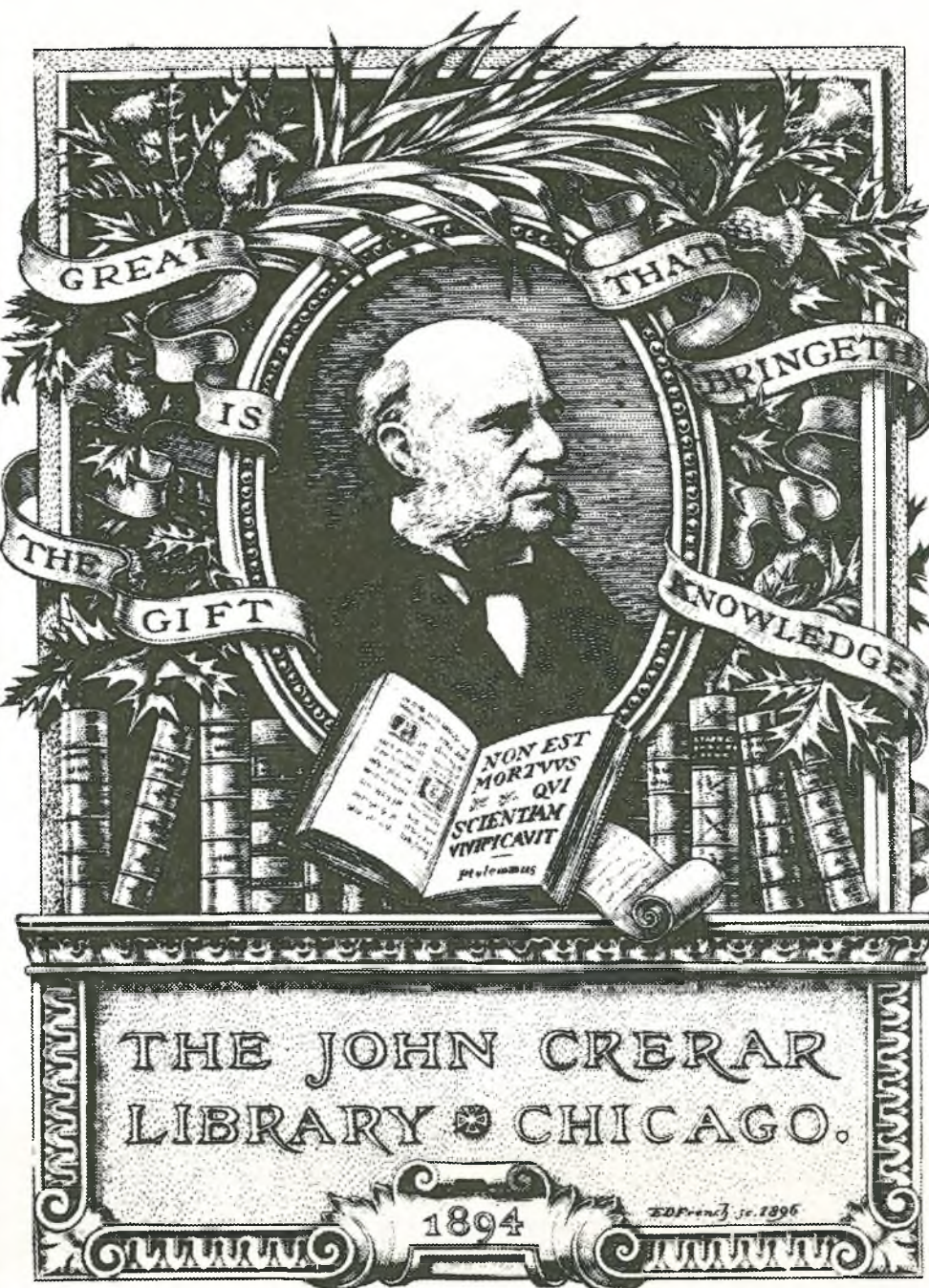
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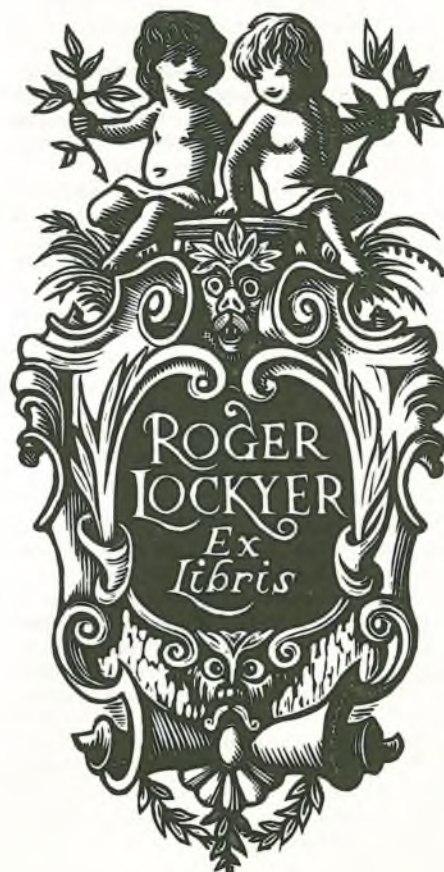
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## MESSAGES FROM THE MAYA continued from page 9

several reasons. At the beginning of the project, it seemed that any interpretative commentaries would quickly become obsolete in a reference work intended to serve for many years. More recently, the Peabody researchers have heard that other scholars are working on a sort of primer of Maya decipherment. Mathews and Graham plan to publish commentaries presenting the logic for certain readings in the *Corpus*, but to avoid needless repetition, they are waiting until the primer appears.

Just the same, Graham does not expect that all Maya inscriptions will be understood in his lifetime. For one thing, scholars have identified 850 distinct hieroglyphic signs. "This is a problem you have to chip away at," Graham says. "You'll never read in the *New York Times* a headline that says, 'Maya code cracked.' A great many of the signs don't have much of a phonetic element in them; each is a discrete problem of interpretation. For a number of signs, we've found only one or two examples. Other signs refer to arcane ceremonies or concepts that are beyond our comprehension today."

Why is it important that scholars come to a better understanding of Maya hieroglyphics? In one sense, it's hard to improve on Graham's comment—the answer of a pure

scholar—"any undeciphered sign is a puzzle to solve." But there is a particular aura of mystery about the Maya. On the remaining evidence we know that they developed a high form of culture, the greatest civilization in the New World. The beauty of their art, the precision of their astronomical calculations, the intricacy of their architecture, and the sophistication of their written language all testify to that. Yet the contemporary descendants of the Maya, tribes still living in village clearings and practicing a religion that blends elements of Christianity with ancient ritual, are astounded to hear that their ancestors built the high stone pyramids that poke through the vast jungle. Mayanists, of course, have theories on what brought down this powerful society. The prevailing view holds that the peasants revolted against the theocracy of their ruler-priests and abandoned the great ceremonial centers. By turning dim centuries of prehistory into history itself, Maya hieroglyphics promise to contribute to the ever-meaningful tale of how civilizations rise and fall.

—George Clack

"*Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions Program*"/Gordon E. Willey, *Harvard University, Cambridge, MA*/ \$85,000 OR; \$49,950 FM/1982-85/ *Basic Research*

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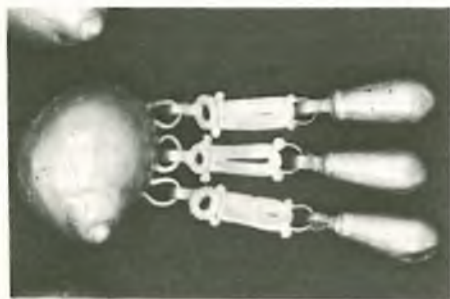


# Featured in this Issue of Humanities

## 1

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An eminent archaeologist describes the two civilizations that were the last to flourish in Mexico and South America before the coming of the Spaniards. Although the Aztec and Inca were contemporaries, the author finds great differences between the two cultures. The Incas were a society of bureaucrats, efficient and highly organized. The Aztec culture was dynamic, even dangerous, propelled by a deeply religious fervor.



## 4

### **The Largest Inca Monument** by John Hyslop

The Inca roads were a vast network binding the empire that ruled the Andes mountains of South America for the entire century before the Spanish conquest in 1532. They could traverse a major north/south route for a distance of 3,400 miles. These monumental roads demonstrate the sophistication and efficiency of Inca civilization and show how this vast communication system helped to maintain the empire's supremacy.

## 6

### **Treasures from a Sacred Well**

For archaeologists studying Maya civilization, it is fortunate that Maya religious rites included hurling precious objects into a sacred well. From this Great Cenote at Chichén Itzá, 30,000 sacrificial objects have been recovered and studied for clues to understanding the history and culture of a powerful people who dominated the Yucatan from A.D. 750 to 1250. Hundreds of these artifacts will be on view through spring at the Science Museum of Minnesota in St. Paul, before traveling to six other cities.

## 8

### **Messages from the Maya**

A massive effort to catalogue and publish photographs and drawings of all the known Maya hieroglyphic inscriptions "will save much of the cultural heritage of Mesoamerica from sure obliteration," according to *American Antiquity*. *The Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions* is being documented chiefly by two Peabody Museum archaeologists. Both are MacArthur "genius" award winners who shun the image of "archaeologist as hero."



## 10

### **Stoic Survivors**

by Robert Coles & Alex Harris

The Pulitzer Prize-winning author describes what may very well be the last remnant of pre-pipeline Eskimo civilization. The photographs that accompany his essay underscore the virtues of this proud, stoic and self-reliant people.

## 11

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### **Rediscovering Native American Literature**

by Jarold Ramsey

The simultaneous awareness of the value of native American traditional literature and the growing recognition of modern native American writers are generating an excitement about America's "oldest and newest" literary heritage.



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### **Lost in Time**

How an anthropologist, a publisher, and two television producers from Auburn University collaborated on a film about Alabama's prehistory. In the process we learn about the migration of Paleo Indians from Asia to North America; the development of Archaic culture; and the rise and fall of Mississippian society, including the sophisticated culture that developed along the Black Warrior River in Moundville.

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### **Hello, Columbus!**

by John Williams

What the NEH and others are doing to prepare for the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus, and a reminder that 1992 is closer than you think.

## 24

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