Museum

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Issues in museum practice

museum

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Cover photo: A wake feast, bark-painting by Malangi of the Manarrgu group, Arnhem Land, Australia, and which has served as a model to illustrate the Australian one-dollar note (41 cm × 48 cm). This piece is part of a fine collection at the Musée des Arts Africains et Océaniens in Paris, which was displayed in a special gallery, newly renovated to coincide with the 1983 Festival d'Automne. The Festival, which focused on Australia in 1983, brought to Paris Aboriginal musicians and dancers who had never been out of their ancestral homes before. If features visual arts as well. The museum's display sought to present Aboriginal art in its technical and social context. An article on the museum's new purposes will be included in a future issue. [*Photo:* Réunion des Musées Nationaux, Paris.]

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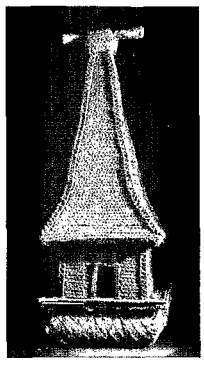

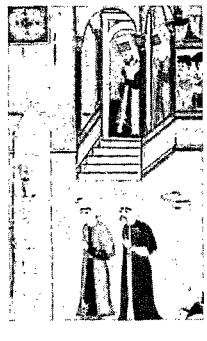

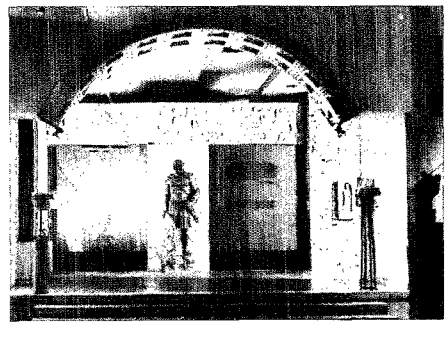

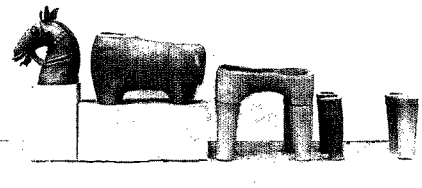

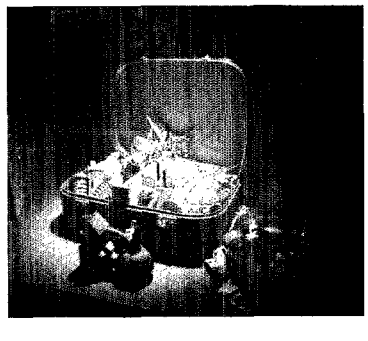

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Stirrup-spouted bottle with mountains, deity and small figures, Moche IV culture, A.D. 400.
See article, page 58.
[*Photo:* Courtesy of the National Geographic Society.]

Museums for today and tomorrow: a cultural and educational mission

Makaminan Makagiansar

After high-level responsibilities in the fields of scientific development and education in his country, Indonesia, Makaminan Makagiansar was appointed Assistant Director-General of Unesco in 1976. He is now in charge of the sector of Culture.

The decade of the 1980s augurs well for the world's museums. They appear open and accessible to wider publics than ever before. They are increasingly a place for both learning and play for children all over the world. They are seen as significant repositories of cultural identity by the citizens of every country, as interesting and challenging places for all to visit.

We know of course that this was not always so. Even as recently as the 1960s museums appeared to offer little to many people—perhaps the majority—and were generally not considered useful and relevant to the needs and aspirations of developing countries.

In most of the latter this stemmed essentially from the fact that the museums were only partly the emanations of an indigenous cultural personality: they were not there to meet a need expressed by the majority of their own people. Rather, they were in one respect immature transplants from the élitist cultural milieux in nineteenth-century Europe when it was taken for granted that the discourse of 'high culture' could be grasped by only a few. From another standpoint, despite the fact that museums were already staffed by indigenous specialists, the attitude of the latter was largely that of their European mentors of yesteryear, a closed professional group, élitist in the sense that the museum existed mainly for their own scholarly pursuits. This was particularly dysfunctional in the Third World context, where life-styles remained predominantly 'traditional', still relatively untouched by some of the most harmful features of industrial civilization, and where people continued to be creative and conscious of visual quality and form as defined by their own cultural traditions. The privilege of higher education certainly does not confer a monopoly of sensitivity to artistic values.[1] But until relatively recently many museums gave the distinct impression that they were created and maintained for a limited educated élite.

Today, however, museums everywhere are being gradually transformed. The museum in Europe and North America has had to come to grips with the notion of service to contemporary society as a whole. In fulfilling this role it has found itself in keen competition with an array of media which cater to the information and leisure-time demands of people in industrially advanced societies. All evidence points to the success of the museum movement in these countries, for new museums are continuously being created, catering to all fields of knowledge and human endeavour, financed in a wide variety of ways and used increasingly—and spontaneously—by young people especially, as an educational resource, regardless of the educational attainments of the user.

In developing countries, where the recovery and re-assertion of cultural identity has become one of the most basic popular aspirations—if not a fundamental one after food and shelter—museums are having to take on even more significant responsibilities. There are relatively few of them, to begin with, but even more important is the fact that, unlike those countries which began the safeguard of their cultural heritage a century ago and more, in most of the Third World systematic study and documentation of the cultural heritage has only just begun. The authorities responsible for the heritage in these countries have yet to determine exactly what they should preserve

1 As one lucid Western writer has observed with respect to a South-East Asian country: 'What struck me the most was their capacity to create art, quite unimpressed by so-called international art or by tourism, i.e. making no concessions to European aesthetic values. Thus musical improvisation, architecture, theatre and literature are being permanently renewed while respecting a certain cultural continuity' (Hugues de Varine, *La culture des autres,* Paris, Seuil, 1976, p. 188).

and, in the light of the means at their disposal, what they can preserve. The financial and human resources to do so are necessarily limited. This is especially disquieting today, when the internal and external threats to the integrity of all cultures are becoming increasingly dangerous.[2] But for the developing countries as a whole the notion of safeguard cannot possibly be interpreted in a purely protective, passive sense. They are not taking part in a rearguard struggle. Their cultures are not moribund but very much alive, despite the severe trials they have undergone, and that vitality means pragmatic creativity in the forging of a living cultural reality, nourished by the abundant heritage of the past, which is preserved, used and respected.

These developments have made new demands on the museum's services in all countries of the world. But it is in the newly independent nations that, during the 1960s and 1970s, culturally sensitive individuals, decision-makers and, naturally, museum professionals themselves acquired the firm conviction that their museums could play a truly considerable role in the cultural renaissance of all peoples. From the vantage-point of an international organization, which has actively promoted the concept of cultural development, we are able to grasp the full measure of the vast responsibilities facing the world's museums.

Unesco has always followed very closely the evolution of theory and practice in the museum profession and it would be fair to say that the Organization, professionally informed and advised by the International Council of Museums, has itself stimulated significant progress in the identification of major problems of international relevance and in the search for a global response to them. Thus, in the preparatory work for the drafting of a Medium-Term Plan to guide Unesco's activities during the period 1984–89, the Director-General was very conscious of the fact that, since the museum is very definitely a key institution in the cultural scene of the 1980s, Unesco must do all that is within its power to promote worldwide recognition of this reality. We all remember the terms in which, not so very long ago, museums were still described: dead institutions, cultural mausoleums, etc. Such clichés are difficult to overcome. The fault has not lain merely with the museums themselves, for the pioneering work of rejuvenating museological practice had already been done and dynamic new museums were there for all to see. No, the general public, including some administrators, still shared the misunderstandings of the previous age. Therefore, it is particularly heartening to see in what terms a Minister of Education and Culture can in full confidence characterize the contemporary museum as

> a forum where the genius of the times and the spirit of the people find expression. It aspires to be a laboratory, a novel happening, a transitory experience . . . a place where the public holds discourse with artists, where it can express its doubts, seek information, make a start in art or science, and freely question what it is seeing and experiencing.[3]

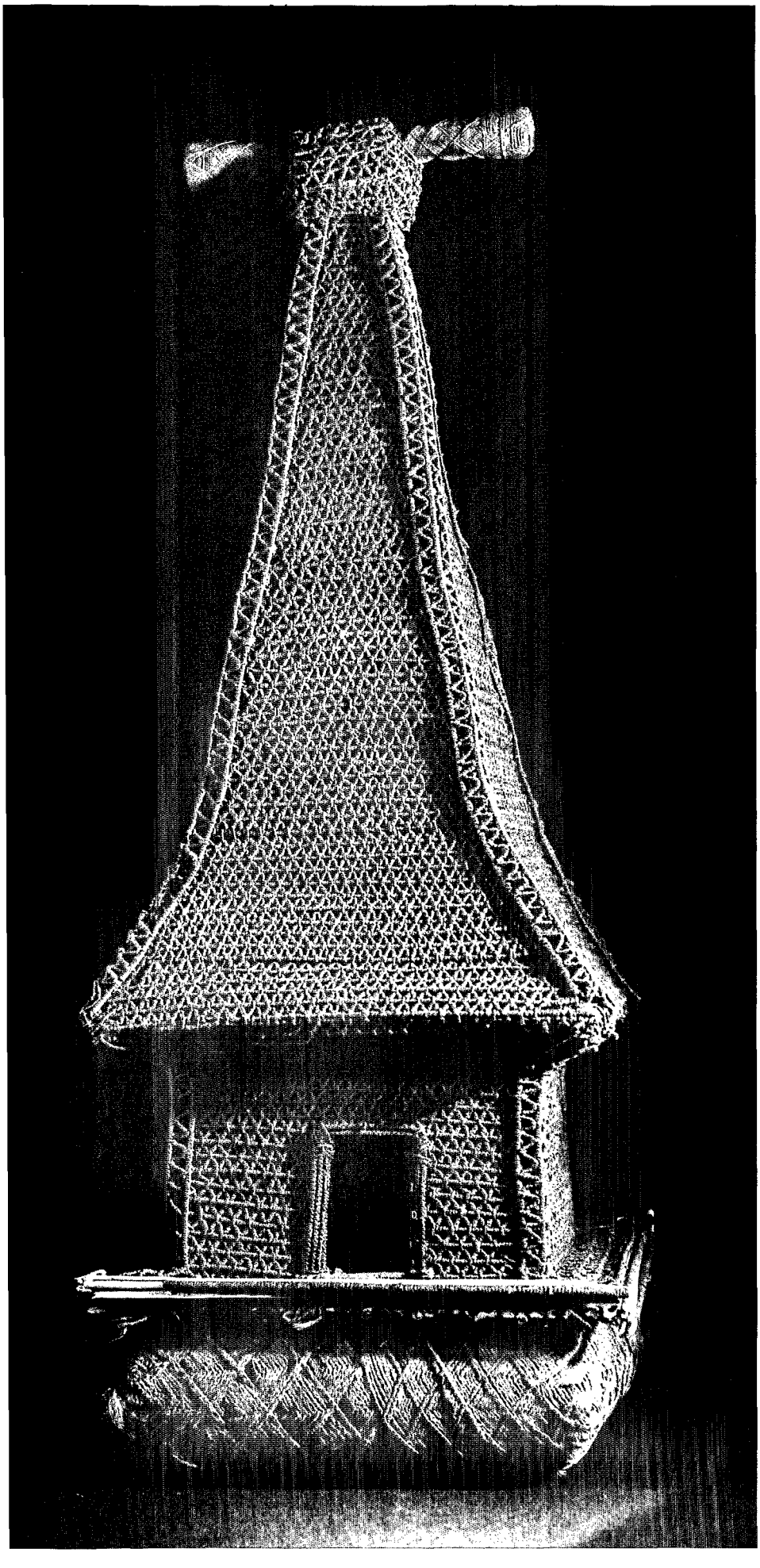
Such a vision also permeates Unesco's own ambitions for the world of museums in its Medium-Term Plan for 1984–1989, which specifies that the 'cultural heritage is an expression of each people's historical experience and its collective personality. It represents the very basis of

2. Describing the widening gap in this respect between industrialized and developing countries, ICOM's publication *Museums: An Investment for Development* (1982) has this to say: 'A quick comparison of some basic statistics for museums in industrialized countries and those in the low-income category highlights the inequalities of the present situation. The industrial countries, with 15.6 per cent of the world population, have 66.5 per cent of the existing museums; the average number of museums in each country is 983; and the ratio of inhabitants to museums is 30,500, less than one-fifth of the world's average. The low-income countries, on the other hand, have 52.7 per cent of the world population, 3.1 per cent of the total number of museums, an average of twenty-two museums per country, and 2,271,000 inhabitants per museum.

'The gap in the museum situation between these two groups of countries, far from closing, is enlarging as time goes by. Not only do industrialized countries have more museums, by whatever ratio is employed, but the industrialized countries' museums enjoy the advantages that derive from their relatively long existence. These advantages are based on the recognition as 'worthy' institutions they receive from their societies, their experience on the administration and organization of museums, and the cumulative value of the funding they have received through the years'. The situation is neatly summed up again in the ICOM Foundation's brochure *A World of Museums,* p. 35, where it is pointed out that three-quarters of existing museums are in Europe and North America. Europe itself has one museum for every 43,000 inhabitants, while Latin America has one for every 272,000; Africa one for every 1,320,000, and Asia one for every 1,420,000.

3. Fernando Solana (Mexico), Inaugural address at the Twelfth General Conference of the International Council of Museums, Mexico City. October–November 1980, *Proceedings of the 12th General Conference and 13th General Assembly of the International Council of Museums, Mexico City, 25 October to 4 November 1980. The World's Heritage—The Museum's Responsibilities,* ICOM, 1981. 188 pp, ill.

Bure Kalou model spirit-house or temple. Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. Height 1.18 m.
[*Photo:* Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.]



cultural identity in the consciousness of individuals and of the community'. The Plan goes on to say that monuments and museums are no longer merely places where specialists carry out their researches 'but fulfil a cultural and educational mission, making the population aware of the various aspects of its culture'.

The latter emphasis, concerning the broad educational functions of the museum, its responsibilities as a 'communicator' as discussed in a previous issue of *Museum,* is in our opinion vital for the continuing prosperity of the institution. Some curators strongly defend the argument that their primary responsibility is towards the conservation of their collections and towards the pursuit of the best possible scholarship in relation to those collections, in order to add to our stock of understanding and appreciation. But conservation and excellence in scholarship must not stand alone. They can certainly be ends in themselves for conservators and scholars who have little or no inclination for other things; a museum exclusively staffed by such people, however, could not respond adequately to the needs of our time. Good conservation and scholarship of a high standard on the one hand and a style of presentation which seeks to communicate delight and instruction to a wide spectrum of people on the other are not necessarily incompatible goals. It is precisely because the apparent dichotomy between quality and access had to be tackled first and overcome in the field of education that professionals in that discipline firmly hold the view that no such incompatibility exists. One such ex-educationist, who has the responsibility for building interdisciplinary links with museums, has already pointed out in this journal that

> a collection is not a museum any more than a library is a university. The latter can be legitimized only by its function as an institution for teaching and learning. However gifted the professor or excellent the materials in the laboratory the purpose of the university is to apply those resources to the task of education. Thus, however well informed the curators or comprehensive the serried rows of artefacts in the store, the museum's purpose is to share its collection, to enable the public to participate and enjoy the particular as-

4. James Porter, 'A Rejoinder to "The Museum as Communicator", *Museum,* No. 138, 1983.

> pects of culture which it represents. The museum is not simply a place to house a collection of precious objects to be knowingly contemplated by a small group of scholarly gazers: its cardinal work is to communicate, not as an option but as the central feature which everything else must facilitate.[4]

It is fitting that the present issue of *Museum,* the first to appear during the period covered by Unesco's Medium-Term Plan, should present reflections and reports from museums throughout the world which exemplify the above philosophy. Thus several articles deal explicitly with the theory and method of communicating an authentic message simply but scientifically. Two experiences deal with the interaction between museum objects and their guardians on the one hand and the members of the public on the other, who are using the museum as a means of self-discovery and as an agent of their own 'non-formal' education. One text argues for the very specific role the university museum can play in the teaching of a particular subject area—anthropology—while another concerns an exhibition designed to make an urban population more aware of the value of its traditional crafts. Another two articles reveal how museums seek to interpret and present a nation's history. On a more technical plane, but one which is decisive in the acquisition and sharing of knowledge, two articles deal with efforts to inventory collections of objects, not merely for the sake of counting and classifying, but so as to make comparisons and refine our understanding of almost vanished cultures, the memory of which is indispensable for their present-day inheritors. The issue also contains descriptions of how museums can contribute to the fight against illicit traffic in cultural property, showing how museum curators themselves are using the language of the object to condemn this terrible scourge and sensitize public opinion to its pernicious implications. Last but not least, this issue presents the case for the return of a famous item of cultural property (the 'Elgin Marbles') as stated by a scholar of the very country in which this priceless heritage is held.

This latter scholar's attitude brings me to my own concluding reflections. I am convinced that on the international level one of the gratest challenges to museums will be their capacity to share their heritage, not just within each particular society as we have seen above, but in the perspective of a far greater movement of objects characterized precisely as 'movable'. Unesco has always recognized that progress in the area now referred to as the 'return or restitution of cultural property' will come primarily from within the museum profession itself. Today, there are encouraging signs that such progress is being achieved at an increasingly rapid pace.

As a corollary to these developments, two observations increasingly made in museum circles are of particular relevance to Unesco.

The first of these is suggested by the fact that many museum professionals —and not just in the 'requesting' countries—have begun to recognize that certain outstanding creations of the world's heritage might conceivably be more appropriately displayed and appreciated in the social and cultural context from which they came. But a true sense of responsibility towards that heritage also requires that the principle of the 'primacy of the object' be scrupulously respected. And we know that in many cases the country of origin may lack the infrastructure necessary to ensure adequate conservation and display. We would argue therefore that the gesture of international solidarity exemplified by the return of an object is not an end in itself, does not suffice on its own. A far broader co-operation between museums is required, which involves the sharing of knowledge and skills, the provision of facilities and equipment to enable a country of origin to hold safety in trust for the entire world an outstanding treasure of its heritage. To assist countries of origin in assuming this responsibility would be one of the noblest conceivable missions for some of the great 'universal' museums of today.

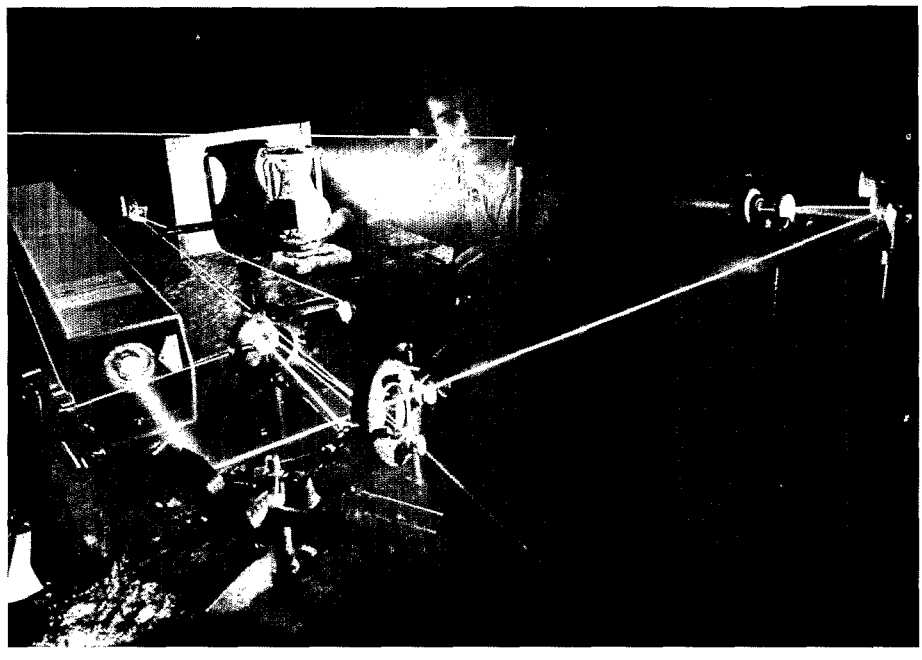
A high degree of political and economic interdependence characterizes the modern world already and, referring recently to the Mexico City Declaration (adopted by the World Conference on Cultural Policies, Mexico City, 26 July to 6 August 1982) Unesco's Director-General, Mr Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, stressed the 'decisive importance of international cultural co-operation, on which the hope of new relationships between nations and of conclusive progress towards peace is based, in view of the fact that potential solutions to certain intractable problems of the modern world seem now to lie in the area of culture'. The problem of the return of cultural property to its countries of origin is one that is itself within the field of culture but it is precisely the search for solutions to it that should provide evidence of those 'new relationships between nations'. One way that museums, especially the large 'universal' institutions, could pave the way would be to take part actively in the development of museums all over the world. These large museums are uniquely equipped to contribute to improving museographical standards everywhere. In so doing they would help contribute to preserving a heritage that belongs to all mankind. At the same time, they would help in reinforcing the cultural identity of many peoples, a cultural identity defined as

> not only as something already achieved, a body of enduring elements and values, but as a dynamic process —based on the continuing dialectic of remembrance and innovation, of being true to oneself and receptive to what others have to offer—which enables a society to promote change without alienation, and to transform itself without losing its distinctive lineaments.[5]

Many forward-looking museologists are also advocating a new definition and scope for museum exchanges, which leads me to the second observation. These curators point to another grave imbalance in international cultural relations: the absence of North–South and South–South exchanges. Today, for example, art books may travel widely and freely to all corners of the globe, but certainly not works of art themselves. The former can perhaps be purchased (at a price!) in the bookshops of Lomé, Montevideo or Kuala Lumpur, but museums in these and other cities are hardly ever able to present adequately the cultures of *other* peoples. Humanity's great 'universal' museums have all grown up in one geocultural area; since there is no question of dispersing their collections far and wide it is necessary to think of ways to achieve a circulation of art works through a process of exchange much more vast and systematic than the sporadic activity seen so far. As an African anthropologist and curator has pointed out,

> in the whole of Black Africa, for instance, it is impossible to find a single museum of Oriental art, or a good gal-

5. Extract from Mr M'Bow's introduction to the General Policy Debate at the twenty-second session of Unesco's General Conference, October–November 1983.



Preparation of a hologram
[*Photo:* V. B. Markov, Ukrainian National Commission for Unesco.]

> lery of modern Impressionist or other art. Greek sculpture, Aztec pottery and Slav silverware, to name a few, are completely unknown to the African peoples. . . . African museums do not possess sufficient resources for a broad system of exchanges or even of temporary circulation to be set up.[6]

Unesco's 1976 Recommendation concerning the international exchange of cultural property set out some of the technical measures to make such circulation possible. But this text was not a blueprint for action. What are technical measures, however excellent, without the will to achieve an objective? The experience since 1976 has shown that will to be inadequate so far. Yet we must also recognize that lack of will may be only part of the problem, for such factors as the high cost of insurance and transport of valuable or fragile objects can be quite daunting. It is unfortunately true also that international travel does not agree particularly with works of art, many of which are subjected to very severe strains and dangers in the process.

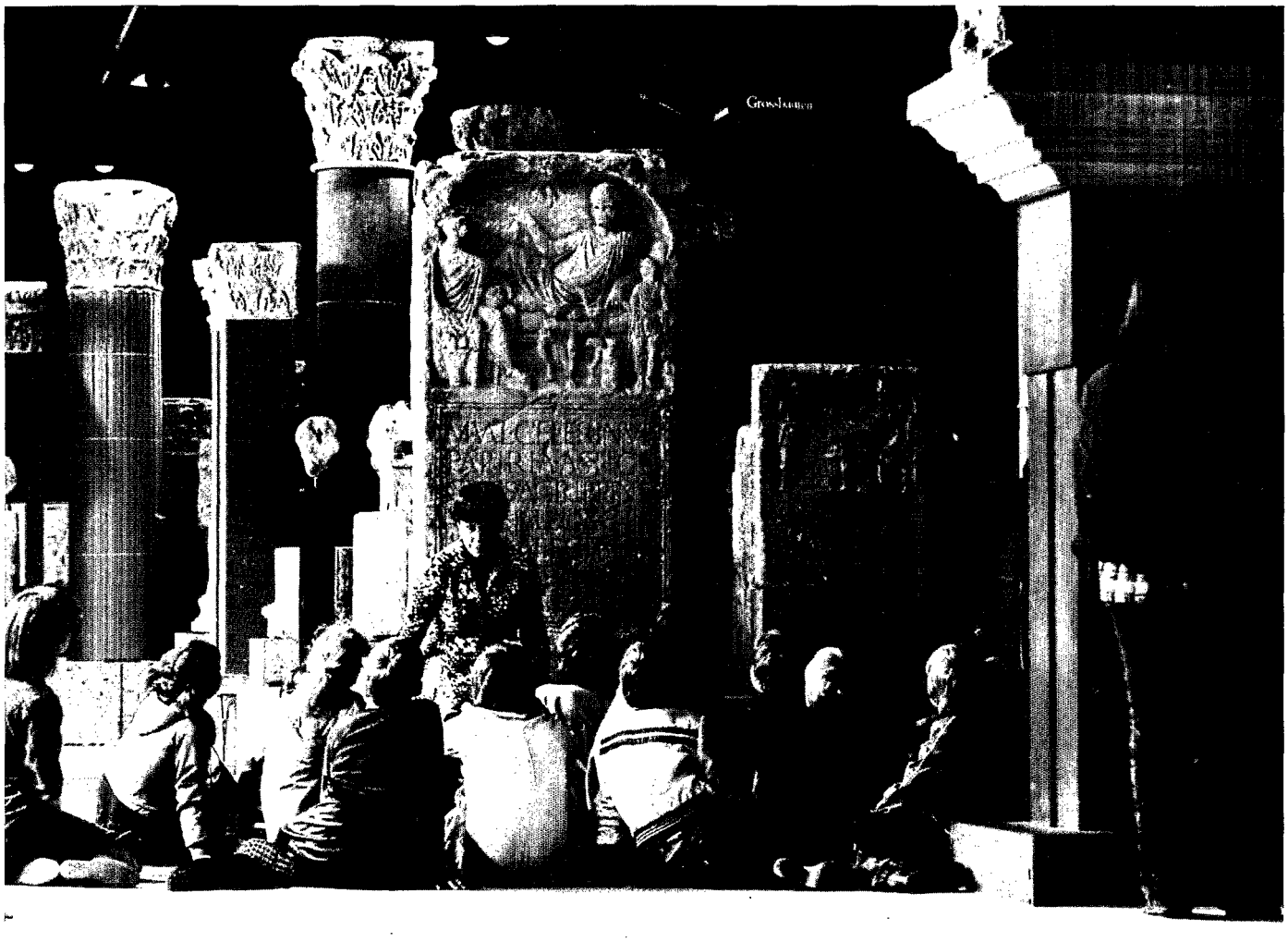
This is why museums will be obliged to think of international exchange of cultural objects in terms of the most modern and sophisticated technology at their disposal. Maybe an art historian or museologist would scoff at the idea of widespread recourse to replicas and reproductions, but the quality of the latter has been so amazingly perfected in recent years that even the specialist cannot tell the difference. I can personally cite the case of the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen, where a set of replicas of archaeological objects from Greenland, made thanks to an extremely sophisticated technology and destined for educational use, are so authentic-looking that the only way to identify the original, even for the specialist, is to bite into copy itelf and notice its different taste!

Already we can observe, in excellent museum displays everywhere, the widespread use of photographs, reconstructions of large structures such as domestic interiors, etc. In the original, our heritage exists in limited quantity, too limited to be shared as widely as people want today. Therefore we must accept, sooner or later, the idea of using and circulating, on a mass scale, excellent replicas and reproductions.

In addition, modern technology also offers the enormous potential of holography. The production of holograms is still in its infancy, just as micro-technology was only a few years ago. The uncanny faithfulness of holographic reproductions, their fascinating three-dimensional illusion, already draw large crowds of visitors wherever they are shown. Holography is a truly modern synthesis of science and cultural values and represents a new technique of popularization and of multiplying cultural exchanges. As its technology is developed it will become cheaper as well, and could be made available thereby to the developing countries for the popularization of their own heritage and the promotion of exchanges worldwide. In the years to come it will be a precious resource for the enrichment of all our cultures, through the appreciation of the distinctive heritage of each. Already active in the international co-ordination of various applications in different countries of holographic techniques, Unesco too will contribute to the development of this new medium for the enrichment of culture today and tomorrow.

6. Henrique Abranches, *Report on the Situation of Africa,* Paris, Unesco, 1983 (document CLT-83/CONF.216/3, presented to the third session of the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return or Restitution of Cultural Property).

ON METHOD



RÖMISCH-GERMANISCHES MUSEUM, Cologne. Many of the objects exhibited were found in tombs but 'at all costs the feeling was to be avoided that one was in sort of huge cemetery, having to pause in reverence and walk about in awe'.
[*Photo:* Rheinisches Bildarchiv].

Communication and the museum

An interview with Dr Hansgerd Hellenkemper, Director of the Römisch-Germanisches Museum, Cologne

Cachia. Dr Hellenkemper, I see that the Römisch-Germanisches Museum is in the process of renewing many of its audio-visual presentations. As 1983 was proclaimed World Communications Year by the United Nations, I consider this a fitting occasion to ask you as Director to express your views about the place of communication, both the direct sort and that which takes place through the media, in fulfilling the functions of a museum.

Hellenkemper. Let me start by saying that for me a museum is a place for a highly personal meeting between the visitor and the past creators, owners and users of the objects displayed. The objects are therefore the links in the chain of communication. As I see it, a museum stands on three pillars. The first is service to the

public; the second is research, both theoretical and practical; the third is conserving and ordering its collections. It is a fallacy to believe that a museum has exhausted its functions simply by exhibiting its collections to the public. I consider our museum for example, to be the historical consciousness and memory of this city. It was formally founded in 1946, but the building was actually inaugurated in 1974. It is situated just next to Cologne Cathedral and can no more be missed by visitors than the Cathedral itself. The collections it houses were started as far back as the late eighteenth century. In terms of communication, therefore, the spirit of the museum is not confined within its walls, but extends beyond them to the whole city. Not only the city council but also the individual citizens of Cologne take pride in it and give it their full backing. So, in terms of personal, direct communication, there is a shared interest and co-operation in the functioning of this museum. In spirit, the present inhabitants of Cologne feel themselves akin to the Romans who founded their city.

Cachia. How do you try to foster still further the spirit of communication between the present and past 'Colognians', if I may use the term?

Hellenkemper. In order to encourage communication among the people of Cologne today and with their most ancient predecessors of Roman times, each exhibit is displayed with precise written information about the exact spot where it was found. Ninety per cent of the objects were actually found in excavations in the Cologne area, so that the Colognians on visits to the museum are strengthened in their feelings that members of the Roman population can, as it were, be considered their next-door neighbours. This sensivity, which puts them in touch with the past, they take home with them when they walk out of the museum precincts.[1]

Cachia. How does the layout of the museum strengthen this spirit of communication?

Hellenkemper. The spatial organization of the museum and its displays represent what I would call 'science-fiction in reverse'. Personally, I believe people are more interested in their origins, in their past, and in how they developed into what they are now, than in the future and in how their posterity will develop in the ages to come. The Römisch-Germanisches Museum is so designed that a visitor is encouraged to stroll around. The planners were on the lookout for new concepts of spiritual reconstruction. At all costs the feeling was to be avoided that one was in a sort of huge cemetery, having to pause in reverence and walk about in awe, thinking of the dead. Eighty per cent of the objects found in Cologne itself were excavated from graves or funerary monuments, but they really were objects that had been in daily use in Roman times.

Cachia. Why is that?

Hellenkemper. The answer is quite simple if you stop to think a moment. When a housewife breaks a jug or a glass object, she just throws it away, but if the same object is put in a grave as a keepsake for the dead, the chances are that it will remain intact for centuries. That is why so many unbroken glass objects that we found happened to be in graves. They do not possess any particular artistic value or other intrinsic worth of any sort. They were in the main just ordinary household goods bought for a few pennies, not treasures that cost fortunes. Overpowering awe is not the feeling one wishes to induce in visitors.

Cachia. I get your point. No cemetery, but a cheerful place to be in: this is the feeling you wish to give visitors.

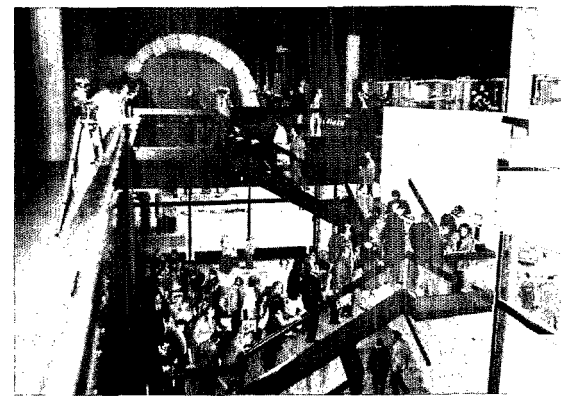
Hellenkemper. Visitors to a museum must feel relaxed and actually enjoy themselves if the right spirit of communication with the past is to be instilled. We want them to leave with the feeling that they really ought to return as soon and as often as they can. At the earliest planning stages the new concept was adopted that large open spaces, not separate rooms, were to house the exhibits. This is basically a classical idea that has been rediscovered in modern architecture and city planning: open but sheltered areas with arcades, lobbies and galleries. In the Römisch-Germanisches Museum there are no arrows pointing to where to begin and where to go next. The large halls lead into one another. This is deliberate. Planning a museum is a creative undertaking. The conception of a museum is a personal act that depends on the support

1. While Francis Cachia was conducting this interview Dr Hellenkemper's secretary rushed in to say that an intact head of a Roman statue had just been discovered at a Cologne excavation site.

Francis Cachia

Born in Valletta, Malta, in 1928. Educated in Malta, the United Kingdom, the United States, Italy and the Federal Republic of Germany. M.A. (Oxon.), Ph.D., 1979. Trained in television production at the BBC, London and Manchester. Secretariat of the Pontifical Commission for the Means of Social Communication (Mass Media), 1967-72. Media sociologist, lecturer and broadcaster in the Federal Republic of Germany since 1973. Among his publications are *Mass Media: Unity and Advancement* (Rome, Multimedia International, 1971) and *Socio-political Novels to TV Plays* (Valletta, Midsea Book Ltd. for the Maltese National Commission for Unesco, 1981). Two of his articles have been published in Unesco's journal *Cultures*.

'A classical idea that has been rediscovered in modern architecture and city planning: open but sheltered areas with arcades, lobbies and galleries.'
[*Photo:* Rheinisches Bildarchiv]



Another large open hall, to 'stroll along' in. [*Photo:* Rheinisches Bildarchiv]

of all, administrators, archaelogists, architects, artists and the authorities. We are very lucky to have had this co-operation all along in Cologne.

Cachia. I was very struck by something you said a little earlier on: that most of the exhibits have no great intrinsic value. Why then exhibit them at all?

Hellenkemper. I feel we ought to return to the nineteenth-century idea of a museum: a place to display not only the most artistic or interesting objects, but to show as many as possible. Only in this way is it possible to bring out the relation of the thing now to what it was in the past.

Cachia. So you want to convey to the visitor a sense of the 'function in life' of an object?

Hellenkemper. That's just it. It is true that most of the objects displayed in this museum have no outstanding qualities of craftmanship or art about them. Take again the glassware, for instance. The visitor will be struck at how much use was made of it, the many shapes and sizes, but it will not escape his notice how conservative and unimaginative the designs are. The Roman glass-workers kept always to the same forms and showed little evidence of any extraordinary know-how.

Cachia. So a museum is not mainly a place for artistic contemplation, you would say?

Hellenkemper. No, that is taking it too far. A museum is the last remaining refuge for a thorough and highly personal artistic experience, for gaining aesthetic knowledge. As a museum director, I continually ask myself what added help I can possibly give visitors so that they can understand an object to the full. A visit to the museum ought to be a process of seeing and reflecting.

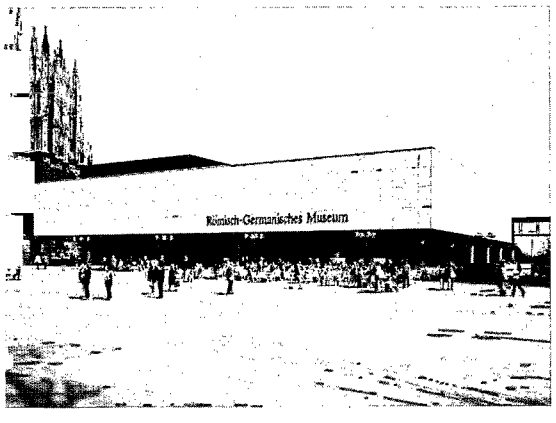
Cachia. Does that mean that you aim at putting an object back into its historical context?

Hellenkemper. Oh no, not at all. Let me quote André Malraux at this point: 'Objects taken out of their historical contexts can never be put back into them.' I agree fully with him. That is why, for instance, you will find no models made to scale in the Römisch-Germanisches Museum. People simply don't understand scaling down, *Verniedlichung* we call it in German, which implies not only making smaller but somehow also belittling in worth. Objects reduced in scale lose their particular aura; all their vitality goes out of them.

Cachia. But you do not object to reconstructions? I was very much struck by the most impressive reconstruction of a Roman coach in the museum.

Hellenkemper. Yes, reconstructions are something else again. We are justifiably proud, I feel, of the reconstructed Roman coach. When we did it we were engaging in experimental archaeology. Much original material was used, especially the bronze; and the new woodwork was built to the exact specifications of a real Ro-

General view of the Römisch-Germanisches Museum.
[*Photo:* Rheinisches Bildarchiv]



Children admiring a Roman head, like the one uncovered while the interview with Dr Hellenkemper was in progress: continuing research and excavations constitute one of the 'pillars' of the Römisch-Germanisches Museum. [Photo: Rheinisches Bildarchiv.]

man coach. The criteria for the ordering of objects in the Römisch-Germanisches Museum are not the context *in situ* where they were found. They are arranged according to themes, e.g. transport, household goods, ornaments, etc.

Cachia. But is not the whole museum built around the original site where the Dionysus Mosaic floor was found?

Hellenkemper. Yes, it is. The museum is built around the Dionysus Mosaic, which covers the floor of what was once the dining-room in a villa belonging to a wealthy Roman. The museum itself has the ground size of this villa, which contained twenty rooms around a garden. But this is the only exhibit, even if it happens to be the main one, that is still on its original site. Even so, it is looked at now by visitors from angles different from the point where the Romans viewed it, and the surrounding space is different too. So, the three-dimensional effect it once had is now lost. Unfortunately, as I said, once a historical context is lost, it is gone for ever.

Cachia. However, I still don't understand why you feel it is not the main aim of a museum display to put an object back into its original context—to the extent that this remains possible.

Hellenkemper. The reason is that a display must at all costs avoid giving the visitor the impression that the exhibit was in the past exactly what it is now. In a sense, the visitor must be suspicious of the object. He should never conclude that he knows all about it simply because he saw it on display in a museum. The encounter with the exhibit should set in motion a process of reflection about it and so lead the visitor as it were to communicate with the people of the past who made use of the object.

Cachia. Yes, now I understand. And I can add, as a specialist in communication, that the section of the museum where the exhibits are arranged to illustrate the daily life of Romans on the banks of the Rhine is of particular interest to me.

Hellenkemper. I am pleased to hear that, but in a spirit of self-criticism I must confess that the section about Roman women at home is open to objection from the feminist point of view, as far as the division of roles between the sexes is concerned. We put all the combs and mirrors in this particular section as though to imply that these articles for looking after personal appearance were necessarily employed only by women or constituted their main concern. I am most pleased, on the other hand, with the children's section—the toys and the articles they took to school with them.

Cachia. Returning to the other two 'pillars of a museum', do they not show that you have an interest in communicating with the future as well as with the past?

Hellenkemper. Yes, indeed. I wish to make sure that future researches and administrators receive as much help from me as I can possibly give. You see, every answer we find to a puzzle about the past raises two more new questions. Only new discoveries and developments in research can fit objects of the past into their true picture. Fulfilling the functions of a museum requires that one be conservative and dynamic at one and the same time. Not only should direct excavations be continued without pause, one must preserve the finds and store them in such a way that the work of future generations of researchers is facilitated to the greatest extent possible. Let me mention as an example the Lucius Publitius monument. In 1896 thirty stone blocks were found. In 1965 seventy more were excavated with the result that even though about two hundred pieces were still missing the jigsaw puzzle fell into place and the shape of the monument can be fully reconstructed. What we find now, and cannot yet explain, can later on be fitted into the right picture thanks to future developments and our present care in properly preserving each archaeological object. Archaeological archives are not meant for the general public today but for the researchers of tomorrow, who may be able to exhibit them meaningfully to future general publics.

Cachia. All this fundamentally important communication with the past, present and future that you have so clearly explained to me can be achieved with help from the audio-visual media. How can one use these media to good advantage?

Hellenkemper. We greatly depend on the media to get the results we want. It would take three days for one person to read all the printed texts, but it would

take only eight hours to follow all the eighteen- to twenty-minute audio-visual commentaries we have prepared for visitors. Considerable care is taken to ensure that the media are used in a professional way. The printed words explaining the exhibits, which cover over 1,800 typewritten pages, are on cards for which a professional designer was engaged. They are regularly updated and they are meant to give as much information as possible. Exceptional care is also taken in the preparation of the audio-visual commentaries, for not only are the exhibits not self-explanatory, but the printed words alone do not suffice to explain them in the right context. Much reflection and discussion was for instance devoted to the question of the proper length of the takes. Personally, I was always in favour of takes lasting at least a quarter of an hour, even if one assumes that few visitors would want to stop before each screen for more than five minutes. You cannot attempt to explain the economic and social problems of Roman days in less than fifteen minutes without risking serious distortions. It is better that the visitors leave with two or three accurate concepts in their minds and perhaps return later to hear the rest of the programme than that they should depart with the false impression of having acquired an accurate and complete picture of the whole situation in just five minutes.

Cachia. How do you go about preparing these takes?

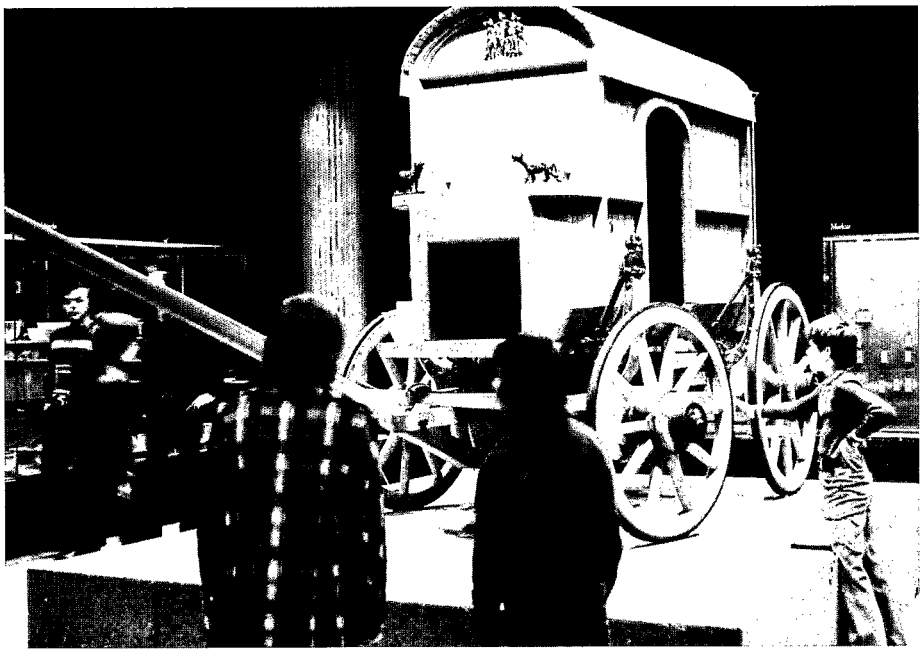
Hellenkemper. The scripts of the audio-visual takes were each written at least three times over. First a specialist (archaeologist or museologist) writes the draft. Then a professional broadcaster goes over it. Then the script is rechecked from the scientific point of view. Actual production is done in a studio, and the texts are read by well-known professional broadcasters. We want the visitors to feel perfectly at ease. When they hear the trained and familiar voices they know from their television screens at home, they can truly identify with the speakers and feel relaxed.

Cachia. How often do you rework the audio-visual presentations?

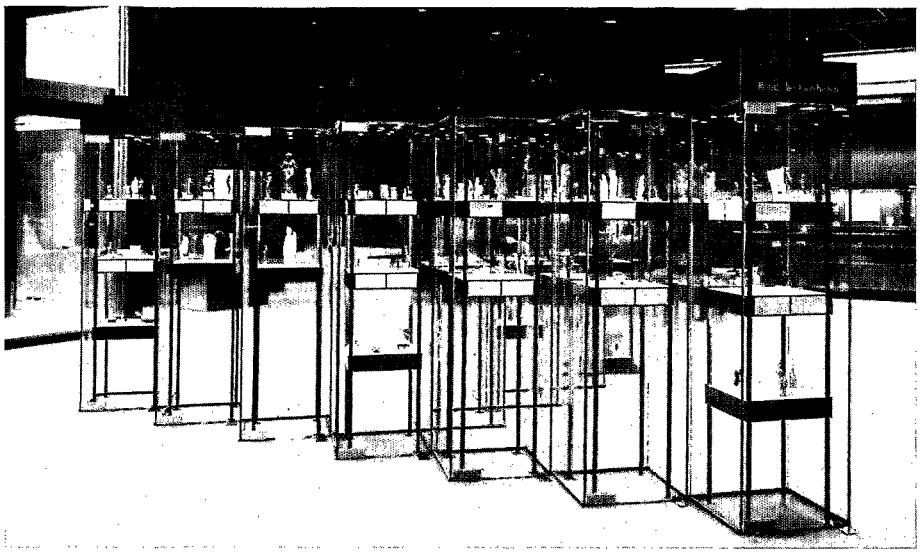
Hellenkemper. We renew the slides every three months, hence the financial burden of keeping the audio-visuals up to date is tremendous. Besides these audio-visual takes explaining the individual exhibits and several of Roman life and times, there is a general introductory audio-visual programme in six languages, including Turkish, Greek and Serbo-Croatian.

Cachia. Having English and French, which are international languages, I can understand, but why the others as well?

Hellenkemper. The reason is not only that there are people of these nationalities living in Cologne, but also that in their countries of origin they have museums with exhibits from the Roman period. We want them to feel they are at home when visiting the Römisch-Germanisches Museum. Some people detect a certain xenophobia in sections of the German



Young visitors admiring the reconstructed Roman coach; with original bronze. The woodwork was made to the exact specifications of a real Roman coach. [*Photo:* Rheinisches Bildarchiv.]



Some of the museum's more precious objects. Most of the exhibits have little artistic or other 'intrinsic' value on their own.
[*Photo:* Rheinisches Bildarchiv.]

population today. If my museum can make foreigners among us feel at home, it is surely performing a valuable social task. I have observed earlier on how a fellow-feeling exists with the inhabitants of Cologne when it comes to personal communication with their Roman past. People from the countries I mentioned also have a Roman past. I wish to include them in this spirit of communication. Moreover, it is not only the visitors who feel a kinship with one another. There is a feeling of brotherhood between museum administrators whether they come from north, south, east or west. I feel at home with them in every part of the world. This undeniable fellowship between us surmounts barriers of language, culture and geography.

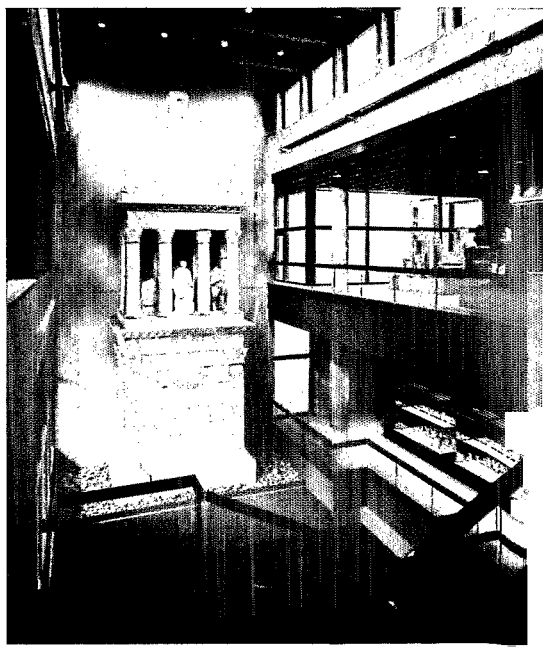
Cachia. Dr Hellenkemper, do you consider feature films, for instance *Ben Hur,* suitable to illustrate aspects of Roman life?

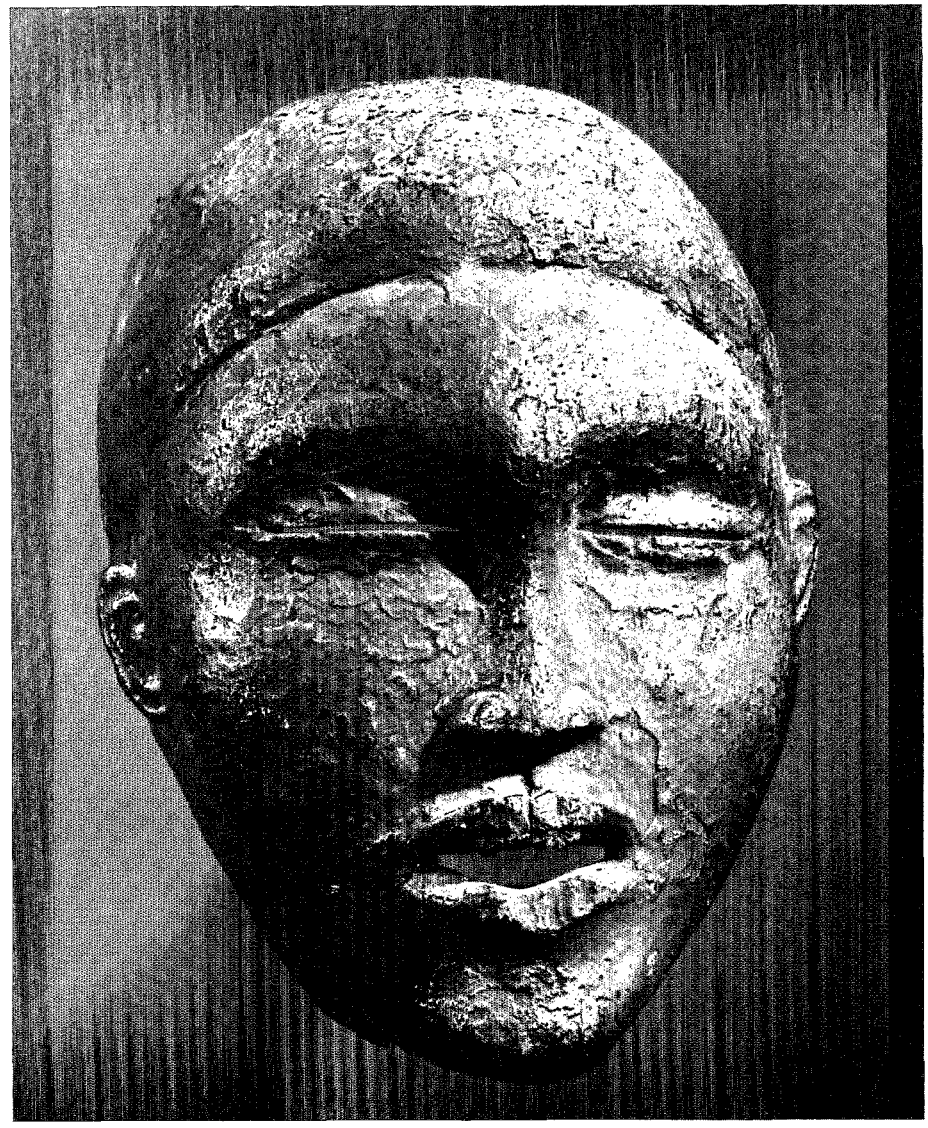
Hellenkemper. Much as I value the potential of all the audio-visual media, I cannot consider the visit to a museum as just a sort of multimedia show. Here I must confess to a failure. We once tried the experiment of setting aside a room for children with a collection of Asterix comics. These became so dirty from constant handling and mishandling by children that for hygienic reasons the experiment had to be given up. As far as *Ben Hur* is concerned, I recognize the value of being able to show episodes from films or television productions with reconstructions of scenes and customs of Roman times. After showing the chariot race in *Ben Hur,* for instance, there is much that one can seize upon to comment and explain in greater detail. On the other hand, I doubt whether this is really a task for a museum. Since my museum has gone much further than many others in the use of audio-visuals, I feel entitled to sound a note of caution. A museum does not show reconstructed objects from the past, but the very things themselves. I don't think one should give in to the exaggerated contemporary tendency of showing everything through the mirror of the media, as it were, rather than allowing direct contact whenever possible. I am reluctant to use techniques that could rob ancient objects of their immediacy. The individuality and the type of a particular museum should be taken into account when deciding what use to make of the media. A museum of modern inventions, for instance, would naturally find much more scope for the modern electronic media than a museum of antiquities.

Cachia. May I ask you whether you see any great advantage in the use of video-recorders in a museum such as yours?

Hellenkemper. At their present state of development, the outlay of money to install video-recorders would not be justified. The advantages that can be derived from them are not sufficient. Tapes that are in constant use lose their quality too quickly and would have to be replaced with new ones. If technical advance renders this financial problem more manageable, we shall reconsider the matter. One should always keep an open mind, weigh the advantages against the disadvantages and plan well ahead to make sure the media help towards more effective communication and understanding and in no way prove to be a hindrance rather than a help.

Funerary monument found in excellent condition. More open, interconnecting areas.
[*Photo:* Rheinisches Bildarchiv.]





Isolation and careful lighting of these African masks arouse aesthetic awe appropriate to an art gallery exhibition. Kongo mask from the Zaire River coastal area, Zaire–Angola. Wood. Height 22.8 cm; width 16.8 cm; depth 10.7 cm. [*Photo:* Bob Wharton, Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas.]

Mediating our knowledge

There is today a wide gap between what scholars know about objects in ethnographic collections and what the public knows or believes. However, scholars, especially those with responsibilities at university museums, can make their knowledge accessible and interesting to the public by creating exhibitions that demonstrate anthropological concepts. This little explored avenue offers a fresh way of engaging the minds and interests of the public.

The recognition of 'ethnographic objects' as art reached its apogee, especially in New York, during the 1960s, and this prestige has since affected the manner in which they are exhibited in museums. Through such 'artistic' displays, museum personnel hope that their institution will share in the kind of prestige and support that 'art' won in the 1960s.

The currently favoured style of exhibiting ethnographic objects is to present them as visual experiences in neutral space. Either singly or in groups, they are isolated by spatial arrangement of by lighting and given minimal labels. The display of objects alone is relied upon to sustain interest by arousing personal curiosity or engendering a kind of aesthetic awe. The impact of this style may be seen in a wide variety of museums. Exhibit displays from a recently redesigned European museum of ethnography or a museum of natural history in the United States could be cited as convenient examples from the late 1970s. In type of content and display style, these efforts

may be compared to exhibits in commercial art galleries, without our finding much difference. Behind this style lies a long tradition in our society of focusing on the single object as a work of art. For an art gallery this is a defensible exhibition style. However, it does little to bridge the information gap between object and public. For a university museum of ethnography or other institutions featuring ethnographic material, I find this approach highly unsatisfactory when practised consistently or as a major formulation for exhibit style.

A recent study[1] of public reaction to a tastefully arranged exhibition of African sculpture in a city art gallery revealed that, even there, the public was sharply critical of the display: the explanation of the individual pieces was insufficient, the objects seemed limited to collectors' items, the display was too stark. In sum, they wanted a different kind of display, with a more appropriate setting, a selection of objects that revealed more about a society, and more information.

New approaches

A degree of restlessness among the professionals is suggested by a few changes in approach. For example, the Museum of Mankind in London has altered its exhibition area to include space for the construction of a detailed, full-size replica of a village street or compound, thus carrying the idea of context to an extreme. In a recent reconstruction of a mud-brick house interior courtyard typical of the Yoruba people of south-western Nigeria, the carefully rusted iron roofs were propped up by a series of finely carved houseposts, as they should be for an important man's household, and properly placed on the dimly lit shrines were bowls filled with dusty sculptured figures. Calling this the 'you are there' approach, John Povey[2] notes that this verisimilitude yielded only a curious sense of being there and yet not being there. In the two exact reproductions that I walked through, I missed the slightest hint of guidance. Finding a village in a museum may induce a kind of approving acceptance, but I suspect that exact reproduction leads to no better understanding of the Yoruba household than walking through the real village did for dozens of travellers, missionaries and colonial officials.

The museum should aim for somewhere in between the isolated object and the complete village. It should provide a more specific frame for viewing and within that maintain all the authenticity it can muster.

Another approach adopted by the Museum of Mankind is along more familiar lines. Povey has called it the 'now you have been told' type: that is, a focus on descriptive information about a set of objects. A recent example concerns the brass weights (including small figures of humans and animals) produced by the Asante people of Ghana, and formerly used in weighing gold dust and as counters in debts and loans. The opening display section offered an extended text on the history and significance of the little figures, then a pile of weights were displayed, divided into categories of geometric and figurative, along with an explanation of the technology and the accessories. The up-to-date aspect of this display was the effort to affect public attitudes favourably toward present-day craftsmanship by pointing out that increasing tourism in Ghana has revived this industry, which had been dying because of the loss of traditional practices.

How to convey understanding of other cultures

This type of informational presentation is an essential part of the inventory of exhibition styles and can satisfy or reward the interests of some portion of the public. However, it is limited in level. As Povey points out, with all its information it does not help one to understand the first kind of question that would occur to our viewers: how, given the lack of geometric standardization, did these small objects of variable size function as a system of weights in loans and debt payments?

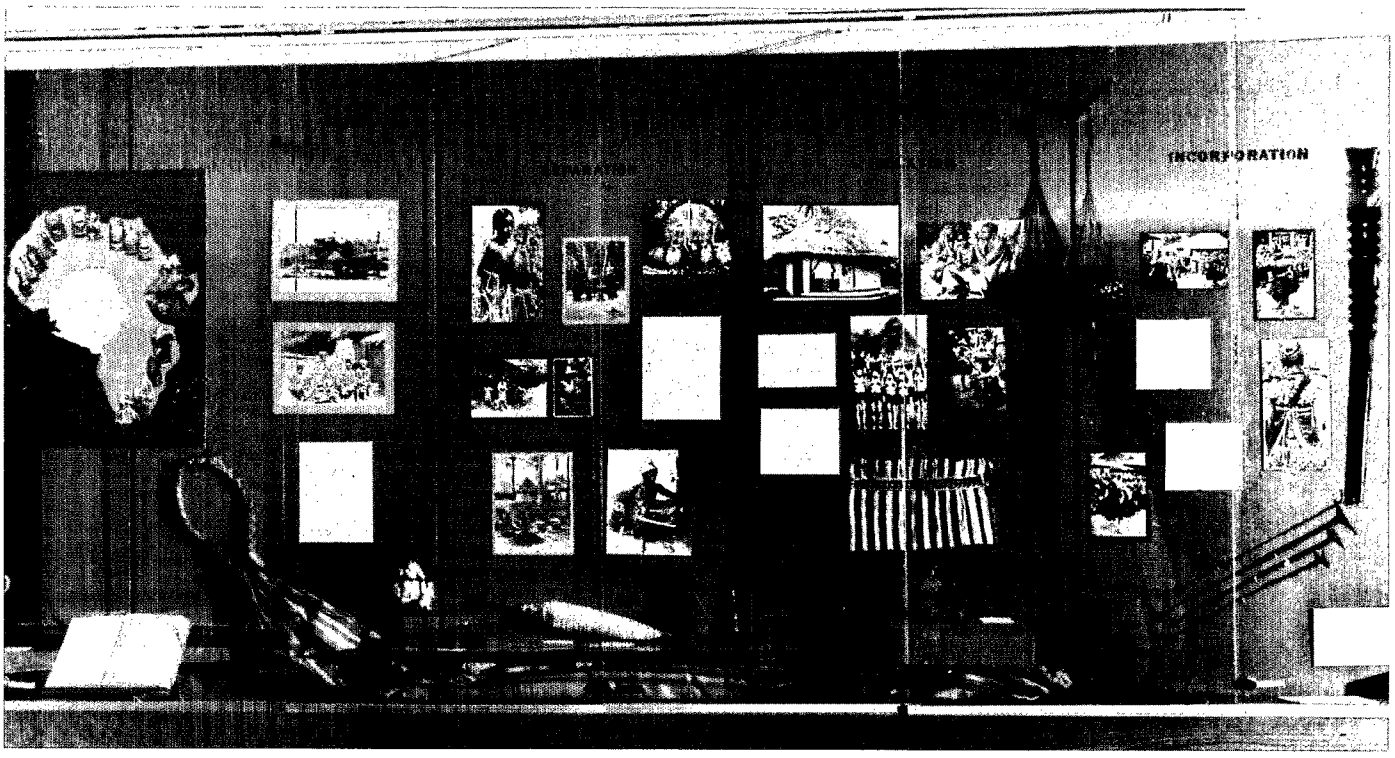
While I applaud this informational exhibition style, my own conviction is that it should not be the end point; we should build a bridge between what the object is and the position of the viewer. The display may be excellent by conventional standards and still not fulfil the task I would set for ethnographic exhibitions: how to convey scholars' understanding of other cultures of societies through the media of museum collections. I would like to approach the answer to this question through my experience at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard

1. J. Delange Fry, 'On Exhibiting African Art', in J. Cordwell (ed), *The Visual Arts,* pp. 535-52, The Hague/New York, Mouton, 1979.
2. J. Povey, 'First Word', *African Arts,* Vol. 13, No. 1, 1979, pp. 1-6.

Marie Jeanne Adams

One of the first scholars to obtain a Ph.D. from Columbia University for a specialization in ethnographic art (1967). Her articles on the arts of Indonesia and Africa have appeared in various European and American journals, including *African Arts* (University of California at Los Angeles) and *American Anthropologist.* Formerly a professor of art and anthropology and curator for Africa and Oceania at the Peabody Museum of Ethnology at Harvard University. At present teaching at Wellesley College, Mass. In 1982 she organized and wrote the catalogue for a major exhibition at Harvard: *Designs for Living: Symbolic Communication in African Art* (Harvard University Press). She continues as Research Associate at the Peabody Museum.

Student volunteers help bring order to previously scattered items from the Peabody Museum's enormous collections. Behind them is Marietta Joseph, who supervised the volunteers.
[*Photo:* Hillel Burger, Peabody Museum, Harvard University.]



Exhibition at the Tozzer Library of Anthropology, Harvard University, which is intended to convey through objects, pictures and text an awareness of the structure of a youth-initiation process, as it is understood by anthropologists. A second case (not shown here) contains a full-sized masked figure, which appears at the close of the ritual.
[*Photo:* Hillel Burger, Harvard University.]

University, while I was an Associate Professor of Art and Anthropology.

My immediate aim is to encourage the use of anthropological collections as a teaching and communication resource for anthropology; my hope is to reverse the increasing trend toward descriptive or 'art' exhibitions of ethnographic materials. Of course, a museum provides an opportunity for students to learn skills in museum work, but my focus here is not on that aspect, but on the question of how collections can convey and add to understanding of other societies.

Student participation

To do this, the collections must be in good order. However, although concerned with collecting for over 100 years, the Peabody Museum had no systematic storage. Starting with the African collections, the staff needed six months to locate and gather the approximately 25,000 pieces from Africa. This storage project provided the first opportunity for student participation in museum operations.[3]

From this project, we learned that the Peabody Museum possessed three major regional collections (from Liberia, South Cameroons and Uganda) and one of a type of object, that is, musical instruments. In addition, while gathering pieces for rearrangement, we could visually 'discover' treasures, not apparent from paperwork, in the form of outstandingly fine individual objects. On this reordering of the collections, we could plan conservation, research and exhibition activities.

However, at that time, the museum's policy was only to maintain permanent exhibits, so that changing cases represented a departure. Nevertheless I obtained a large case in the Africa Hall so that two graduate students from Boston University could design a display. They were to make selections from a gift of about 120 pieces of African sculpture, taking care to maintain the style of the rest of the Africa Hall. That was just the problem, because the exhibits there were clearly in the style of the 1960s: isolated objects of sculpture, some set above eye level, some below, some set straight and others at an angle, and all with minimal identification. We managed to include three large photographs showing objects in use and following field photographs, to furnish some accoutrements to the objects.

To reduce handling of the objects by the students, a special technique was worked out: paper cut-outs were made of objects to scale in both plan and elevation, and these were moved about on scale drawings of the cases until the

3. This is not an ideal arrangement, for students tend to be hit-or-miss depending on their exam and activity schedules; the main work had to be done by Marietta Joseph, a hired graduate student at Boston University, and Dr Leon Siroto, a specialist in African ethnology. The results were remarkable, with an orderly arrangement of the collections, based on a standard reference work on the peoples and cultures of Africa.

overall arrangement seemed to take shape and be interesting visually.

For conformity's sake, we could not include texts in the show-case, so information and sketches of each object appeared on a separate panel alongside it. The accompanying sketches, drawn by a student, meant that the interested viewer could avoid looking back and forth and tracing numbers. However, at this stage the information we provided was of the 'tidbitty' kind, such as, 'This bird appears as a headpiece in a harvest festival'. I asked the graduate students to prepare a detailed report of each stage of their work and sources of supply, so that it would provide a guide for future student work.

With this success behind us I began to offer the possibility of designing displays, limited to one case in the Africa Hall, to undergraduate students. The first group were attracted to the human-figure motif in various small hand-held prestige objects from Africa and their display focused on this visual theme, showing the various ways different parts of the body were used in objects.

Of the next set of students I requested a presentation of men's initiation, in view of our large collection of masks. However, when they examined our reserves, they came up with a proposal to design an exhibit of musical instruments. Their main concern was arranging them in an artistic manner and only under pressure and with some help did they turn out an acceptable text, photographs and a push-button tape of musical selections. In both cases, these students concentrated on the 'fine arts' aspect, and their approach to exhibits was shaped by their expectation that presenting objects visually was a sufficient and satisfying accomplishment.

Another kind of student involvement related to background work on a scholarly conference. The Peabody Museum possesses a large group of masks from Liberia, collected by a medical missionary in the 1930s and 1940s. To encourage research in this region, we invited several scholars to meet and present papers at the museum. For this meeting, students gathered all the documentation we possess about the noted Harley mask collection, attached relevant data to each mask, and arranged a display so that the scholars could obtain an overview of the 300 masks and make comparisons.

I also encouraged classes to react to exhibits in the museum, and then we worked on changes, especially in the Africa Hall. We could not undertake major redesign but we could reduce or alter items and add text and drawings. In this way, I learned what serious problems in communication existed between the public, represented by interested students, and the exhibits.

For the next student exhibition *Asmat Woodcarving*, we aimed to overcome this problem by publishing a catalogue, with essays on the background of beliefs, uses of the artworks, and personalities of the carvers. (All 500 copies of this catalogue have been sold, most of them through the Peabody Museum gift shop.)

One problem in mounting exhibitions as a learning process is that one wants to allow students to take the initiative, develop their ideas and carry them to fruition. However, the end result may not represent the ideal exhibition arrangement, for various reasons. It is best to work towards compromises, and once students get over the excitement of the achievement they can see the weaknesses of what they had previously defended.

We tried to get our message about the museum and its objects across to others on the campus, and mounted various exhibitions, including *Peabody Scholars in Africa* at the main library—this aims to show how we know what we know—and *African Ornament* at the Center for International Affairs building at Harvard; here we were concerned more with refined sensitivity to form and materials than with the more familiar hewn wood sculptures.

Bridging the gap

We had done enough for me to realize that it was always art students who volunteered to undertake an exhibition project, never those studying anthropology. Only impulses from the art world seemed strong enough to motivate students. In each case I coud also see that results were usually quite within the narrow confines of the 1960s style. I became dissatisfied with putting so much effort and time into these projects with the results edging only slightly towards what I thought was important about the subject. Teaching the art with the benefit of anthropological studies on the one hand and on the other working on these exhibits only as visual experiences made me conscious of the disparity between the two realms. I felt increasingly the need to bring into the displays messages of the same order as those I tried to convey in lectures or that students met in their reading. The level at which I was teaching was wholly different from the level of information conveyed by the exhibits. This brings us back to the gap between modern scholarship and public knowledge and how it can be mediated by exhibition style. How can this museum material be used to illuminate anthropological concepts and insights?

In lectures on African art, for example, I show how the contrast, so apparent to the eye, between the village and the bush surrounding it is used as a way of categorizing and evaluating social behaviour, and as a contemplation of the relative power of various forces affecting the community. This contrast is vividly expressed in the form, costume and behaviour of masked figures. We should be able to show masks with other visual material that will make clear this connection between the physical, social and spiritual forms.

Responding to this issue, I put some pressure on an economics student to develop a more anthropologically oriented display on the Ndebele of South Africa, one that would show the context and uses of the beadwork and house-painting which were women's arts. Taking a much stronger stand with the next student, who came from the folklore section, to do an exhibition in the anthropology library, I insisted on carrying out a design that would demonstrate an anthropological insight. Her topic was 'Girls' Initiation among the Mende, West Africa'. How were we to work this out visually? Van Gennep's three phases of initiation[4] gave us our guideline. In the first of four sections of the exhibition case, we presented an introduction: the village setting, scenes of the chief with his wives, and a general text. Each subsequent section was devoted to one of the phases of initiation: formal separation, isolation period away from the village, and re-aggregation or rites of re-incorporation into society. Even a glance at this exhibit conveyed the idea that this process is structured, and this seemed to me to be a giant step towards demonstrating an anthropological insight and affecting public understanding of this ritual process.

With this simple, primitive effort, I conceived a vision of greater potential. Why not use as a focus of exhibits the kinds of questions we seek to resolve in the field of library research? For example, why is an African female figure with child carved with accoutrements that belong to

4. A. van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960.

a hunter's cult outfit? Why not illustrate concretely the different interpretations given to a large Dogon mask at successive stages of initiation to convey the complexity of the Dogons' thoughts about the oddly shaped mask? Why not show how objects of daily use, so constant and reliable, are enhanced and permuted in ritual and myth to become bearers of rich meaning, as in a Dogon account whereby the shape of their universe corresponds to a woman's market basket turned upside down. Upon that basic shape and a spindle of cotton, they build a structured image of their society. Larger visions of what could be done include illustrating the initiation rites for boys and, following Victor Turner,[5] show when and why masked figures appear. Why not create a maquette of a New Guinean society as set forth by an anthropologist, not as the 'scientifically' determined truth but as a hypothetical model of how it seemed to work according to that scholar's interpretation? Why not provide, as the frame for the exhibit, the anthropologist's insight? Any one of these suggestions may not prove feasible; the important point is to take as one's fundamental purpose the presentation of an anthropological approach to an issue, an anomaly or a problem, or to take a setting that relates to objects in a museum and work it out carefully as an anthropologist would in an article. We should be able to show their minds, and ours, at work.

Wittgenstein observed that 'what can be shown cannot be said'. And I recognize a special quality of experience in contemplative perception of objects. However, as members of a scholarly discipline, anthropologists must make meaningful selections of key clues that address the mind in order to illuminate another custom, another society. An exhibition must not simply show works of art, but be like a work of art, in that it exemplifies skilful selection and arrangement in order to achieve a certain effect, to make a statement.

The popularity of television programmes with an anthropological orientation, such as *Tribal Eye, Wide World* and *Odyssey,* prepares a wide public with information and stimulates their interest. And art museums have been responding to the more sophisticated levels of public taste. In an exhibition of painting, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, for example, had a section showing X-rays of the Impressionists' manner of painting and why it annoyed the bourgeoisie of the time; their exhibition of Siberian art included a demonstration of stratigraphy and the material archaeologists start with to reconstruct the objects and the society that produced them.

It is not enough to provide some glamorous secene or dramatic setting so that people will absorb some of the 'magic' of an exotic society and thereby, non-verbally or in their sensory capacity, arrive at some special feeling about African society or culture. I take the position that, belonging to a scholarly discipline, we are interested in teaching through conscious and deliberate methods, without dismissing what can be gained from sensory experience. But our main appeal is to the mind.

We should not undertake a mission to familiarize the public with, say, all African art. They can gain a general familiarity through art galleries, television and various kinds of film and decorators' efforts, but we should convey a different kind of experience, providing some insight into the situation presented by art objects. We do not provide the facilities for study, a comfortable chair and books for reading. The message cannot be carried by objects alone. We must use media thoughtfully: graphics, photoprints, text, film loops, demonstration devices. We must accomplish our aim primarily by visual means without recourse to the lengthy exposition that would be available in a classroom.

This is the crux of the problem: how to convey complex notions that are at the matrix of art, myth and ritual or social settings by means of various kinds of visual media? I am convinced that these media should not focus entirely on description. Some kernel of meaning in the situation, event or object should be addressed in the display. The visitor should take away from each exhibition some new idea or interpretation developed by museum or field anthropologists' insight and research.

Other societies may be different but they are intelligible and we want to demonstrate features that convey this intelligibility. If we believe that anthropology has a lot to say we must devise ways to say it through the medium of our vast collections of objects.

5. Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols,* Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press, 1967

Entrance to the first gallery, which shows prehistoric and historic pottery traditions with their modern parallels. The exhibition starts with two handprints in rice paste by the woman potter Saraladevi. In a niche is Ganesh, the god of good fortune. The clay relief at the entrance suggests a chariot; through it the introduction platform is seen.
[*Photo:* National Institute of Design for the Crafts Museum.]

Form and Many Forms of Mother Clay

Haku Shah

Born in 1934 in Valod, Surat District, Gujarat, India. M.A. (Fine Arts), M.Sc., University of Baroda. Has worked on different exhibitions about India at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Topenmuseum, Amsterdam, the Museum of Mankind, London, and the Rietberg Museum, Zurich. Consultant, National Institute of Design; Nehru Fellow, 1972-73. Member, Crafts Museum Committee, New Delhi; board member, Museum of Man, Bhopal. Curator of the Tribal Museum, Gujarat, Vidyapith, Ahmedabad. Several publications on ethnography and crafts, including *Rural Craftsmen and Their Work* (with Dr Eberhard Fischer), Ahmedabad, National Institute of Design, 1970; *Mogra dev* [Tribal Crocodile Gods] (with Dr Eberhard Fisher), Ahmedabad, Gujarat Vidyapith, 1971; *Mata no chandarvo* (with Dr Eberhard Fischer and Dr J. Jain), Zurich, Rietberg Museum; *Pithora the God,* Zurich, University of Zurich, 1983.

Preparing the exhibition *Mati ye tere rup (Form and Many Forms of Mother Clay)*[1] at the Crafts Museum, New Delhi, was a manifold challenge. When asked by the Government of India to take it on, however, I accepted readily, for it was an experience that I, a curator-cum-designer, could only look forward to. This exhibition was of a unique nature.[2] In countries like India, where a rich cultural tradition is still alive, we take for granted the fact that we drink water out of a clay pot in every house. But the ways pots are made and their various uses have great lessons to offer, even to future generations. The very process of making a pot is a science in itself. So the first point I had to stress in the presentation was the whole process of making clay objects in the different states of India.

The large, high-ceilinged building, with its different levels, was an environment created out of big squares by its architect, Charles Correa, and I was straightaway attracted to work in it. My first reaction, for example, was to make a jar, about two metres high and a metre wide, for I was sure that it would look majestic there. When I put the jar in one of the squares, it looked like a sculpture and I felt that the display was complete. It was an interesting piece and just by placing it right it became monumental in its impact!

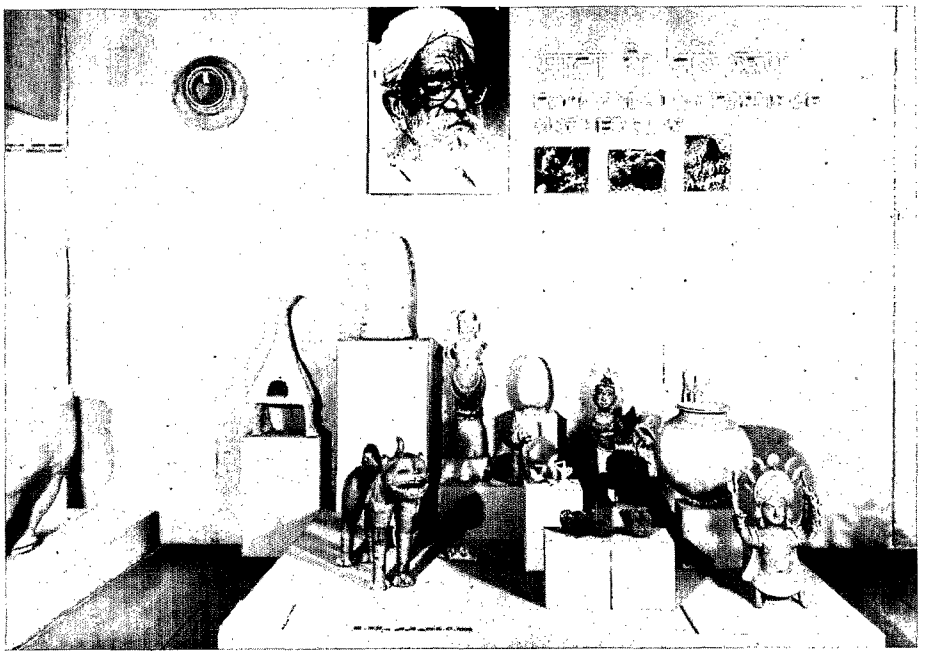
Most museum people however, are reluctant to put unbaked objects in their displays: they feel that they are too ordinary, for one thing, and are convinced that they are easily breakable. But when I asked a tribal potter how long her pots would survive, she replied, 'A few generations.'

Simply because an object is common in the social sense, it does not mean that it is ordinary, not worth placing in an exhibition or a museum. A pot is made in an extremely scientific manner, and I wanted to exhibit hundreds of pots created by various potters.

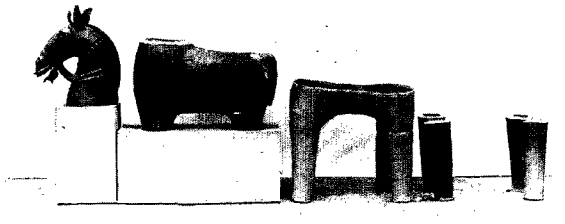
In this I was greatly aided by thirty-five potters from all over the country. In order to show variations in form, each was assigned a specific task, according to his know-how and traditions. I asked

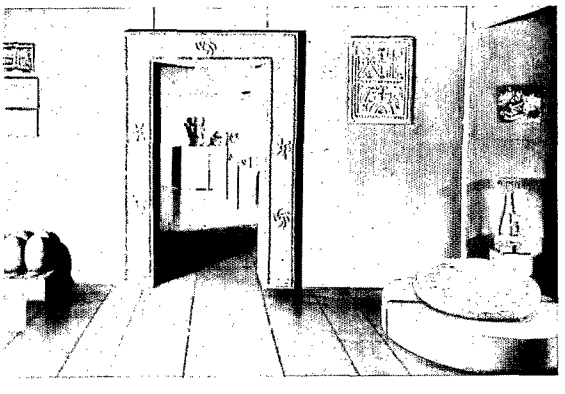
1. It was difficult to think of a name for the exhibition, which contained not only terracotta but also pottery und unbaked items. Dr Kapila Vatsyayan came up with the title 'Form and Many Forms of Mother Clay'.

2. The very idea of an exhibition on clay was in fact that of Mrs Pupul Jayakar, a distinguished pioneer of the crafts movement in India.



Evolution of form: a horse from Tamil Nadu. The legs, half-done body, torso and head are shown separately, and then the full object is shown. Students derive great benefit from observing the various stages, and this helps to maintain the living tradition. The whole two-metre horse is made by hand, without use of the wheel. [*Photo:* National Institute of Design for the Crafts Museum.]





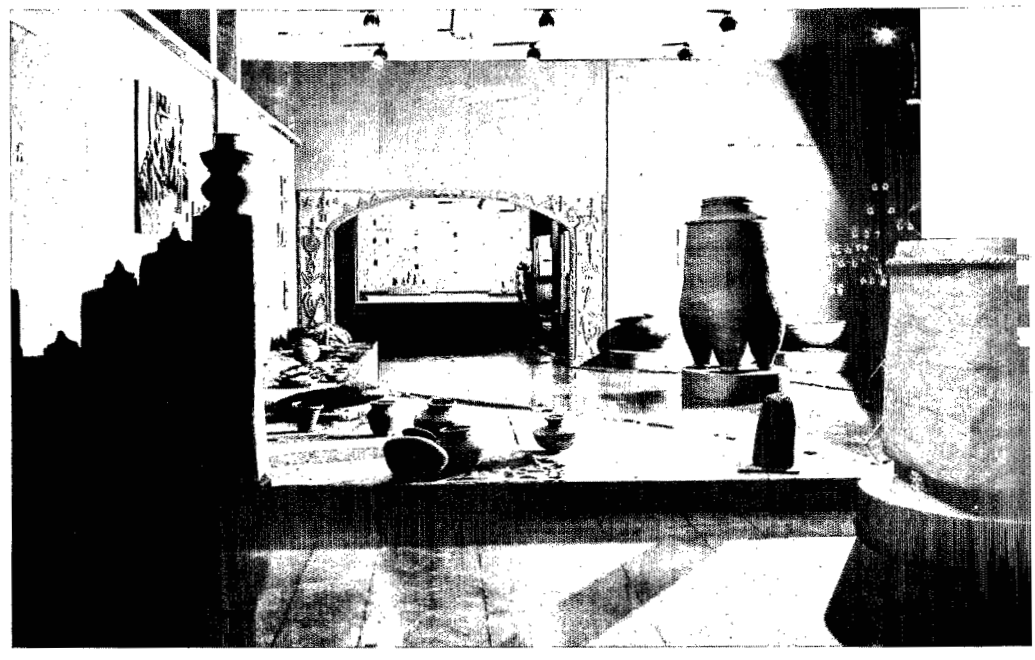
First gallery where a sunbaked clay potter's wheel is shown. A clay lamp from Bihar and the young potter, Jagdish, who made the wheel, are in the photo. Five rice-paste handprints are always made on the wheel by the bridegroom at the beginning of a wedding. Form and many forms of Ganesh can be seen through the doorway. [*Photo:* National Institute of Design for the Crafts Museum.]

each potter to collect one item, such as an elephant from Bihar, a statue of the goddess Durga from Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh, Hatimaputul, the mother goddess, from Assam, a horse from Bengal, a pot from Gujarat and so on. It was stimulating to watch them do it. From the objects I selected several for the exhibition, with the intention of showing their stages of production according to the space allocated to me at different levels of the exhibition.

A large platform of about 15 by 17 metres was built, and on this the techniques of making pots in different regions were displayed. Whenever an important group of visitors comes to the exhibition, a live demonstration can be made on this platform. Two open-yard kilns were also created along with the platform. It is important to note that the potters themselves worked with me in arranging the displays: when the 'maker' joins hands with the curator or designer, it makes a great difference, adding both authenticity and precision. Purushottamramji, a potter from Azamgarh, helped with the display, making a kiln, writing captions and placing his marvellous object, a *surahi* (pot), at different stages of its production process, with raw material, tools, slip and other objects. The designer can always make a mistake in placing an object; the scholar may spoil it by incorporating unnecessary material into the caption. Here the potter just spoke and wrote on a clay plate about what he made, its uses and the philosphy behind it in simple handwriting.

In this fast-changing world it is very important to document the use of an item in any form. For this exhibition, I selected four spots from different regions to show how and where people place their votive terracotta figures. Village sanctuaries are generally quite large, and I had enough space in which to show the viewer how, where and in what sort of environment the terracotta figures are placed. In the Rajasthan *Devra* hut, for instance, a drum, iron chain, incense pot, and the idols were arranged in their respective places. Then a little opening was made in the front wall of the hut (which happens in the village environment, too) for the viewer to see the *Devra.* Similarly, to re-create the environment of sanctuaries in Tamil Nadu and Gujarat, we worked out in minute detail the placing of lamps, flags, etc. In some instances I had to use photographs to explain rituals, but they were printed in sepia, so as not to mar the overall impression. For example, tribals sprinkle the blood of a sacrificed goat on the terracotta horse; so when the visitor sees the photograph of a horse with blood spots in the sanctuary, it makes sense to him. Tribal music also helped to create the environment.

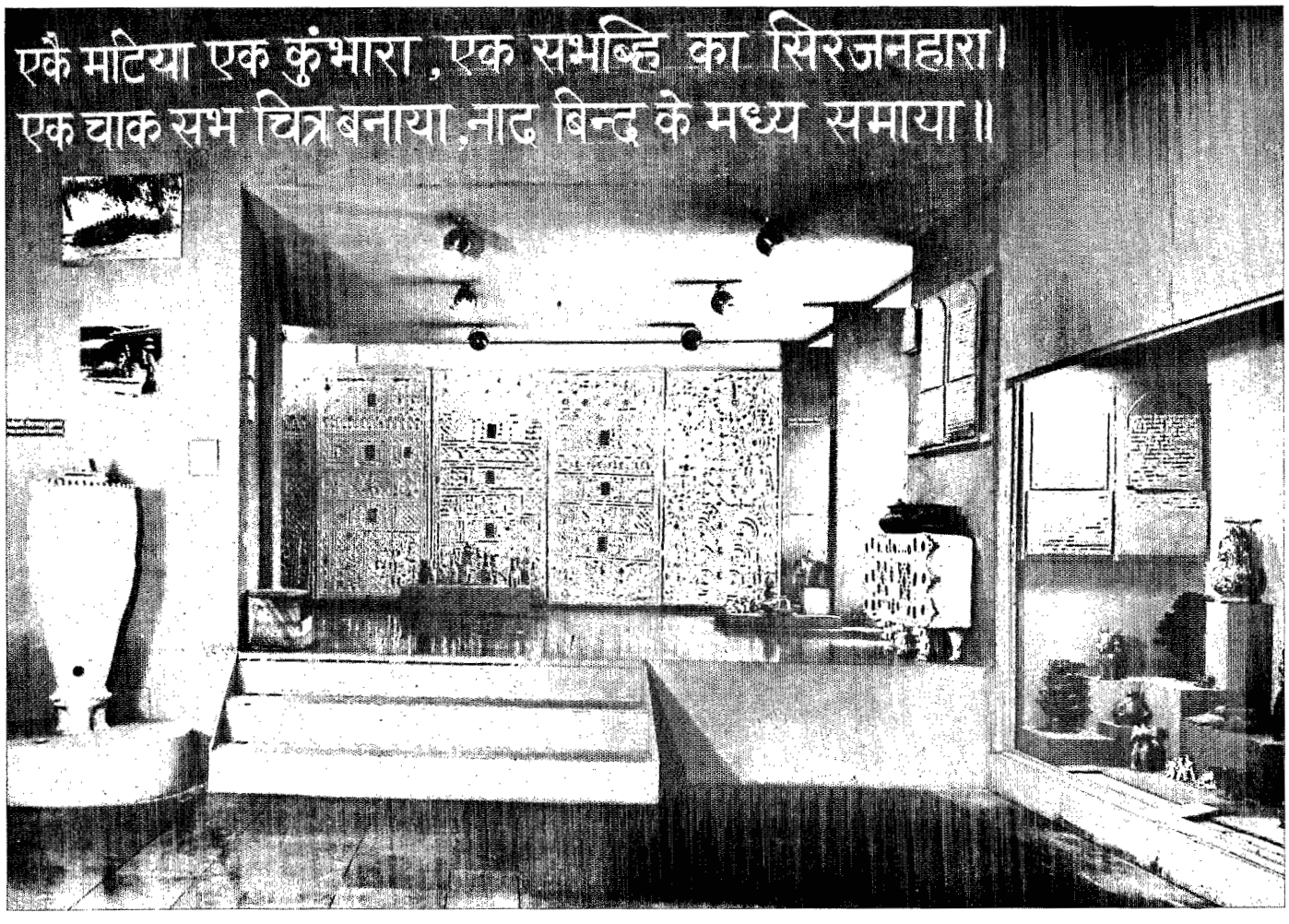
The problem of cutting and arranging trees to make a grove was solved by Narayansingh, an officer of the Crafts Museum. After finding out what sort of branches I wanted, he had them cut from the university campus and fixed them on 60-cm-square wooden bases. These I covered with clay and the trees were erected. There was also an ornately carved front door that was out of keeping with the environment, so I covered it with wooden planks on which women from Kutch, Gujarat, were asked to make or-

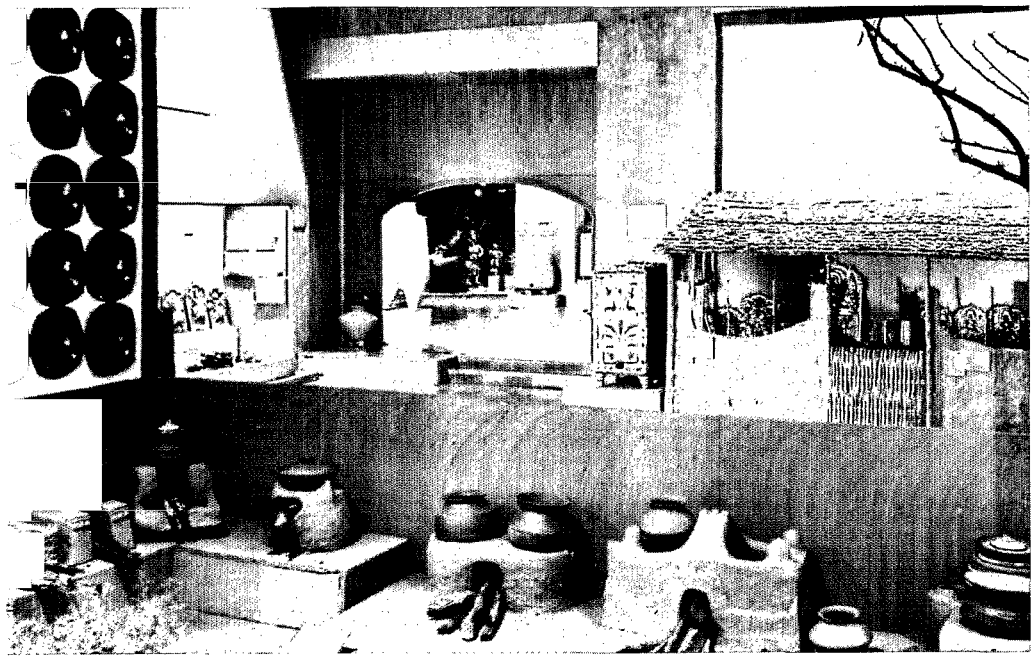


Left. Detail of the introduction platform: a lump of raw clay, a *lingam,* a tiger from Bastar, a pot from Gorakhpur, a clay toy from Gujarat and a village deity from Tamil Nadu, different forms created all over India from a simple lump of clay. Photographs of an old potter and tribals offering these terracottas to their gods are placed on the wall.
[*Photo:* National Institute of Design for the Crafts Museum.]

Show-cases at right contain pottery from each Indian state. The Bengal goddess Mansagath is on the extreme right. Terracotta tablets with texts can be seen: it was a marvellous experience to see writings on terracottas. Writings pertaining to the philosophy of clay were an integral part of the display.
[*Photo:* National Institute of Design for the Crafts Museum.]

As soon as one enters the large gallery, one sees the clay relief wall at the extreme end and, on a large platform, a potter's wheel, pots, kiln, etc., used for demonstrations. Jars are among the main items for storage in India's villages.
[*Photo:* National Institute of Design for the Crafts Museum.]





Open cooking stoves are a common sight all over India. Here they were displayed with respect. Tribal lacquered dishes were made into a wall on the left side. Back view of the whole gallery. In the background, right, a Rajasthani *Devra* sanctuary in a hut, authentically displayed. A small opening was made in the upper part of the wall to help the viewer without spoiling the content in any way.
[*Photo:* National Institute of Design for the Crafts Museum.]

namental motifs. They designed a canopy on top and two flowers on the sides. To me it looked like a chariot in which an old man and the form and forms of clay travelled!

I wanted to place a potter's wheel near the entrance of the exhibition, and looked for a wooden wheel. Jagdish, one of the young potters from Bihar, said, 'We make clay wheels.' I was fascinated by the idea of having a clay wheel. He made it within ten days, mixing coconut fibre and clay together. In the centre of the wheel he fixed a stone and a wooden nail with a log as a base for the wheel to hold it above. 'When a bridegroom starts out for marriage,' he said, 'he prints his hand five times on this wheel.' This became a marvellous introduction to the exhibition.

After the preparation of clay each potter makes a pile which resembles a *lingam,* signifying the beginning of the process of creation.[3] I thought this would be a great link element in the whole exhibition. So first in the introduction of the forms I placed a *lingam* near the raw clay. Again, while showing the process of making pots of the different regions, I placed the *lingam* in front, right in the middle of the room. Finally, when showing the form and the many forms of elephants and horses, I placed another *lingam.* So three *lingams* together created a totality in the exhibition.

Three wall displays were also created. Yamuna Devi from Bihar created a wall relief with figures of Ganesh, Shiva, Krishna, etc., in clay. This was kept behind the large platform where pot-making techniques were shown, as though it were the back wall of a house. The platform looked like a verandah, while the work-space of the potter and the posterior wall seemed like part of a large wall. A second wall was set up at the extreme end of the exhibition. When one entered and looked left, one saw the wall at the far end, glittering with mica mirrors on clay relief and creating a different atmosphere at different times of the day. This wall could be seen even in darkness! The third wall was placed near the big jar but it looked too empty—I had no idea what to do with it. I started by having it covered with cowdung and clay. This base 'form' of cowdung wall looked interesting enough, yet something more was needed. Then, one day I had an idea. I asked all the craftsmen and women, young and old, to celebrate their contribution by leaving their handprints in rice paste on the wall. There was also a potter's child, two years of age, who always helped (or harassed!) his father, mother and grandfather—the real learning process for a craftsman in India. He printed his hand near a large clay pot over a metre high, made by potters from Assam. Those tiny handprints on the wall near the large pot became the symbol of blessings on the exhibition.

I have always felt that in our museum displays and texts, folklore is not interwoven to become an integral part of the exhibit. In this exhibition the potters were always present, chanting, singing or humming tunes or songs. I noted down some of the couplets and had them written down in such a way that they became part of the exhibition. In old family traditions and in epic stories it is said that writing verses this way has changed the people's lives. The writings were normally inscribed on ceilings, but texts were also written on clay plates with white clay, which became red and white after firing. This was a risky process but it turned out very well, so much so that the map of the exhibition was made in terracotta, and in the poster the horse motif was made in high relief with the text above it.

The colours used were sober—ochres, burnt sienna, browns, black and reds. The base wall and the cases were all coated with cowdung and clay, giving unity to the entire exhibition.

3. The *lingam* is the stylized emblem of the male organ, symbolizing creative power, which is the main deity in many Hindu temples.

Grace McCann Morley

A presentation of new perspectives

Clay, shaped by a diversity of techniques, unbaked, or baked to become terracotta, has everywhere been a medium to serve art, religion and the requirements of everyday life. No other material can challenge its availability, versatility and low cost, while its aesthetic possibilities represent a virtually unlimited bonus.

Form and Many Forms of Mother Clay at the Crafts Museum, New Delhi, showed how traditional potters exploit the resources of clay in a great variety of forms and techniques in different parts of India. It emphasized clay objects made in contemporary rural India. However, the enduring links with traditions going back some 4,000 years were also evoked effectively by toys and miniature utilitarian objects from the Indus Valley culture (*c.* 2500–1500 B.C.), borrowed from archaeological collections in the city, which anticipate in form and appearance items still made today.

The exhibition also aimed to help visitors understand the techniques of fabrication and decoration. An example was the two-metre horse shown on page 20. All the component parts made separately were displayed along with the colossal form of the assembled animal. Less dramatic, but equally instructive, were numerous other examples illustrating different stages of fabrication.

For the attentive and responsive viewer the focal points of the exhibition to which Haku Shah directs attention in his text cannot be overlooked, but they represent only a small part of the abundance and variety of the pieces on display, serving as clues, one might say, to the extensive survey of traditional pottery. The description of the clay-plastered wall marked with the white rice-paste imprints of the potters' hands and the settings of the votive offerings according to custom in various regions give some idea of the sensitivity and care with which the exhibition was created. Similarly, the illustration of utilitarian items like the *chulas* (cooking stoves), which have different forms depending on the region where they are made and used, and the reference to the *surahi* (water jar of porous composition, ensuring the cooling of the contents by evaporation) are evidence of the effort to provide insight into the ways in which traditional potters have understood and responded to the needs of their communities.

The exhibits and their settings, designed to simulate their actual environment, were supplemented by special events to add to the enjoyment as well as the instruction of visitors. The platform that was constructed for demonstrating techniques to important visitors was useful in between times for exhibiting pots and tools and was by no means limited to these uses. Demonstrations there by potters were frequent and these were also carried on regularly in other convenient shelters in the Crafts Museum's grounds as part of the continuing activities for the benefit of visitors. The kilns proved very useful for these artist-craftsmen, who were able to bake their products for greater permanence and sell them as artistic but inexpensive souvenirs to admiring visitors.

Thus *Form and Many Forms of Mother Clay* was much more than a handsome and effective exhibition. It was the occasion for a continuing series of events which amplified its influence and broadened its possibilities for instruction. Mrs Smita Baxi, Director of the Crafts Museum, following her usual practice,

Terracotta Crafts Workshop at the Crafts Museum, New Delhi. Formally trained studio potter, a participant in the workshop, working with a tribal craftswoman. [*Photo:* Crafts Museum, New Delhi.]

School programmes at the Crafts Museum. Students learning clay work from the traditional potters of Haryana State. [*Photo:* Crafts Museum, New Delhi.]

arranged a lively programme of activities. Class visits were invited and many schools sent large groups of students to be guided through the exhibition, to see demonstrations of techniques, and even to model with clay under the supervision of the potters. There were special lectures. Of particular interest was the workshop in which 'studio' potters, that is those who had learned the craft in art schools and practised pottery production either as an avocation or professionally, met the traditional potters. As there are a considerable number of highly competent and successful studio potters in the Delhi area there was a good response and a profitable exchange of information and experience between the two groups.

In *Form and Many Forms of Mother Clay* the objects exhibited, with the exception few borrowed pieces from the Indus Valley, were specially created. In this respect it was in contrast with the exhibition immediately preceding it, *Myth and Ritual in Indian Crafts,* the first large carefully documented exhibition presented from the museum's own large collections, the major part of which had been in storage for many years. It had indicated the importance of the Crafts Museum's role as an archive of objects for the guidance of craftsmen on standards and for reference by designers.

Haku Shah makes special mention of the poster in baked clay and the plaques of clay on which the labelling was done, in both Hindi and English, with white clay characters on the beige terracotta backgrounds. It was an innovation, but effective and completely in harmony with the exhibition. It is one more instance of the creative and meticulous approach of Haku Shah and his company of potters to every aspect of the exhibition.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that the exhibition itself and the programmes and activities based on it profited greatly from their setting in the Crafts Museum and its Village Complex—in all respects a sympathetic environment.

Dominique Jammot

Born at Clermont-Ferrand, France. Studied at the University of Dakar, Senegal. Curatorial training in geology and palaeontology (research on present-day and fossil shrews). Has been curator of the Musée des Sciences Naturelles, Orleans, for the past four years.

Cost-effectiveness and efficiency in a small museum

A museum's efficiency cannot be gauged simply by looking at an annual report of activities: its financial situation and the size of its staff must also be taken into account. These data are rarely to be found together, however, but in this article we will try to present them side by side in an attempt to express museum management in terms of efficiency and to demonstrate, if demonstration is necessary, the effectiveness and competitivity of the medium-sized institution. Our argument applies only to small- and medium-sized regional museums.

The productive unit

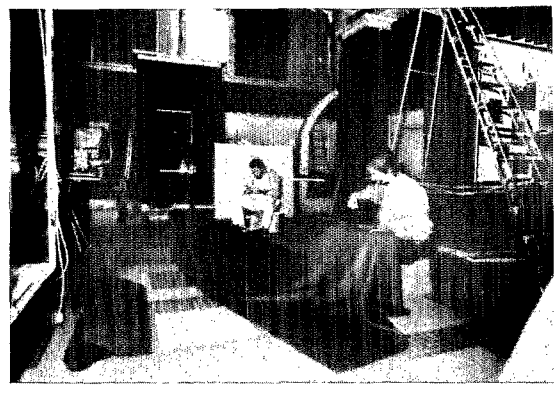
The medium-sized category in this case should be taken to mean provincial natural history museums, whose essential shortcoming is that their research potential is relatively insignificant—and indeed in many cases non-existent. In this category it is necessary to make a further distinction between two types of establishment: those with the means to be continually productive and those which once established have only a maintenance capability.

The Natural Science Museum in Orleans, France, may be regarded as a unit of the productive type, and it is on that basis that our study of the implications of its methods of management with respect to productivity has been made. Founded in 1823 and reinstalled in 1966 in a new building specifically designed to house a museum, this establishment is located area of 2,250 m² spread over five floors and comprising: storage space (500 m²); workshops, offices, projection room (500 m²) and display area (1,250 m²).

The museum employs fourteen full-time staff members and has an annual budget of approximately 2.2 million French francs (about $175,000 at the rate of exchange of 8 francs to $1). It serves a town with 120,000 inhabitants

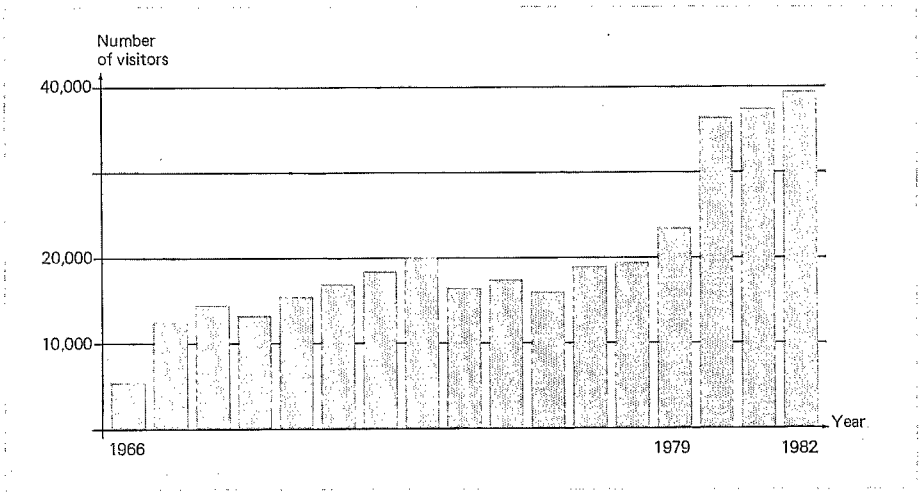
MUSÉE DES SCIENCES NATURELLES, Orleans. General view of the exhibition *Orleans, Once upon a Time ...* [*Photo:* Laurent Arthur].

In museum work, sewing is not the sole privilege of the womenfolk! [*Photo:* Laurent Arthur.]



Taxidermy of the large mammals—sentimental attachments. [*Photo:* Laurent Arthur.]

FIG. 1 Annual variation in the number of visitors.



(200,000 inhabitants including the suburbs) and receives approximately 40,000 visitors per year. Neighbouring scientific institutions include the Faculty of Sciences at the University of Orleans, the BRGM (Office of Geological and Mining Research) and the local CNRS (National Scientific Research Centre) laboratory.

It should further be noted that the Natural Science Museum of Orleans, because of its relatively complete exhibitions and its sustained museographical production, is the only properly constituted establishment of its kind in the central region of France and should go on to play a leading role among the satellite museums of lesser importance if its long-standing plans to build an extension are put into effect.

Preparation of a temporary exhibition: multidisciplinary work and permanent co-operation.
[*Photo:* Laurent Arthur.]

Limited objectives

A natural science museum may be regarded as a set of resources, in the form of collections, material and staff, accessible to different categories of potential users. The range of possible activities is great, and there is a considerable risk, especially for small units such as ours, of dispersal of effort with a consequent serious impairment of efficiency. It is therefore necessary to opt for specific activities at the outset in order to be competitive, if possible, in the areas thus selected.

In our own case, we have chosen to concentrate on two fields, namely educational activities, involving young members of the public, and taxidermy, in both its museographical and its scientific aspects. Needless to say, these activities complement rather than supplement the primary task of conserving and managing the collections of our establishment, since the collections can only be used for scientific or educational purposes if they are in good condition.

We chose taxidermy with full knowledge of what it would involve. This is an underdeveloped branch of museography, particularly in France. Museums equipped with the staff necessary for even the simple upkeep of their mammal and bird collections are few and far between. It is therefore desirable to preserve and if possible to reinforce the advantages acquired in this specific field so as to finish up with acceptable collections and real freedom with respect to museum displays incorporating stuffed animals.

We chose educational activities because of the high level of demand among schoolchildren (who account for 50 per cent of our visitors); statistical analysis of the ages of the classes that visit our establishment shows that children aged between 8 and 12 years of age are in the

majority. We were thus prompted to fill a gap that allowed for the implementation of a relatively innovatory policy in a sector characterized by a serious lack of appropriate educational documentation. We appointed an *animateur,* holding the equivalent of a Ph.D., to run our educational sector, co-ordinating this type of activity with the other members of the group in close collaboration with a productive audio-visual sector.

We have furthermore observed in practice that the introduction of the audio-visual element in the case of the natural sciences gives our displays a further dimension by adding movement and living spaces, which are essential data for acquiring a correct approach to environmental knowledge.

These choices were made as far back as ten years ago, for historical reasons and because they were appropriate at the time, and conferred upon our establishment a certain amount of originality through the considerable experience that it gained in these special fields. Since that time this policy has been reinforced by the selective allocation of credits and through the recruitment of appropriate personnel.

The advantages of the small unit

Judging from our own day-to-day experience, we believe that the emphasis in future will be increasingly on small, functional and decentralized units, for two main reasons. First, because they operate at the local level they place effective limits upon the geographical transfer of collections, which is detrimental to a proper understanding of their nature, and thus avoid an impoverishment of the cultural heritage that may subsequently prove hard to rectify. Secondly, the fact that they employ few people means that real team-work is necessary and there is no danger of compartmentalization into decision-makers, planners, executors and educators which is the bane of museography.

What these units lose in supposed prestige, when compared with larger and necessarily more influential groups, they gain in efficiency through in-depth work which affects the populations to a greater extent at the local level, by offering them a unique opportunity to feel involved with their own heritage.

However, over and above these basic reasons, the highly competitive cost price of these structures that consume very little in the way of budgetary resources might very well increase their attraction in the coming years.

Human resources

More than other types of establishment, museums offer unconventional and unusual employment possibilities. Our museological team is by no means overstaffed. Consequently, we have to use all the professional skills of the staff (intellectual, manual, artistic, educational), whatever their individual specialities might happen to be.

Motivated by this constraint, which is far from being totally negative, the essential qualities that we take into account in recruiting, apart from the specialized professional qualifications desired, concern the candidate's capacity to adapt and his genuine potential to work as part of a multidisciplinary team. Experience shows, furthermore, that efficiency and competitiveness tend to be greater in a team whose members have different academic backgrounds. These results derived from observation would suffice to explain why we are not fervent supporters of a stereotyped and uniform museological training acquired beforehand. In the field of museology, we require specialists whom we can transform into versatile members of staff, rather than versatile non-specialized personnel. It is perhaps too seldom realized that museums are particularly fertile ground where further training is concerned.

Within our establishments the ongoing acquisition of knowledge is a reality which is stressed only too rarely, and concerns all staff members. Admittedly, the transfer of knowledge takes place spontaneously and without following any set pattern, as a simple result of the interest staff members take in their daily tasks, which call for genuinely multidisciplinary work and permanent co-operation.

Provincial museums are privileged places where dialogue and an interdisciplinary approach are neither empty words nor fashionable slogans. Researchers, planners, educators and executors work together on concrete, ongoing activities. Such a degree of harmony—as experience in other fields has shown—is not easily achieved and we are anxious not to disturb the factors underlying it but, on the contrary, to make the most of our fortunate situation. Professionals and trainees working in our establishment on a temporary basis readily acknowledge the practical value of this approach from the point of view of training and instruction in the field of museography.

While the largest teams do not necessarily achieve the most impressive results,

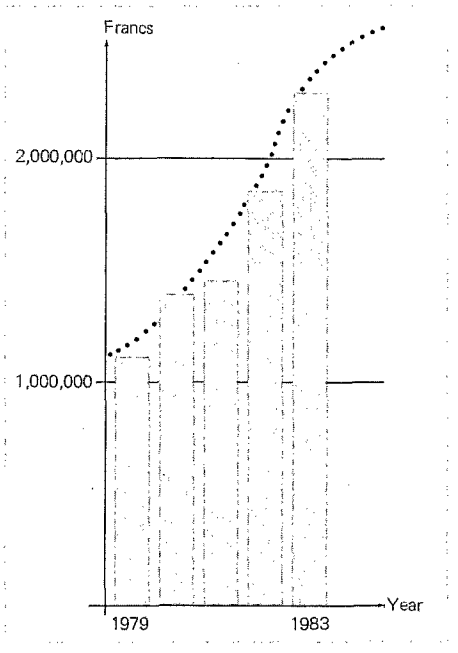


FIG. 2 Annual variation in the budget.

it is none the less true that a museum's possibilities in terms of activities are directly correlated to the number of qualified staff members available to it. Too many establishments still have units whose museographical potential cannot be properly exploited because of understaffing and which only function on what we have called a maintenance basis. In Orleans a careful recruiting policy has enabled us to form a team of fourteen full-time employees, whose organization chart is shown in Table 1.

The absence of any provision for guards is not due to an oversight. These posts were recently done away with: their elimination has not led to any noticeable disruption to date, and has made it possible to create productive technical posts without incurring any extra expenditure. To ensure continued security the entire staff agreed to double as caretakers, except on Sundays and public holidays, when the task is performed by science students.

Although small, the team is sufficiently diversified in terms of professional skills to be able to carry out a project from start to finish. The team's scientific potential is still only average, however, and we are therefore obliged to seek outside co-operation in certain areas, including the management of the collections. The team's average age is about 35 with a slight preponderance of women.

In terms of the 'Peter principle' we currently possess a number of advantages that generally, though not invariably, characterize smaller teams:

Rapid, collective decision-making.

Effective co-ordination at all stages of projects: drafting, structuring, execution, evaluation of results.

Reduced emphasis on working hours and more on fulfilment of assignments, geared to each team member's proved aptitudes.

A relatively satisfying group atmosphere, with everyone feeling involved at his own level in joint and tangible achievements.

It should, however, be said that these advantages, and the team spirit that goes with them, can never be taken for granted: they are the product of a delicate balance that is all the harder to maintain in view of the strong personalities of those concerned.

TABLE 1. Organization of staff, Orleans Natural Science Museum

Function	Qualifications	Number of posts
Curator	Doctor of Science	1
Lecturer	Ph. D. (Doctorat 3e cycle)	1
Assistant	Science degree	1
Assistant [1]	Science degree Taxidermist	1
Taxidermist	Premier ouvrier de France	1
Photographer/ cameraman/soundman [1]	D.U.T. (University Diploma in Technology)	1
Specialist in marine species		1
Carpenter/painter	C.A.P. (Certificate of Professional Aptitude)	1
Museographic technician ironwork [1]	C.A.P.	1
Secretariat	Administration/telephone/ac- counting/ typing/filling, etc.	2
Receptionist		1
Maintenance [2]		2
TOTAL		14

[1] Recent recruitment.
[2] Staff supplied to the museum by the municipal authority.

Financial resources

This is not the place to go into the sources of our funds, because such factors vary too much from one country to another and our analysis might well turn out to be too narrow. Suffice it to say that in our case almost our entire operating budget comes from public (municipal or local government) sources.

On the other hand, we are perfectly able to analyse the real costs of our establishment over the past five years. These are presented in Table 2.

The disparity between expenditure and receipts is, on the face of it, striking. Receipts are all the more insignificant since the municipality decided two years ago, at the Curator's suggestion, that admission to the museum should be free. Consequently, the subsidy of the General Council (a local government body) represents the museum's sole source of receipts. The only sums managed by the museum itself consist of the direct operating expenses and the amounts allocated to capital expenditure. The remaining items, which constitute the bulk of the budget, are managed by the municipality's finance department (salaries, maintenance of premises and administrative costs). Capital expenditure covers the purchase of scientific and technical equipment; during the past four years this has been mainly audio-visual and optical (a research microscope). Funds are allocated annually for this purpose and we plan to build up our equipment progressively over the years.

The overall expenditure of our establishment has doubled in five years. This was a circumstantial development due to the fact that, following a brief period devoted by and large to maintenance, we

TABLE 2. Budget of Orleans Natural Science Museum, 1979-83
(in thousands of French francs)

Expenditure and receipts	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
1. EXPENDITURE					
Operating costs					
Direct	36	62	102	100	120
Indirect					
Personnel	446	512	526	747	960
Maintenance of premises	160	129	245	302	420
Administrative costs	491	611	505	666	700
TOTAL operating costs	1 133	1 314	1 378	1 815	2 200
Investment (capital expenditure)	6	88	80	60	100
2. RECEIPTS	68	67	68	112	

restructured our activities and embarked on a permanent policy of museographical production and educational activities. As our budget has now been balanced and effectively corresponds to our real needs, it should evolve in a far more regular manner in the years to come.

Towards optimization

Museography is not in itself a very expensive activity provided the necessary qualified personnel are available. One has only to look at a breakdown of project costs to see that labour constitutes the largest item; a theoretical project whose execution is contracted out on a 'turnkey' basis may turn out to cost far more than anticipated and to have been unsatisfactorily executed into the bargain.

This would tend to show that achievements in museography are not necessarily solely dependent on financial possibilities, but rather on a precise balance between a diversified staff and an appropriate operating budget, which, on the basis of our own activities, we would assess at the present time at 10,000 francs annually per person employed.

Museums are expensive items for the bodies that finance them. In order to justify these pricy investments it is therefore necessary to make them cost-effective. In this case it is not cost-effectiveness from the financial point of view that is meant, since it turns out that the cost of our activities in real terms is not borne by the beneficiaries and that our receipts and expenditure are very far from being evenly balanced. There would accordingly be no point in assessing the price of our services with respect to education, training and production or in evaluating the cost of maintaining a cultural heritage.

On the other hand, to become cost-effective in cultural terms it is necessary to exploit the museum's potential to the full, ensure that it is used in a rational manner and made accessible to as many people as possible.

In the long term, the pursuit of a dynamic policy capable of justifying the funds allocated to us does not depend on any particular methodology, but rather on the collective attitude of a team whose efficiency can only be enhanced by its awareness of the responsibilities involved in managing a public service.

As a result of the current economic crisis, we are more concerned with cost now than ever before in the past. Thus curators, who up until now paid little heed to problems of an administrative nature, are today becoming careful managers through necessity. Increased financial pressure will soon oblige those responsible for cultural affairs to make decisions affecting not only the size of the establishments to be set up but also the allocation of preferential funding for such establishments. This selective pressure should in the long term favour the development of the type of unit we have called 'productive'; small decentralized regional structures with reasonable operating costs and limited, qualified staffs are in a better position to provide a cost-effective museum service and thereby reduce the overall cost of culture.

[*Translated from French*]

A method of recording public inquiries in a museum

Beryl Morris

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The South Australian Museum at Adelaide established an Information Centre in 1964 in order properly to handle questions from the public and requests for identification of specimens. The Centre currently deals with some 11,000 inquirers a year, some of whom have over fifty specimens or questions. A further 10,000 people simply visit the Centre to look at the displays of live animals, natural history specimens and resource library. Two Information Officers deal with these inquirers on weekdays and on weekends specimens and questions are left with attendants on duty in the display galleries and are processed by information staff immediately on Mondays. This article is not so much concerned with the unique service provided by the Information Centre, but the way in which data associated with specimens and people is recorded and used.

The museum's information officers are professional scientists with a broad background in the natural and human sciences, and one of the aims of the Centre is to answer, on the spot, as many

Staff member Janine Flory locates a specimen for collection. [*Photo:* Roman Ruehle.]

No. 679 Date 23 June 1979, Wednesday

No.	Name and address	♀	♂	P	W	D	G	P	S	T	Remarks	*
871	Mr J. Brown 18 Queen St Hackham 5208		✓			✓	✓				Fossil sea urchin found 8km south of Mannum at base off cliff 20 June 1979 Lovenia forbesi	
872	Annette Hall 3821137 Mitcham	✓				✓			✓		What is the female term for swan ? Pen	
873	Mrs E.S. Tudd 74 Acorn St Goolwa North 5324	✓			✓		✓				Details of ♀ fantail being attacked by ♂ straight tailed goldfish. Would like reasons and remedy. Write.	▮
874	Ken Atkins		✓	✓			✓				Which way do the knees on a giraffe bend ?	
875	♀	✓				✓	✓				Sought leaflet on cleaning abalone shells.	
876	♂		✓	✓			✓				Dug up old bottles in back garden. Who can advise him on value? Adelaide Historical Bottle Club.	
877	Penny Anne Dowd Plympton South Primary School R2/7	✓			✓			✓			Would like leaflets and photos for a project on Egyptology Posted	
878	North Adelaide Pest Control Company (Peter Aims) 268 3911		✓			✓	✓				Left fragments of fly wings found in a packet of sugar. Are they accidental or from a pest species ?	▮
879	♀	✓		✓						✓	Sought pickling recipe for spiders which she is collecting for a zoology course.	
880	Adrian Edgley 21 Flinders St Rosetown 5014		✓	✓			✓				Described a bird which is nesting in his garden for the first time. Large, long beak, striated. Suggested a Little Wattle Bird.	
881	Marianne Peters 12 Third Ave Rostrevor 5089	✓		✓			✓				How to preserve a common sea dragon found yesterday at Victor Harbor. Also, preserving crabs. Post leaflets.	▮
		6	5	5	2	4	8	1	1	1		

Fig. 1. Printed sheet used for recording inquiry details at the South Australian Museum.

of the questions as possible, thus providing instant gratification of curiosity and an efficient community service which helps enormously in the museum's public relations.

About 85 per cent of answers and identifications are successfully made within the Centre. A further 5 per cent are not connected with the museum (the Information Centre is used by many as a springboard into the world of knowledge) and the inquirer is directed to the appropriate authority. The final 10 per cent of inquiries are either directly connected with a collection curator's special field of research or require the information officer to retain the specimen or question in order to research the area more thoroughly. In either case, the inquiry is not dealt with immediately.

It is the policy of the Centre to make a note of any inquiry that demands the time of one of its officers. In this way, it has been possible to determine the most popular topics, the seasonality of the questions, characteristics of inquirers such as age, sex method of approach (i.e. phoned, written or direct) and so on. A printed sheet is used to record this information (Fig. 1).

Each inquiry is given a number. At the beginning of each month, the number of the inquiry starts at 1, but is preceded by figures indicating the month and year. The name and address of the inquirer are recorded wherever practicable. Even when an inquiry is dealt with successfully in the inquirer's presence, it is often possible, armed with a name and address, to forward further information to the person should it come to hand soon after the event.

The person's sex is marked in the appropriate column, followed by either P. W or D, depending on whether he or she phoned, wrote, or came to the Centre direct. The next four columns on the sheet are aimed at roughly determining the person's age level and educational status. G refers to adult non-students, P to primary or pre-schoolers, S to secondary students and T to tertiary.

Once these columns are completed, details of the inquiry are noted as fully as possible. The final column of the page is left blank if no further action is required.

At the South Australian Museum the information officer, Judy Whitehead, records details from an inquirer. [*Photo:* Roman Ruehle.]

If, however, the person needs to be contacted again, a small red sticker is placed in the column. Thus, no outstanding inquiry is ever lost because a quick flick through the pages of the inquiry book shows at a glance any red stickers. When the inquiry is completed and the person notified of the outcome, the sticker is simply removed and discarded.

When specimens are retained for further inspection they are labelled with the inquiry number and perhaps the inquirer's name. This obviates the necessity to write out all the details—they can easily be looked up in the inquiry book. Specimens awaiting identification, etc., are stored in metal cabinets away from the public. Perishable specimens are stored in a freezer and a note of their location is placed in the inquiry book. Those in the cabinet are grouped under headings such as 'mammals', 'spiders', etc., and then on a set day one of the information officers visits that collection in the museum and either seeks the assistance of the responsible curator or finds the specimen and information for herself.

Because of this fixed appointment with each curator, the latter is able to plan for an interruption, not from a member of the public as occurs in so many museums, but by a knowledgeable information officer who simply needs to be pointed in the right direction and who has communication skills for passing on the information, at the appropriate technical level, to the inquirer.

Once the specimen has been identified and is waiting for collection by or posting to the inquirer, it is placed in another metal cabinet which has the same broad groupings as the first cupboard. When the inquirer comes into the museum for

his specimen, he usually says something like, 'My name is Smith and I've come to pick up my shell which I left a couple of weeks ago.' The information officer then opens the 'for collection' cupboard, and looks on the shelf marked 'marine invertebrates' for a packet bearing Smith's name and a number that tallies with inquiries about fourteen days old.

Letters received by the Centre are also marked with their inquiry number, and enough details are recorded in the inquiry book to make it possible to answer the query even if the letter is lost (which, of course, never happens...).

This method of recording public inquiries evolved in response to the need to handle large volumes of information and numbers of visitors in the most efficient manner. In conclusion, I believe the obvious advantages of the system are as follows:

The inquiry-book pages are pre-printed with the appropriate headings, thus standardizing the information recorded and saving time in drawing up a book.

The method is simple, using a chronological numbering system. It can be used by anybody needing to follow through an inquiry.

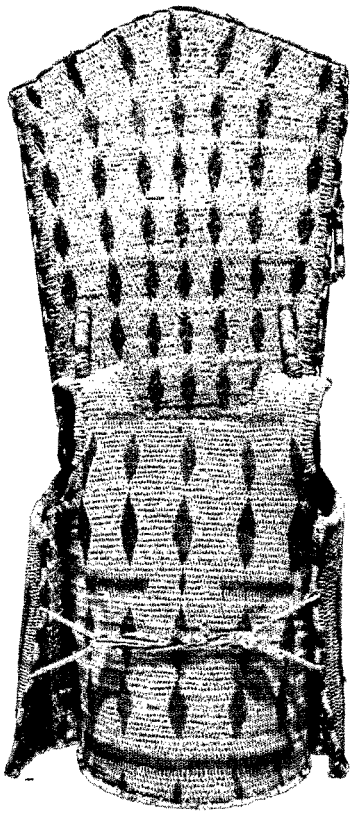
The inquiry number supplies information about the approximate date of the inquiry, thus making it easy to find in the inquiry book. For example, an inquiry number of 679,711 attached to a specimen instantly shows that it was from June 1979 and occurred towards the end of the month (up to 1,200 inquirers are recorded each month with an average of around 900).

The number is fixed to everything connected with the inquiry, making it almost impossible to lose track of data or the owner.

It is easy to record a lot of information in a small space.

It is possible, through the red stickers, to keep track of outstanding inquiries, thus aiding our efficient, co-operative image.

It is simple to carry out statistical analysis of the most popular day, demographic location of inquirers, method of approach, etc. (This has been done and is the subject of another paper.) In brief, we have found such analysis indispensable in planning staffing and resource needs, and in finding out about areas in which we were not reaching our public.



Body armour, Kiribati. Queensland Museum.
[*Photo:* Queensland Museum.]

Recording Oceanic collections in Australia: problems and questions

The inventory of cultural property is a fundamental contributor to the advancement and exchange of knowledge and to the promotion of cultural identity and intercultural communication. It fulfils this purpose before and independently of another significant function, that of identifying dispersed heritages and permitting countries of origin seriously to organize possible requests for the return of cultural objects. In this spirit, the project described below has been financed by Unesco and the experience gained by our Australian colleagues will no doubt be of considerable interest to others engaged in similar undertakings.[1]

The Unesco Oceanic Cultural Property Survey is a project to record Pacific anthropological collections held in Australian public institutions. It is designed in the first instance to make available to the Pacific islanders information about parts of their cultural heritage held elsewhere in the world.

The second phase of the survey is presently being carried out at the Australian Museum in Sydney. It aims to produce comprehensive artefact listings of Polynesian and Micronesian material in Australia. Volume 1, on Micronesia, was published in mid-1983 and Volumes 2 and 3, covering Polynesia, will follow in early 1984.

The first phase, financed under Unesco's project for the Study of Oceanic Cultures, was seen as a preamble only, as the pilot survey on which the survey proper—the detailed documented inventory—should be based. The considerable success of Phase 1 (published in 1980 as

1. The original version of this report appeared in No. 13, June 1983, of *COMA* (the bulletin of the Conference of Museum Anthropologists, Australia). *Museum* is grateful to the editors of *COMA* for permission to reprint it here. The text in *COMA* was a slightly modified version of a paper presented at the Fifteenth Pacific Science Congress held at Dunedin, New Zealand, in February 1983. A special session devoted to 'Museums in Pacific Research' was held with the financial support of Unesco (see summary report by Lissant Bolton in box); this meeting issued a statement drafted by Peter Gathercole of Darwin College, Cambridge, which is also reproduced here.

Oceanic Cultural Property in Australia) served to reinforce this perception and to stimulate support for Phase 2.

The original proposal for the whole project, drawn up in 1977 by Dr Jim Specht of the Australian Museum, suggested alternative procedures for carrying out the detailed inventory. The first was to employ a Research Assistant for five years to inventory 'the more important' artefact collections and archival photographs, the results to be published in low-cost form for distribution in the Pacific. The second procedure was 'to create visiting Fellowships for Pacific islanders to visit Australia and carry out specific research projects on material culture and photographic archives relating to their home country'.

These alternatives were combined in a proposal for Phase 2 drawn up by Specht and myself in 1979 while Phase 1 was revealing the magnitude of Australian holdings. In this rather ambitious scheme we suggested that a full-time co-ordinator be appointed for five years, whose work would be supported and amplified by a series of short-term research assistants. This would not only produce a detailed inventory of both artefacts and photographs, but further identify particularly significant artefacts and collections, prepare publications on the traditional material culture of Oceanic societies, and develop photographic archives in appropriate Pacific institutions. Not surprisingly, it proved impossible to attract funding to a project on such a large scale.

We then recognized that it is not financially feasible to document all Oceanic collections in Australia (by then known to exceed 117,000 artefacts) at once, and after some false starts decided to limit Phase 2, at this stage, to Polynesian and Micronesian material. Several factors prompted this decision. Australian holdings from these areas comprise over 10,000 pieces, a much more manageable figure than 117,000, and yet in documenting them we would be producing information for most Pacific nations. Moreover the geographical proximity of Australia and Melanesia facilitates the exchange of information between individual museums in the region, making the need for Phase 2 less urgent.

Survey design

This proposal, which is the one now being carried out, incorporates, unstated (and at the time, I think, unperceived) changes in the objectives for Phase 2. The first proposal suggested the recording of the 'more important' collections. The final proposal aims, instead, for comprehensiveness. The reasons for this are simple. It is too expensive to employ the degree of expertise necessary to identify significant material from such a number of different cultures. The staff of the holding institutions, of necessity generalists in the field, cannot be expected to produce such information, whatever the ideal situation might be. Instead, Phase 2 will produce as comprehensive an account of Australian holdings as the state of those holdings will permit.

In March 1982 a contract was signed between Unesco and the Australian Museum, Sydney, for the implementation of Phase 2. As a cost-cutting measure it was specified that the Australian Museum was to devise, co-ordinate, collate and publish the survey, but that state museums were to be granted funds to employ someone to record the collections in their region.

The survey was designed with reference to a number of limiting factors, in particular the need to produce a publication that is not outrageously unwieldy and from which it is *easy* to obtain information. It was decided that each artefact should be recorded on a catalogue card. The cards were designed so that the final publication could be typed directly from them. Each category of information was given a code number, and those numbers

Lissant Bolton

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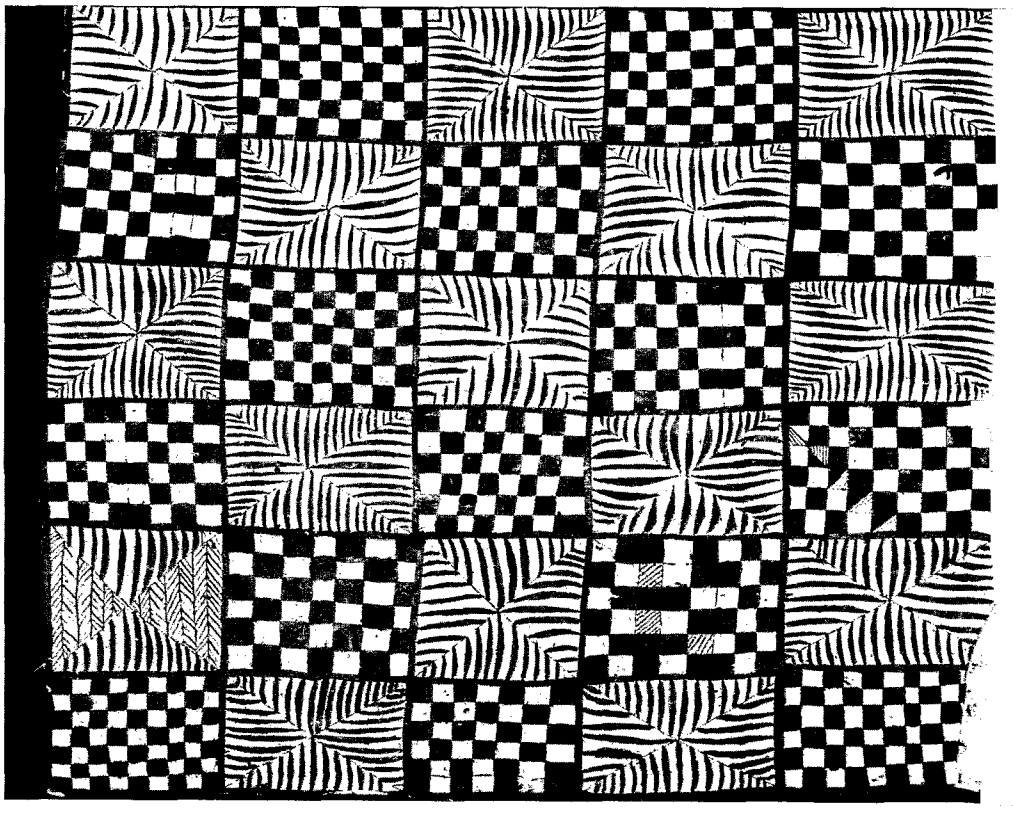
Sheet of bark cloth from Niue. Acquired by the Australian Museum in 1947 Width 1.36 m; length 1.65 m.
[*Photo:*© The Trustees of the Australian Museum.]



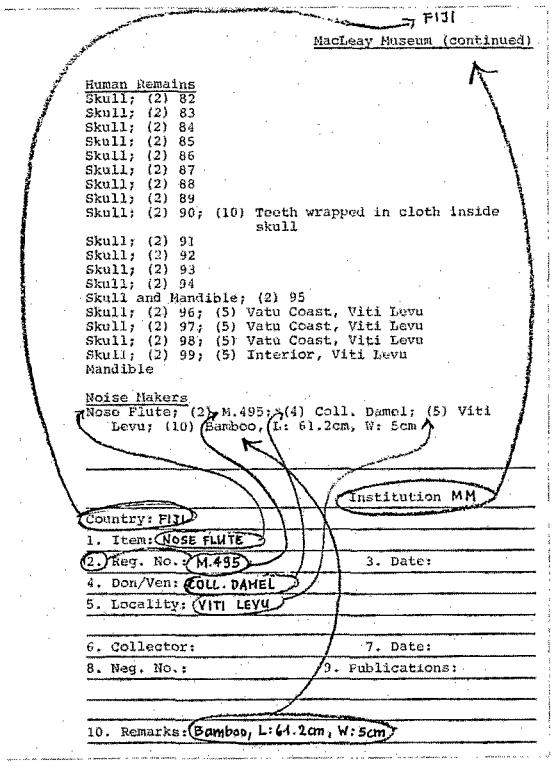


FIG. 1.

will be used to identify the information in each entry. Thus (1) is item name, (2) registration number, (3) date of registration, and (4) vendor/donor. An entry in the listing for Fiji might therefore begin; (1) Club; (2) E.7236; (3) 10 Feb. 1898; (4) Don: Mr P. T. Smith. Where a certain kind of information is lacking, that category can be lucidly omitted from the sequence; if, for example, the date of registration were regrettably forgotten, the entry would begin: (1) Club; (2) E.7236; (4) Don: Mr P. T. Smith. Figure 1 illustrates how the information recorded on the catalogue card is turned into an entry in the publication.

The categories of information specified on the cards are the obvious ones, identifying and giving the collection history of the object. It was initially proposed that an attempt be made to standardize nomenclature for artefact types. A difficult task in any event, this was rendered virtually impossible by the fact that eight different people recorded material for the survey, none of whom were sufficiently well versed in Polynesian and Microonsaaanmtterial culture to consistently rename the artefacts they were recording. The geographical units used are esentially present-day political ones. Although they may be culturally irrelevant they nevertheless reflect the provenances used in museum registers throughout Australia. We have in fact had to retain some outmoded political units, such as the Caroline Islands, which bear no relation to present-day divisions, because they are the only locations provided for some objects. Any more specific provenance information is of course recorded on the catalogue card, In an earlier proposal it was suggested that the objects be photographed and prints be sent to the museum of the island concerned. In this survey we have simply recorded the identifying number of any existing negative.

The design of the card has been criticized for consigning the details of the object itself—such as dimensions and material composition—to the grab-bag of 'Remarks'. This was entirely to do with the layout of the cards. The significance of 'L: 23 cm' is obvious in a way that '23 Jan. 1898' is not. It does however reflect the fact that most museums know more about the history of their artefacts than about their manufacture and social significance.

Each museum was sent blank cards with a set of instructions, and each museum, grateful for the opportunity to give work to an unemployed protégé, very co-operatively filled them in and returned them forthwith. These cards are at present being checked to ensure consistency in the final publication. It is remarkable how differently eight people, however admirable individually, can interpret the same instructions. The quality of the survey results would have been better had one person done all the recording, bringing a consistent approach and cumulative experience to bear on each new collection.

It is imperative that a publication of this kind be easy to use. Our most difficult task proved to be the organization of the artefact-by-artefact listings so that it is easy to find the information one is seeking in the publication. The entries will be organized by geographic unit, subcategorized first by holding institution and then by artefact-type groupings. It seemed that this last was a more useful division than those which could be imposed on the basis of collectors, detailed provenances or registration sequence. However, since no one has yet succeeded in producing a universally accepted taxonomy of artefact types, it was difficult to group the artefacts rationally. This is the age-old question of whether lime gourds belong with containers or personal accessories, whether such categories are appropriate, and in what sequence the lists should be organized. I am of the opinion that it is best to use the simplest and most commonly used categories so that even if the user dislikes them he is at least familiar with them. We will of course include a key to, and an explanation of, the sequence we choose.

Problems and questions

Australia's experience in detailed recording highlights a number of problems and questions which I think other nations should consider before embarking upon similar projects. The most important is what sort of results are being sought from the project. Ours is a low-cost programme, designed to produce comprehensive listings of Australian holdings. It could well be used by other nations to produce results compatible with ours which could then be combined in some form of computer data bank. The *quality* of the information recorded by other nations using our programme could be considerably enhanced if there were enough finance to pay one very well-qualified person to do all the recording. Moreover, the more finance, the more the time that can

be spent recording each artefact and the better the overall results become.

Other countries may decide, however, that the appropriate way of building on the preliminary inventory is not with comprehensive listings, but with programmes to identify and document significant material. Consideration should perhaps be given to the alternative proposal described at the beginning of this article. In this scheme visiting fellowships would be awarded to the nominees of island museums to document collections from their culture area. The results produced in this way would perhaps be of more benefit to the islanders and to the various holding institutions, but not so much to others. It might be, again, that such a scheme really constitutes a 'Phase 3'.

The Australian experience of detailed recording suggests that collection surveys, particularly those which seek to be comprehensive, should not set their sights too high. They cannot, and really should not, do the work which is properly that of the holding institutions. They cannot impose order on the decades of individuality that most museum registers represent—as an attempt to standardize nomenclature might do. Nor can they thoroughly document every artefact. They can stimulate others to do so, however, and in a 'Phase 3' form could be designed to be the vehicle through which some of this documentation could take place.

The Australian experience has also demonstrated the immense value of the project as a whole. In making available information about the existence of Oceanic collections, they render those collections accessible to the islanders and for research and, not least, reveal to museums the treasures they hold.

Gable ornament, Tauranga, New Zealand. Acquired by the National Museum of Victoria in 1951.
[*Photo:*© National Museum of Victoria.]

Meeting to Discuss Surveys of Pacific Cultural Property in Museums around the World

The last decade or so has seen a movement to inventory collections of Oceanic cultural property held in museums around the world. Three preliminary inventories have now been published, *Survey of Oceanian Collections in Museums in the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic* (1979), *Oceanic Cultural Property in Australia* (1980), and *Pacific Cultural Material in New Zealand Museums* (1982). Peter Gathercole, who undertook the United Kingdom survey, convened a meeting at the Fifteenth Pacific Science Congress in Dunedin, in February 1983, to discuss the progress of this inventory project internationally. The meeting was attended by twenty people from nine countries and territories, (New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, French Polynesia, Malaysia and the USSR). It was chaired by Wendy Harsant of the Otago Museum, New Zealand and by Peter Gathercole.

Discussion began with accounts of work undertaken to date. Speaking about the British project, Peter Gathercole intimated that further work may be carried out on the data in the British report to make it more useful. Roger Neich, of the National Museum of New Zealand, distributed a sheet which supplements the New Zealand publication and which summarizes each New Zealand museum's holdings. Roger Neich said that the New Zealand preliminary inventory probably represented the extent of New Zealand's participation in the project. It appears that for various reasons there is little support in some New Zealand museums for a more detailed survey.

Adrienne Kaeppler spoke about her survey of the collections in the United States and Canada. Since funding for this project proved difficult to obtain, the work was carried out largely by mail, a method fraught with several well-recognized problems. The results of this project are presently being collated with assistance from Unesco and will be published in the near future.

Peter Gathercole reported on projects being carried out elsewhere. A survey of ethnographic collections in Switzerland was published in *Helvetia* in 1980. Jean Guiart, of the Musée de

l'Homme in Paris, is about to begin a Unesco-assisted survey of collections in France. There is interest in the USSR in carrying out a study of Pacific collections held there.

Henry Isa of the Solomon Islands Museum, Geoffrey Mosuwadoga of the National Museum and Art Gallery, Papua New Guinea, and Anne Lavondès of the Musée de Tahiti et des Îles, French Polynesia, all spoke about the needs of island museums. Anne Lavondès spoke of the importance of the restitution of information and of the value of loans and exchanges of artefacts. Henry Isa and Geoffrey Mosuwadoga emphasized in particular the need for on-site training for their staff. There was some inconclusive discussion about the question of the repatriation of artefacts.

The second half of meeting began with the account of Phase 2 of the Australian project published in these pages. This was followed by a wide-ranging discussion which eventually produced the statement on the development of the surveys published below.

The meeting was valuable in several ways. In the first place it facilitated an exchange of information and ideas about the projects. Anne Lavondès, for example, made some very helpful (and encouraging) comments on the usefulness to her museum of the Australian Phase 2 results. Furthermore, in formalizing itself to the extent of producing a statement and appointing Peter Gathercole co-ordinator of the project internationally, the meeting produced a lever to encourage non-participating nations to undertake such projects, and established a focus for future work. The meeting did not attempt to impose any consistency of format upon the various projects. While such consistency would obviously be very valuable, the enormous differences in the various situations in which the surveys are carried out was tacitly recognized, as was the difficulty of drawing up any such parameters. Whatever the form in which they are presented, the value of the surveys is indubitable.

Lissant Bolton

Statement on the Development of Worldwide Inventories of Anthropological and Archaeological Collections Derived from Oceania

This meeting of curators and museum anthropologists from nine countries, convened at the Fifteenth Pacific Science Congress, Dunedin, on 8 February 1983, welcomes the steps already taken, or planned, in several countries, to compile inventories of anthropological and archaeological collections from Oceania. At the present time there is an urgent need to make available, to scholars and Pacific peoples alike, information concerning the location, content and documentation of these collections, in order to promote international co-operation on their proper care, enlargement and study. Our meeting has considered ways in which the compilation of inventories can be extended and deepened. We have noted that levels of work vary enormously in different countries. In some, detailed lists have been, or are being, prepared. In others, initial surveys have been completed, while in some countries no work is so far contemplated. These variations, reflecting differing museological conditions, are not necessarily a disadvantage in the development of inventories worldwide, nor do we feel it obligatory to suggest specific guidelines (e.g. concerning terminology, indicating how they should be compiled), although certain guidelines would be valuable. Advances in the technology of information storage and retrieval mean that it will soon be possible to computerize data for international usage, should that priority be given to the compilation and dissemination of basic information concerning Oceanic collections, so that as a minimum it is known where they are and what they comprise.

To this end we propose the following:

1. That all museums holding relevant collections be encouraged to co-operate in carrying through appropriate inventory programmes on a national basis.
2. That museum and university colleagues engaged in, or planning, inventories of Oceanic collections should be encouraged to send reports on progress to the *Pacific Arts Newsletter.*
3. That a full report on this meeting be published in a future issue of the *Pacific Arts Newsletter.*
4. That appropriate steps be taken to inform the Scientific Committee on Museums in Pacific Research of the Pacific Science Association concerning our discussions and proposals, and to seek its overall support.
5. That progress be reviewed at future Pacific Science Congresses, or other suitable venues, as required.
6. That for the time being, Mr Peter Gathercole, of Darwin College, Cambridge, United Kingdom, be appointed Convenor, for purposes of exchanging information and facilitating outside support for the development of this work on an international basis.

Peter Gathercole,
Convenor

OPINIONS

Peter Gathercole

Born at Tilney St Lawrence, Norfolk, England, in 1929. Head of the Department of Anthropology, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand, 1958-68. Lecturer in ethnology, University of Oxford, 1968-70. Curator of the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 1970-81. At present Dean of Darwin College, Cambridge. Has a long-standing research interest in the Pacific region. Co-ordinator of the newly formed ICME working group on inventories of ethnographic collections. Author (with Alison Clarke) of the *Survey of Oceanian Collections in Museums in the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic*, Paris, Unesco, 1979.

The need for ethnographic inventories

It is depressing that one has to write in a museum publication today about the need for museum workers to produce records (yes—records! lists! inventories!) of collections. But, as far as archaeology and ethnography are concerned, this is still the case. What other profession concerned with the care and conservation of the past would allow itself to remain in such a state of disorganization that, for these subjects at least, it is still unable to declare what is to be found in all our museums worldwide? The position (essentially one of ignorance) would be comic were it not a sad indictment of the profession itself. The best of the world's pieces are of course recorded, no matter where they may be held—even the most narrow-minded and élitist scholars have seen to that (for the real culprits are those Western scholars who, by training and precept, have held the view that only the 'best' pieces matter and need be known only by the *cognoscenti*). But what is still missing is a general approach by all responsible authorities that will ensure that each country produces, at least as a start, an outline checklist of what its museums possess. Where this is not done, the implication is that the country does not know what it has, and is not bothered enough to want to find out. Now is the time for this implication to be confirmed or denied!

On the brighter side, in numerous countries much has been done to improve the amount and quality of records—both individual museum accession lists, and national inventories. Switzerland, Sweden, Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States are cases in point. Slowly, a more responsible attitude on the part of museum officials is seeping through—a reflection, I think, of the growth of a broader-based, more tolerant and less élitist scholarship, which is aware of the growing demand, and case, for the return of objects, and of the need to respond to it in one way or another. It is naturally the case that such pressures are felt mainly in Western Europe and North America where the inventorying movement is strongest. (What is happening, incidentally, in the countries of Eastern Europe?)

Much remains to be done. The level and incidence of worldwide inventorying is very uneven, and one of the current problems is how to rectify this. There is not enough money, time or labour power to go round. Recently, for example, New Zealand museum workers compiled an excellent list of Pacific collections in their country's museums.[1] But they excluded the Maori collections, because they had no resources to deal with such a large and unevenly organized amount of material, and at least New Zealand scholars could get to most of it. So now, for instance we know what the Rotorua Museum has from Fiji, but not from Rotorua! We've all had that sort of problem.

What basic information needs to be recorded? The preceding important article by Lissant Bolton sets out one group of fundamental categories, no more—an irreducible core, one might say—which should be established in the first instance. But when it comes to the crunch one records whatever one can, given the history of the collection, and time and other resources available. Other, more sophisticated steps logically follow, but it is all so much applied common sense. Frankly speaking, one does what one can, when one can, how one can.

We need to have a movement, a conscious programme, followed—however loosely and unevenly—by museum workers of ethnography worldwide. At the recent General Conference of ICOM in London (25 July to 2 August 1983), the International Committee for Museums of Ethnography (ICME) set up a Working Group on inventories. It established an initial simple programme for the next three years which can be summarized as follows:

1. Set up a basic data bank on current activity,
2. Give immediate attention to the question: 'What basic data do we need?'
3. Determine guidelines for computerization, on agreed international lines,
4. Hold a meeting in late 1984 or early 1985 to review progress.

This is a very simple beginning. I am confident that during the next decade we shall have basic inventories from most countries, at least in ethnography. Am I being too optimistic?

1. Roger Neich, *A Preliminary Survey of Pacific Islands Cultural Material in New Zealand Museums*, Wellington, New Zealand National Commission for Unesco/Art Galleries and Museums Association of New Zealand, 1982.

The case for the return of the Parthenon Marbles

Robert Browning

Born in 1914 in Glasgow. Educated at Glasgow University and Balliol College, Oxford. Honours degree in classics, 1939. Lecturer and reader in Greek and Latin at University College, London, 1947-65. Professor of Classics, Birkbeck College, London, 1965-81; Professor Emeritus. Has published *Mediaeval and Modern Greek*, 1969; *Justinian and Theodora*, 1971; *Byzantium and Bulgaria*, 1976; *The Emperor Julian*, 1976; *Studies in Byzantine History and Education*, 1977; *The Byzantine Empire*, 1980.

When in 448 B.C. the Athenian assembly voted to rebuild the temple of Athena on the Acropolis which had been destroyed by the Persians thirty-two years earlier, the significance of their decision was clear to all. After the Persian wars the Greek cities had agreed not to rebuild their ruined temples, but to leave them as a memorial to those who had fallen. But by 448 the people of Athens were looking with confidence and pride to the future, rather than brooding over the past. Aeschylus was already dead. Sophocles and Euripides were at the height of their powers, Socrates was a young man, Aristophanes and Thucydides boys. The Athens of Pericles was the intellectual and artistic powerhouse of the Greek world, to which thinkers, artists and writers from all over Greece came to seek inspiration and to inspire others. Herodotus of Halicarnassus, Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, Protagoras of Abdera, Parmenides and Zeno of Elea in Italy, Hippias of Elis among the writers and philosophers, Polygnotus of Thasos, Polycletus of Argos, Agoracritus of Paros, among the artists, all spent years in Athens and many were personal friends of Pericles. This, too, was the society which first explored the implications of democracy. The funeral oration which Thucydides put in the mouth of Pericles reflects the optimism, the combination of equality with excellence and the sense of achievement of one of the great ages of human history.

The construction of the Parthenon was planned and supervised by Phidias and Ictinus, the greatest sculptor and the greatest architect of Athens. The whole work took sixteen years to complete. Immensely satisfying in its proportions, dignified in its plain Doric style, the building shows an extraordinary understanding of the principles of visual perception and how to compensate for its errors. Nothing is as simple as it looks. The sculptures are an integral part of the building, not decorations attached after it was completed. They comprise a great pediment at either end, ninety-two metopes (thirty-two on each side, fourteen on each end), and a frieze 160 metres long running round the outside of the cell wall. The pediments depict the birth of Athena and her contest with Poseidon for the land of Attica, the metopes show scenes from Greek Mythology and legend of particular Athenian interest, such as the exploits of Theseus, and the frieze represents the procession to the temple at the Panathenaic festival. The iconographic programme was conceived by Phidias, who also made the great gold and ivory cult statue of the goddess 12 metres high.

Opponents of Pericles and his policy accused him of bedecking the city like a courtesan and of spending the money of Athens' allies on useless show. It was these same groups who, during the Peloponnesian War, twice succeeded in overthrowing for a time the democratic constitution of Athens.

Phidias and Ictinus built well. The Parthenon remained in use as a temple for 900 years. It was already one of the 'sights' of Athens when Pausanias wrote his tourist guide in the second century A.D. Some time in the fifth century it was closed, as part of the general closure of pagan temples, and a little later, like the temple of Diana in Syracuse, it was converted for use as a Christian church. The conversion involved some minor internal additions, but no structural change. It was probably at this time that a few of the sculptures were defaced by radical Christians; but there was no general defacement. In 1204 the Latin conquerors took over the Parthenon for a Catholic church and sometime during the two-and-a-half centuries of Latin rule a small steeple was erected over the west end. In 1456 Athens was captured by the Ottoman Turks, who installed a garrison on the Acropolis. Two years later, Sultan Mehmed II visited Athens and spent four days visiting the Acropolis and the lower city and admiring the monuments. Some sources say that he ordered the conversion of the Parthenon to a mosque at this time. A small mosque was certainly built later within the now roofless temple and was still in use in the early nineteenth century. In 1687 the Venetian general and future Doge Francesco Morosini seized and occupied Athens. In the course of the bombardment which preceded the

capture of the city, a cannon-ball hit the Parthenon and caused a powder magazine in or near the building to explode. Extensive damage was caused, especially to the south face. Morosini tried to remove the sculptures from the west pediment but succeeded only in smashing them. Venetians and mercenaries in their service took a few heads and other pieces of sculpture from the debris caused by the explosion. These are now in various European museums.

In 1799 Thomas Bruce, seventh Earl of Elgin, was appointed British Ambassador to the Sublime Porte. Like many noblemen of the period, he was an avid collector of antiquities. Thanks to his official position and to the political conjuncture after the Battle of the Nile, when the Turks depended on Great Britain to protect them from the French, Elgin enjoyed opportunities beyond the wildest dreams of earlier collectors. Between 1801 and 1803 he detached the greater part of the surviving sculptures from the Parthenon and later had them sent to London. His motives, like those of other collectors, seem to have been mixed. At one time, to judge by his letters, he intended to use the sculptures to decorate his new country house in Scotland. Later, in the evidence he gave to a Parliamentary Committee, he spoke of saving the sculptures from the neglect and depredations of Greeks and Turks. To support this version of his activities, he inadvertently misrepresented the order of events. In any case, his motives are irrelevant to the present dispute. What is worth recalling is that authority under which he removed whatever he thought worth taking—the phrase is his own—

The east side of the Parthenon
[*Photo:* Unesco/Dominique Roger.]

from the Parthenon was a firman from the Sultan issued in 1801. The wording is extremely vague. The court officials who drew it up appear to have thought that the Parthenon was decorated with paintings and they added as an afterthought that Elgin might take 'some pieces of stone with inscriptions or figures'. The firman was issued by an occupying power, which was ousted from Greece within less than a generation by a popular uprising. The Greek notables of Athens, who enjoyed some measure of self-rule under Ottoman suzerainty, were neither consulted nor informed. Experts on Muslim law may tell us whether, if the Parthenon comprised a mosque, the Sultan had authority to alienate any part of it. However, the legal doubts concerning Lord Elgin's initial acquisition of the marbles are only of historical interest. Their present position is the result of a decision by the British Parliament in 1816, on the recommendation of a specially appointed Parliamentary Committee, to buy the marbles from Elgin for £35,000 and to present them to the British Museum.

From the beginning, voices were raised in England both to condemn Eglin's action and to urge that the marbles be returned to Greece. Byron in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812) called their removal an act of shameless vandalism and to the end of his life maintained that their proper place was on the Acropolis. Edward Dodwell, the traveller and archaeologist, who was present when the sculptures were taken from the Parthenon, lamented the disastrous lack of judgement and taste which had prompted such an act. Hugh Hammersley, a member of the Parliamentary Committee set up to consider what to do with the marbles, proposed that they be held by the British Museum on trust, to be returned to Athens as soon as Greece attained independence, but failed to persuade his parliamentary colleagues. Later in the nineteenth century men as different in their views as the novelist and poet, Thomas Hardy, Sir Roger Casement, the Irish Nationalist, and Frederic Harrison, Liberal historian, jurist, and editor of the influential *Nineteenth Century,* all wrote in favour of returning the marbles to Greece. In the present century, others have taken up the same cause. Harold Nicolson, diplomat and historian, urged the first Labour government to break with the policy of its predecessors and offer the Parthenon sculptures to Greece. In 1941, during the grimmest days of the Second World War, it was proposed in the House of Commons that when the war ended the marbles should be returned as a tribute to Britain's ally, but the government rejected the proposal as premature. Since then the matter has been raised many times in the Commons or the Lords. The answer of successive governments has been an unyielding refusal even to discuss the marbles. Only Harold Macmillan as Prime Minister admitted that this was a question which might sometime be looked into.

Today the stage of individual protest has been passed. Relations between the great powers and the smaller nations are no longer as one-sided as they were. International organizations are actively concerned with the restitution or return of cultural property. The Greek Government has announced its intention to make a formal request for the return of the marbles. And in the United Kingdom, a British Committee for the Restitution of the Parthenon Marbles has been working since autumn 1982 to spread information and stimulate discussion of the arguments for return.[1]

These arguments are basically two. The first is the argument of integrity. The Parthenon sculptures are not portable antiquities, like an icon or a manuscript. They were not conceived and executed to pass into the possession of a patron or to be bought and sold on the art market. Nor are they a decoration applied externally to a building after it has been completed. They were and are an integral part of the Parthenon, which in its turn is part of the landscape, natural and man-made, in which it is set. It is not merely that the architect and sculptor designed the building together, but that the sculptures are often a part of the structure; thus the metopes were placed in position before the construction of the cornices, which locked them in their place. If the head of a statue is in one museum and the torso in another, the argument for reuniting them is a strong one. How much stronger is the case for reuniting the disjointed parts of this unique building. Had an occupying power authorized the removal of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel to a foreign museum, there would certainly be irresistible pressure for it to be returned to its original setting.

The second argument turns on the concept of cultural property, the claims of which may on occasion override those of juridical property. Cultural property has been defined by the Director-General of Unesco as a people's 'irreplaceable cultural heritage, the most representative works of a culture, which the dispossessed regard as of highest importance, and the absence of which is psychologically most intolerable'. The Intergovernmental Committee for the return or restitution of cultural property speaks of 'objects charged with cultural significance, the loss of which deprives a culture of one of its dimensions'. That the Parthenon has been since the foundation of the Greek state a principal symbol of the cultural identity of the Greek people and of its links with its own past is scarcely in doubt. It is sometimes suggested that this symbolism is recent and factitious and results from the influence of the Western Enlightenment and the Romantic movement. Even if this were wholly true, it would not diminish the force of the argument. Symbols are human inventions and the result of historical processes. Cultural values are not eternal. But in fact the objection is only partially true.

The Parthenon has for most of its long existence enjoyed a very special esteem. When it was built, it was the outward sign of the intellectual and moral optimism of Periclean Athens and of its special status in the Greek world. For Pausanias it was a tourist attraction. Plutarch records the names of its architects 600 years after it was built. For the Neoplatonist philosopher Proclus, it was the temple of Hellenism *par excellence,* and its closure by a Christian emperor filled him with bitter dismay. As a Christian church it possessed a celebrated mosaic of the Virgin believed to be copied from a painting by St Luke. Although Athens was only a provincial town of the Byzantine empire, it was to the Parthenon that the emperor Basil II went in 1018 to give thanks for his decisive victory over the Bulgarians, and perhaps to ask forgiveness for having blinded ninety-nine out of every hundred of his prisoners. In the twelfth century the archbishop Michael Choniates (1182-1204) speaks again and again of its beauty and its grandeur, although the aesthetic principles of Byzantine art must have made it very difficult to appreciate a classical building. King Peter IV of Aragon, titular Duke of Athens in the late fourteenth century, spoke of the Acropolis as 'the greatest jewel of the world and of such worth that all the Kings of Christendom could not make its like'. In 1436 and 1447 Ciriaco d'Ancona, 'the Schliemann of the Renaissance', visited

1. The author is chairman of this committee.

Athens and enthusiastically studied and drew the sculptures of the Parthenon. The Sultan, Mehmed II, admired the Parthenon when he came to Athens in 1458. And it was on the Acropolis that in 1838 the first meeting of the Greek Archaeological Society was held, during which the chairman pointed to the Parthenon and said: 'These stones are more precious than rubies or agates; it is to these stones that we owe our national liberation.' If we must look for continuity of tradition, it is not hard to find.

It remains only to answer briefly the arguments which have been advanced against the return of the marbles to Greece. We are told, quite correctly, that the British Museum is prevented by an Act of Parliament of 1963 from alienating objects in its possession. But what Parliament resolved Parliament can repeal, especially since it was Parliament that originally entrusted the marbles to the British Museum. A proposal to amend the Act is likely to come before the House of Lords during the present session, which will at least lead to an informed debate.[2]

Then we are asked: 'Why take the marbles from one museum only to put them in another? It would be a different matter if they could be replaced on the building.' To Greek ears this is a strange objection, since the main reason why they cannot be so replaced is the damage caused by their removal, as is shown by comparison of drawings made before Elgin's operations and later photographs. The sculptures can be better understood and appreciated in close proximity to their original site, in the same climate and light and with the possibility of moving to and fro between temple and sculptures. The Greek Government has declared its intention to build a new museum at the foot of the Acropolis—a few minutes' walk from the Parthenon—which will have every modern aid to conservation. Whether the sculptures can or should ultimately be replaced, in originals or copies, is a question for the technology and taste of posterity.

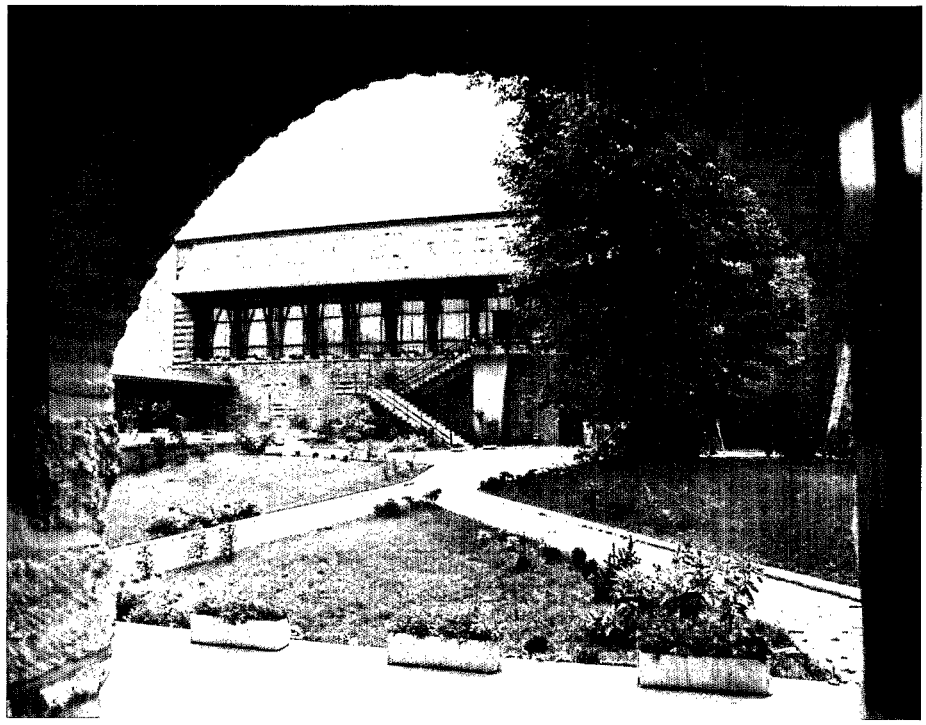
It is often argued that atmospheric pollution is a bar to the return of the marbles. This is rather a case of the pot calling the kettle black. The atmosphere of London was notoriously polluted by smoke until the 1950s and is now heavily affected by the by-products of the internal combustion engine. On a more serious level, it must be said that pollution is a general problem of large cities and essentially a transitory one. It will be solved when it becomes more costly to hospitalize and care for its human victims than to eliminate its sources. In the meantime, much is being done in Athens in general and in the Acropolis area in particular to reduce the level of pollution. Active research on the effects of atmospheric pollution on marble and on means of counteracting them is going on in the Technical University of Athens under the direction of Professor Theodore Skoulikides, an internationally recognized expert in the field, and in collaboration with the Department of Antiquities. If pollution is the reason why the marbles cannot be returned, then an agreement can easily be reached to return them when the pollution is reduced to an agreed level.

Little need be said about the other arguments against the return, such as that they are more accessible in London than in Athens—more accessible to whom?—or that the Greek Government is 'picking on Britain' although parts of the Parthenon sculptures are held in other countries. As for the argument that this is 'the thin end of the wedge' and that if the marbles go, the great museums of the world will be emptied, all one can say is that other countries are already requesting the return of their cultural property and will go on doing so, whether or not the Parthenon marbles are returned to Greece, and that Unesco and its organs are working hard to establish national and practical guidelines for this process which will ensure that museums are not emptied.

The case for the return of the Parthenon marbles is a powerful one, which demands serious consideration by all parties concerned. It will not be forgotten or allowed to go by default. A magnanimous recognition by the British Government of the justice of the Greek request would cement the long-standing friendship between two old allies and provide an example for the rest of the world.

2. The 1983 session is referred to here, since this article was written in August 1983.

MUSEUM NOTES



TÜRK VE ISLAM ESERLERI MÜZESI, Istanbul. The courtyard of the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, with the ceremonial hall (*divanhane*) and the ethnographical section beneath.
[*Photo:* Ara Güler.]

The Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts: rebirth of a sixteenth-century palace

Nazan Tapan Ölçer

Born in Istanbul in 1942. Degrees in ethnology, history and oriental studies from the University of Munich, 1962-68. Joined the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts in 1972 as Curator for carpets and metalwork. Director since 1978. Lecturer at the Univertsity of Yildiz in Istanbul since 1976. Has conducted research and excavations in different regions of Turkey and has published articles in museology, ethnography and the history of Turkish textiles and carpets.

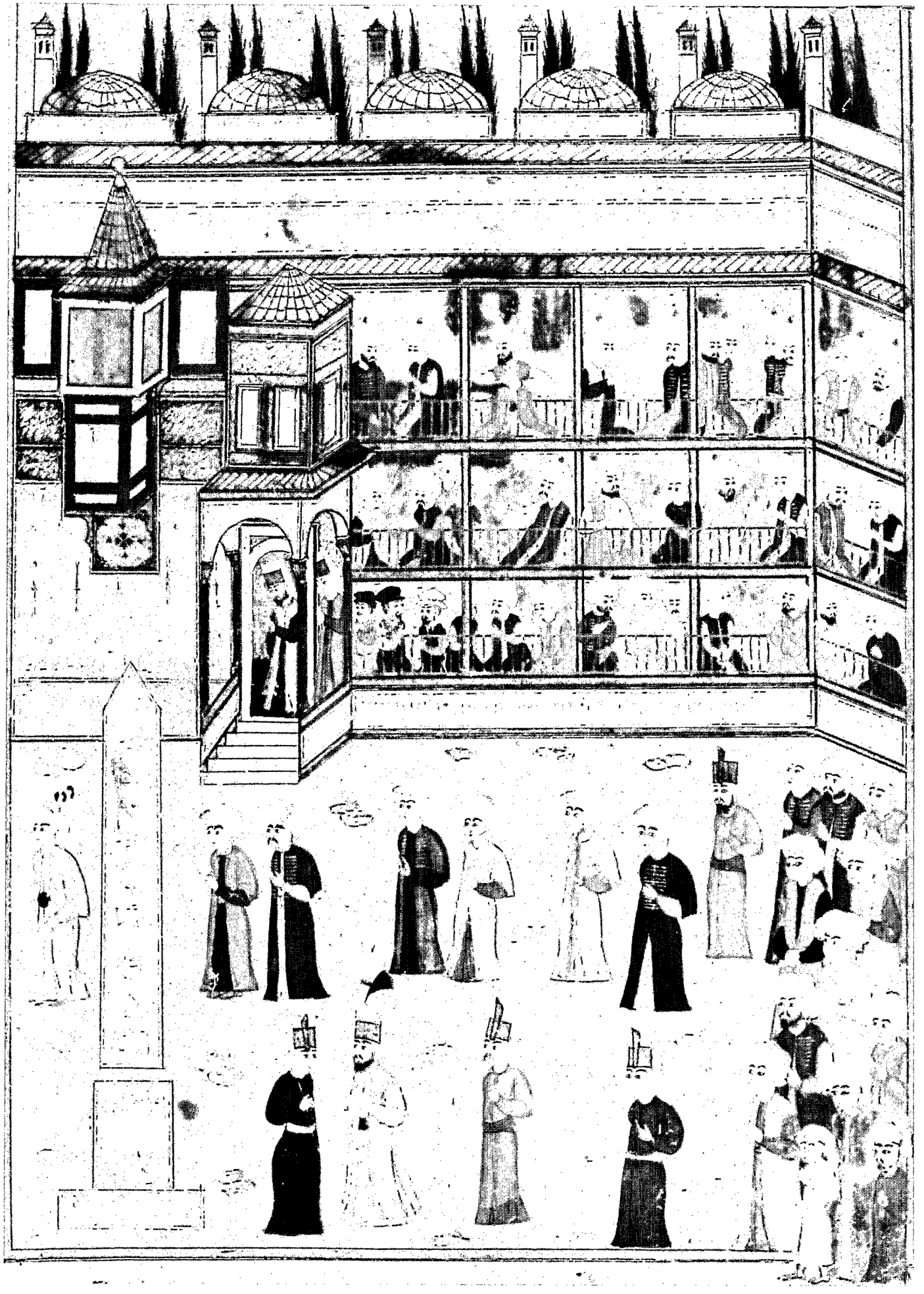
The Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts officially moved to its new home, the Ibrahim Pasha Saray, on the occasion of the opening of the Council of Europe's eighteenth biennial exhibition, *Anatolian Civilizations,* in Istanbul on 22 May 1983. This marked the end of an era for this important collection, housed in the small but attractive *imaret* of the Süleymaniye complex since 1914.

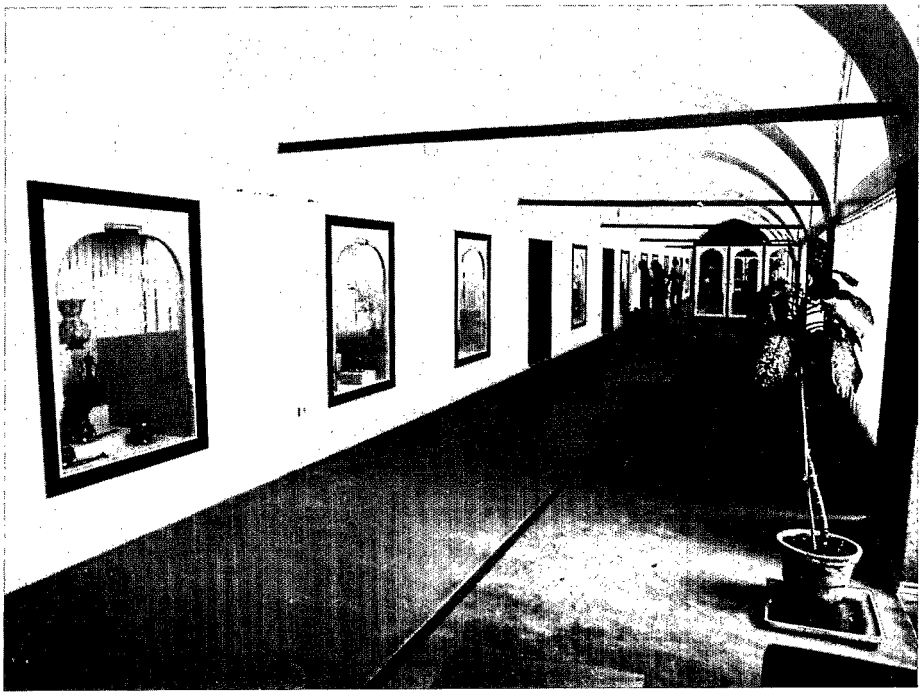
The development of the museum in a sense reflects the history of museums in Turkey. Objects of historical value were first gathered here in 1846, when they were collected and stored in the church of St Irene, a Byzantine structure, and later in the Çinili Kiosk, which dates from the reign of Mehmet the Conqueror.

Between 1892 and 1908, archaeological artefacts were separated from the historical objects and sent to the Museum of Ancient Relics (Asar-i Atika Müzesi). Objects from the Islamic period, many of which came from mosques, were deposited in the Waqf Museum (Evkafi Islamiye Müzesi) in 1914; this became the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts and remained in the same building till 1983. In the meantime its collection grew considerably, with objects acquired from mosques, tombs, monasteries and excavations, including a unique carpet collection. Other important artefacts include early Islamic manuscripts, and important examples of the arts of metalwork, pottery, stonework and wood, dating from the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

As the museum developed, so did the size of the staff. After the formation of the republic, for example, young archaeologists, historians and art historians came to it, as they did to other state institutions. However, if there was one factor

Miniature painting from the Surname manuscript in the Topkapi Museum: the circumcision festivities of Crown Prince Mehmet in 1582. This grand event lasted fifty-two days and nights and was observed by the Sultan (Murad III) from the Ibrahim Pasha Palace, which was also the scene of other public festivities recorded in miniatures and engravings.
[*Photo:* Ara Güler.]





Corridor display area with windows converted into show-cases. [*Photo:* Ara Güler.]

which prevented the museum from growing further, it was its building. Small as it was and housed in a traditional complex (Sülemaniye), it left no room for expansion whatsoever, and gradually became part of the poorer area of the city, surrounded by commercial centres with which it had little in common. The incongruity of its position is obvious from the number of visitors: 14,681 in 1977 and only 9,065 in 1980, whereas in 1981 this figure rose to 14,700 and in 1982 to 18,576. Despite restoration carried out from time to time, and the efforts made to develop new display areas, the problem of space remained unsolved. Thus it was impossible to develop a storage area, modern laboratories, library or workshop.

Palace with a chequered history

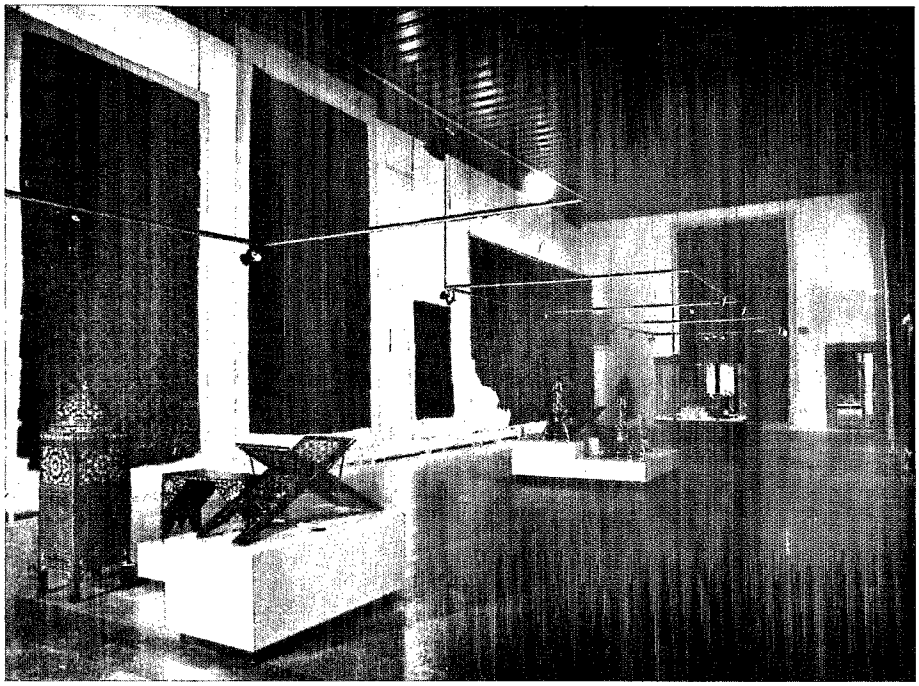
The idea of removing the collection to another building was conceived in the mid-1960s and was brought to the fore by a sudden interest in a historical building on the west flank of one of the oldest squares of the city, the ancient Hippodrome. This was the large Ibrahim Pasha Palace, a sixteenth-century building renowned for its magnificence, documented in a number of sources, and the only one of the viziers' palaces to survive intact to the present day, since it was made of stone, not wood like the others. It was also known to have been in use until the very end of the Ottoman Empire.

The oldest document that mentions the palace is an inscription dated 1520, referring to its repair, which effectively postdates the work, although we do not know exactly for whom or for what it was built. During the reign of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, the palace was given by the Sultan to his favourite vizier, Ibrahim Pasha, who remained in his service for thirteen years.

Subsequently the palace was successively a lodge for a crown prince, a dormitory of the palace trainees, and an administrative building. In an eighteenth-century painting by Jean Baptiste van Moor (now in the Rijksmuseum), in a drawing dated 1710 signed by Cornelius van Loos (now in the Stockholm National Museum) and in an engraving by Melling dated 1812, we see it being used as an administrative building.

The building survived both a number of fires that raged through the city from time to time, and other natural disasters, such as earthquakes. It was used right up to the present century, as a military tailors' centre and a prison—a somewhat ignoble use when we recall its glorious past. Some parts were demolished, a land registry office was set up in the courtyard at one point, and an estates office was built in front of it in 1908.

The palace came under discussion once again during the period 1938-40, when land for a new courthouse was being sought. The battle between those who wanted to preserve it as a historical building and those who wished to pull it down to build a modern courthouse made the headlines at that time. Despite fierce opposition, one part of the palace was demolished and the present



The *divanhane* is used to display sixteenth-century Ottoman carpets, wood and metalwork.
[*Photo:* Ara Güler.]

courthouse built in its place, although the men's quarters and the famous *divanhane,* from which the Sultan overlooked public ceremonies on the Hippodrome below, were saved from destruction. The building owes its restoration as a museum partly to the furore created then.

Restoration began in 1967, on a small scale at first, during which period the land around the palace was appropriated by the state, as were the parts of the palace previously taken over by various administrative functions, and some attempt was made to clear the site. The *divanhane* was revealed to be a gallery with wooden portico-style pillars on one façade, very similar to those we know from miniatures, showing what a keen sense of realism the miniature painters of the time had.

Fifteen years of restoration work under architect Hüsrev Tayla served as a training programme for monument restoration. There were very few documents of the original, so the old building was simply revealed through trial and error. Traces of old doors and partitions appeared like parts of a long-forgotten jigsaw puzzle. The first ten years of restoration were slow, due to lack of funds, and aimed at re-establishing the original structure and finding a way to protect it. In the last five years, the pace of restoration increased considerably, with added co-operation between administrative and technical staff. The entire operation was financed by the Ministry of Culture and cost 359 million Turkish liras (equivalent to almost $1.5 million in October 1983), of which 150 million liras were spent in the last two years of work.

A clearly defined programme

The museum administration in the meantime established the following main aims for the institution in its new location. It was to house a major display of Turkish and Islamic works dating from the eighth to the nineteenth century, in chronological order for the main gallery. Some of the larger pieces in the famous carpet and rug collection would have to be exhibited, as well as the ethnographical collection, which has grown considerably in the last ten years. Suitable modern store-rooms would have to be set aside for the reserve collection, together with office space, a photographic studio, a small artefacts restoration laboratory, a fumigating a room, a carpentry workshop and other technical offices; a carpet-cleaning and repairing laboratory, which is of vital importance to the museum's collection: a comfortable library and reading-room for the use of both museum personnel and visiting researchers; an area suitable for multipurpose temporary exhibitions; a conference room; rest rooms, a café and, finally, a sales area for visitors, with books, postcards and gifts.

One of the matters given special attention was the provision of easy circulation through well-spaced display cabinets and explanatory panels.

Both the curators and the restoration team set out to restore this important historical building determined that its main features were not to be hidden by any permanent display. Thus particular care was taken to achieve a modern display arrangement without affecting the essen-

A view of the storage area's compact rail stacks.
[*Photo:* Ara Güler.]

The ethnographical section: traditional henna room where a bridal ceremony is taking place.
[*Photo:* Ara Güler.]

tial character of the building. Sometimes this meant fewer works were displayed than otherwise might have been; in other places restoration itself was modified to accommodate the exhibition. To aid circulation, cells thought to have been the quarters of palace guards and officials were joined together into groups of three or four rooms, and dividing walls demolished, while the windows in the corridor walls of the cells were converted into show-cases.

This solution allows visitors with a limited amount of time to visit the collection in chronological order by passing down the corridor in front of these cabinets, while those with more time may go in and out of any of the rooms they choose. If there is a shortage of attendants, these rooms can also be sealed off. In the short period of time available for the preparation of the display, this choice of restoration allowed us to close off the rooms and concentrate on laying out the display in the main corridor and window cabinets, and to leave the arrangement of each group of rooms to a later date.

Adapting

While planning the display it was necessary to make a number of modifications to the plan in order to adapt to the ongoing restoration work. For example, the ceiling height of the corridor and rooms mentioned, which were to hold the classical Turkish and Islamic section of the museum's collection, only permitted the display of small rugs, so we were forced to modify the chronological arrangement in placing small rugs only between the cabinets. The world-renowned collection of Seljuk rugs, dating from the thirteenth century, and the fourteenth-, fifteenth- and large sixteenth-century Ottoman rugs are displayed together with wood and metalwork, pottery and early Anatolian carpets known in the West as Holbein and Lotto rugs.

Next to these are the monumental Uşak carpets of the sixteenth century, which are interspersed with well-placed artefacts in cabinets.

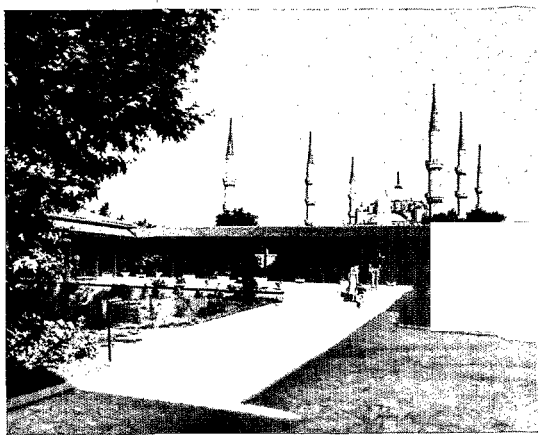
According to the plan, the ethnographical part of the exhibition was to be laid out in the vaulted hall underneath the main ceremonial room. Different ethnographical items were displayed in a number of rooms and alcoves there in a series of realistic reconstructions. These include a room prepared for a circumcision and for a marriage; a display showing the traditional Turkish baths, a very important part of Turkish culture, and

the attendant artworks; and sections showing traditional weaves, costumes and two types of nomad tent, the black goat-hair tent and the round felt tent of the Anatolian nomads. The latter may well be the last surviving examples of these nomadic homes.

To make optimal use of the storage area, compact metal railed stacks were installed. Fumigation laboratories, carpentry, metalwork workshops and other ateliers were installed at the back of the building, overlooking the rear courtyard. At present only the carpentry shop is functioning; the rooms for the other workshops exist but await funds for their proper installation. A photographic studio, binders and restorers' workshop, and the rug-washing laboratory are situated under the exhibit corridor. The rug-repair shop situated next to them is already functioning. In fact the first part of the newly restored building to be actually used was the rug-cleaning laboratory. Rugs that were to be put on display were carefully washed here by a team of experts (under the guidance of Nils Ruters, of the Museum of Islamic Art at Dahlem, Berlin) while the main building was still awaiting completion. The installation was modelled after that of a similar laboratory at the museum at Dahlem. Since there are 1,500 rugs in the museum's collection, we may assume that it is this laboratory which will continue to be the most used part of the restoration workshops.

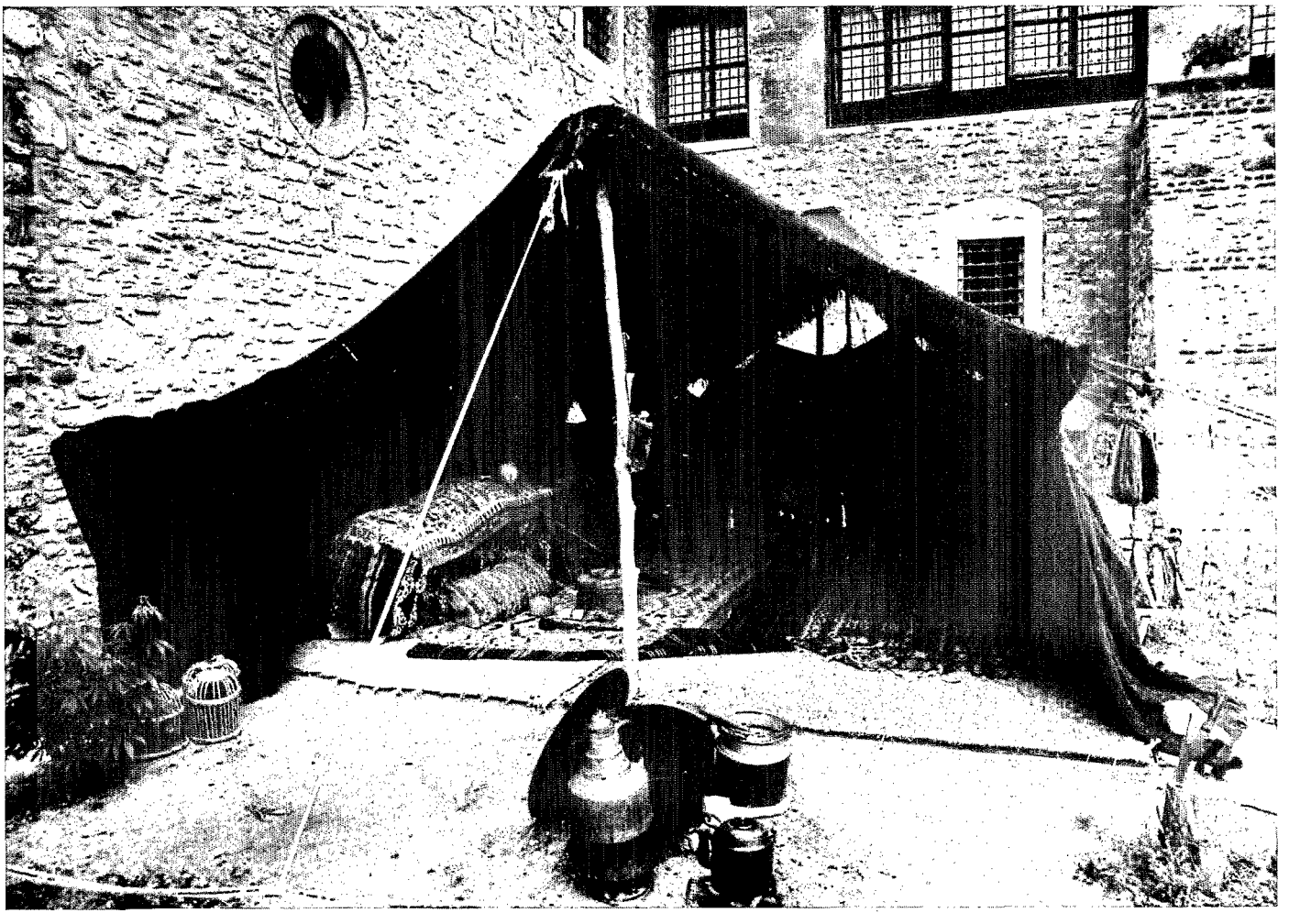
An auditorium has been installed near the entrance. Designed to hold 100 people and equipped with simultaneous interpretation facilities, it is accessible directly from the outside. A bookstall, traditional Turkish coffee-house and other reconstructions of a traditional turkish bazaar are to be found on the same floor, while the broad corridor running in front of this section acts as a temporary exhibition area. The first temporary exhibition, opened just a month after the official inauguration of the museum, was *Treasures of Astronomy,* loaned by the German National Museum in Nuremberg for a period of two months.

During the mounting of the exhibition, we received the help and financial support of a number of private organization, banks and individuals, who contributed to the restoration of the rugs, donated cloth for mounting them, provided materials for the show-cases, for



The courtyard with Sultan Ahmet Mosque (the Blue Mosque) opposite.
[*Photo:* Ara Güler.]

The black goat-hair tent of the Anatolian nomads.
[*Photo:* Ara Güler.]



The temporary exhibition corridor with the *Treasures of Astronomy* exhibition. [*Photo:* Ara Güler.]

carpeting and for the restoration itself. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany provided frames for mounting the rugs, conservation material for use in the rug laboratories and a number of dehumidifiers. Apart from these items, all other materials in the museum were obtained from local sources, and efforts were made to remain within the limit of locally available materials. The main aim here was to assure that materials would be replaceable at all times from local sources. The lighting system, in particular, which consists of adjustable lamps on sliding rails, was most successful.

Both the exhibits of classical art and the ethnographical section are well attended. Their explanatory panels in Turkish and English serve not only foreign visitors but Turks as well, reminding them of a number of traditional arts which are on the verge of disappearing. For the month of June alone, 10,970 people visited the museum, almost as many as the annual figure of the previous years. If we have to remind visitors that it is time to leave every evening as they sit in the traditional coffee house where tea and coffee are brewed over charcoal, where forgotten sherberts are drunk and from time to time old songs are played on the ancient gramophone, it is a sign of the success of this new museum.

The Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts is at present trying to settle into its new home, although we sometimes remember that small tranquil courtyard of the old museum with some sadness. But we accept that any forward-looking enterprise must involve nostalgia of this kind. Are there no minuses? Certainly the museum still lacks many things, and there is much to be criticized. In the first place, the long series of steps tends to be tiring for the old and handicapped, or for small children, but unfortunately the structure of the building does not allow for a ramp or lift to be constructed there. It is only possible to pass through the upper floor by crossing the garden of the museum, and the upper rooms are all connected to one another via the single entrance. This causes circulation problems.

We hope, however, that these faults will be overlooked in view of the fact that a new museum has been created in one of Istanbul's historical areas, on a spot that has witnessed the passage of so many different cultures, and now stands proudly opposite the great Sultan Ahmet Mosque.

The Albanian Museum of National History

Burhan Çiraku

Born in Vlorë in 1929. Higher studies in history, Tiranë. Assistant Master at the University of Tiranë. Researcher at the Academy of Science, 1979-81. Appointed Director of the Albanian Museum of Natural History in 1981.

The Albanian Museum of National History in Tiranë was opened on 28 October 1981. One of the largest socio-cultural institutions in Albania, it presents the history of the Albanian people over the ages—covering its economic, social, political, ideological, cultural, artistic and international aspects—from the most ancient times to the present. Running through it like a thread is the theme of the Albanian people 'making its way through history, sword in hand'.[1] Sculptures, frescos, murals and other objects help the visitor to understand the efforts of the men and women—including some of the most remarkable personages—who made our history. Apart from this, the museum functions as a scientific research centre for Albanian museology as a whole.

A glance at antiquity

The museum has a total of eleven exhibition rooms. The first two display exhibits from antiquity, indicating the ancient character of Albanian culture and history.

In the first room a chronological presentation enables the visitor to follow step by step the economic and cultural development of the inhabitants of Albania. One of these show-cases contains an excellent collection of prehistoric pottery—the Stone Age painted pottery excavated at Kamnik in the Kolonjet region—and a reproduction of the cave paintings at Lepenicë in the Vlorë region, the oldest yet found in Albania, consisting of eighteen roughly sketched human figures. Further on, another show-case is concerned with Maliq, the largest prehistoric settlement yet excavated in our country, together with objects of archaeological interest found there. The exhibits in other show-cases take us back to the Bronze Age and the establishment of large population groups, with two

1. The terms used by Comrade Enver Hoxha, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Albanian Labour Party.

ALBANIAN MUSEUM OF NATIONAL HISTORY, Tiranë. Antiquity, with a statue of the Illyrian leader Bato.
[*Photo:* Albanian Museum of National History.]

names which hold the attention of the visitor: the Pelasgians and the Illyrians.[2] The last two cases contain objects dating from the Iron Age and the years 1100-500 B.C., the consolidation period of the Illyrian ethnic group. Those characteristics appear better than anywhere else in the objects found in the tumuli discovered in the middle valley of the Mat. The female ornaments and the weapons found in these tombs indicate that the Illyrian inhabitants of this region were skilful workers and no mean artists. The ornaments and pottery from the tumuli of south-east Albania are also of great interest and include Devollite painted pottery—so called after its main centre in the valley of the upper Devoll, settled by Illyrian tribes from the Dassaretes.

In the second room concerned with antiquity are exhibited objects from regions of southern Illyria dating back to the fourth and third centuries B.C., a period that saw the development of a series of Greek cities, the establishment of a system of government based on slavery, and the constitution of the Illyrian states. The cases in this room offer the visitor a picture of these urban cultures in no way inferior to the other Mediterranean cultures of antiquity. Here can be discovered the two great coastal cities, Dyrrah and Apollonia, gradually brought back to life by the excavations which are slowly unearthing their structure. Among the fragments of this structure, mention should be made of a group of terracotta statuettes found in a shrine of Aphrodite which stood on one of the hills of Durrës 2,200 years ago, and some bronze figures found in the city of Amantia (Ploçe, in the Vlorë region) around its stadium. A special space is reserved for tools illustrating the development of crafts and agriculture. The silver and bronze coins struck for the Illyrian chiefs Ounoun and Gent, from the cities of Shkodër, Lis, Amantia, Bylis, Dyrrah and Apollonia, and dating from the middle of the fifth century B.C., are evidence of a vigorous economy. On each side of the show-case are original reliefs from the same period. A special place is reserved for the god of Butrint, one of the finest sculptures of the period, which its finder called the goddess of Butrint but which later research appears to identify as a head of Apollo. On the floor alongside the 'goddess' is a multicoloured mosaic, also representing a woman's head and dating from the end of the fourth or the beginning of the third century. It is a rare specimen of an assemblage of river pebbles, known as the 'beauty of Durrës' The woman's face is not the only part of the mosaic to capture the attention of the visitor, who is also struck by the composition, the harmony of the ornamentation, the beauty of the flowers surrounding the head and the fascinating colours, all of which suggest that this is the work of a great master, a fine work of art worthy of a great city.

In this same area can be seen a head of Artemis, various tombstones and other objects found at Dyrrah, vases decorated with red figures, the mausoleum of a prince with a rich collection of objects, a view of the Illyrian city of Lower Selce and busts of the Illyrian kings Pyrrhus, Teuta and Gent, who fought against the Romans. Looking at these archaeolgoical exhibits, at the commentaries supplied by experts on antiquity and the accounts of famous uprisings (the revolt at Bato from A.D. 6 to 9), the visitor can imagine the resistance offered by the Illyrians to the Roman occupiers. This armed and cultural resistance continued until the fourth century, the period when the Albanian people began to emerge in southern Illyria.

Finally, there are exhibits in this room

One of the rooms in the Antiquity Section. The 'goddess of Butrint' and the 'beauty of Durrës'.
[*Photo:* Albanian Museum of National History.]

2. Pelasgians was the name given by Greek writers to the ancient pre-Hellenic inhabitants of the eastern Mediterranean and Aegean. Illyria was the name given in Antiquity to the northern part of the Balkan coast of the Adriatic and included Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and present-day Albania.—Ed.

Fragment of a fifth-to-sixth-century mosaic from Shales in the Mesaplik Vlorë region. [*Photo:* Albanian Museum of National History.]

dating from the period of late antiquity, from the fourth to the seventh century, when one 'barbarian' horde after another poured into the Illyrian region, but came and went without affecting the aboriginal people, who had by then reached a certain stage of development. The original Koman culture which developed among this population within the confines of the Byzantine empire, is also of great scientific interest.

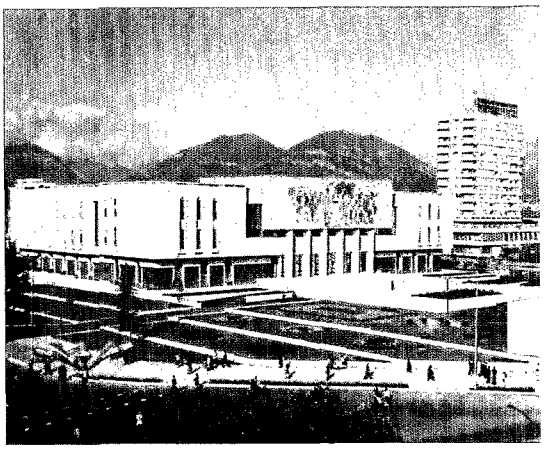
The Middle Ages, an important period

The next two rooms are concerned with the period from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century, an important period in the history of the Albanian people, during which, despite the obstacle of foreign occupations (Byzantine, Angevin, Serbian, etc.), it continued to advance along the road it had traced for itself in the preceding centuries, asserting to the full its own distinctive characteristics in every field of economic, social, political and cultural development.

This general advance was marked by the development of agriculture in the plains of Kosovo, Shkodër, Lezhë, Elbasan, Tiranë, Korcë, Delvinë and particularly Myzeqe, where wheat was grown, a great deal of it for export; by the growth of towns which, starting as administrative and military centres, became craft and trade centres; and by trading activities inside and outside the country. Evidence of this progress is shown by the coins of Albanian princedoms and also foreign coins (Byzantine, Venetian, Serbian, French, etc.) exhibited in a separate show-case. The development of the country is also illustrated by the large number of works of art and architecture created under Byzantium, e.g. the citadels of Berat, Shkodër, Prizren, Durrës, etc., and many churches. The high level attained by the arts can be seen, for example, in the epitaph of Gllavenio, carved in 1373 by the Albanian artist Kusulilovari Arianit and one of the most remarkable works of this period, not so much because of the subject as because of its masterly workmanship.

This same period spans the history of the state of Arberie, the first independent Albanian feudal state, which was established in about 1190 and lasted until 1266. The creation of the Albanian feudal states reached a peak in the second half of the fourteenth century with the establishment of the Albanian princedoms of Balsha, Topia, Zenevis and Shpataj, with their respective capitals Shkodër, Durrës, Gjirokastër and Arta. The coats of arms of these princedoms are exhibited in the museum.

The general progress of the Albanian people during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was retarded to some extent by the Ottoman invasion. From sketch maps the visitor can see how the Albanian forces took part in the first battles waged on Balkan soil, in particular the battle of Marica in Epirus and the fighting in Macedonia. The Albanians were the most numerous and most active group of fighters in the great battle of the Kosovo plain, where as part of the anti-Ottoman coalition of the Balkan and Central European peoples, they fought heroically to defend their native lands and to halt and break the Ottoman onslaught.



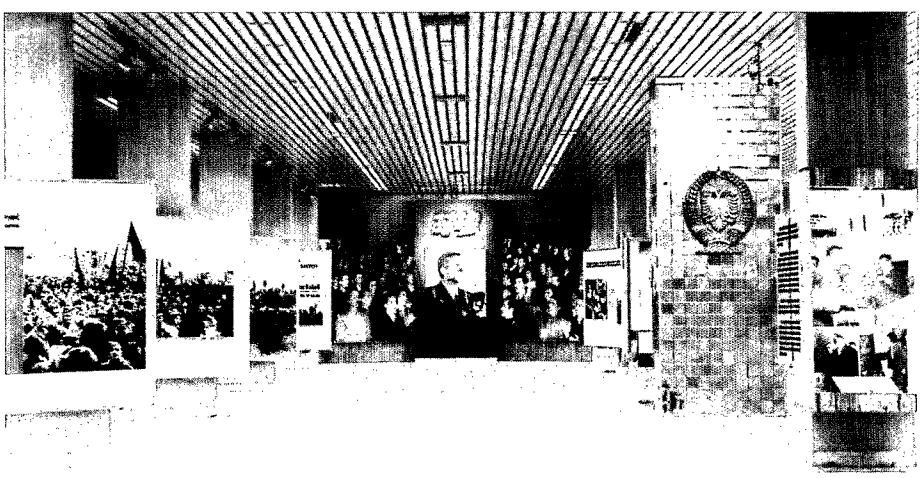
General view of the museum building. [*Photo:* Albanian Museum of National History.]

Medieval history, with the national hero Skanderbeg in the centre.
[*Photo:* Albanian Museum of National History.]

The stugggle of the Albanian people against Ottoman domination became extremely fierce in the fifteenth century under the leadership of Skanderbeg, when it was sorely tried in defending itself and the whole of European civilization against the threat posed by the Ottoman invasion. The display includes various objects and documents, together with weapons and prints depicting the highlights of the political and military activity of the Albanian people under the leadership of Skanderbeg. Further on, the visitor can see illustrations of the international relations practised by Skanderbeg's state, in particular with the states of the Apennine peninsula, Venice, the Kingdom of Naples, etc. There are comments on the importance of the Albanian people's struggle under Skanderbeg, in particular the view of the English knight Newport, who wrote in 1456 that Europe was certain to be invaded and that no other force was capable of stopping the invader if the Albanian resistance were to collapse.

Thereafter the visitor can admire a few specimens of some thousand historical, poetic, epic and tragic works in twenty-one languages, dealing with this struggle.

The museum also shows the political, economic and religious pressures exerted by the Ottoman occupier and the way in which the Albanian people through its great revolts succeeded in preserving its national identity. Works such as the icons of Onufri and of David Selenica dating from this little-known age, compel the visitor's admiration. A wealth of documents illustrate the development of the towns and relate the events of the second half of the seventeenth century,



One of the rooms showing the history of the building of socialism.
[*Photo:* Albanian Museum of National History.]

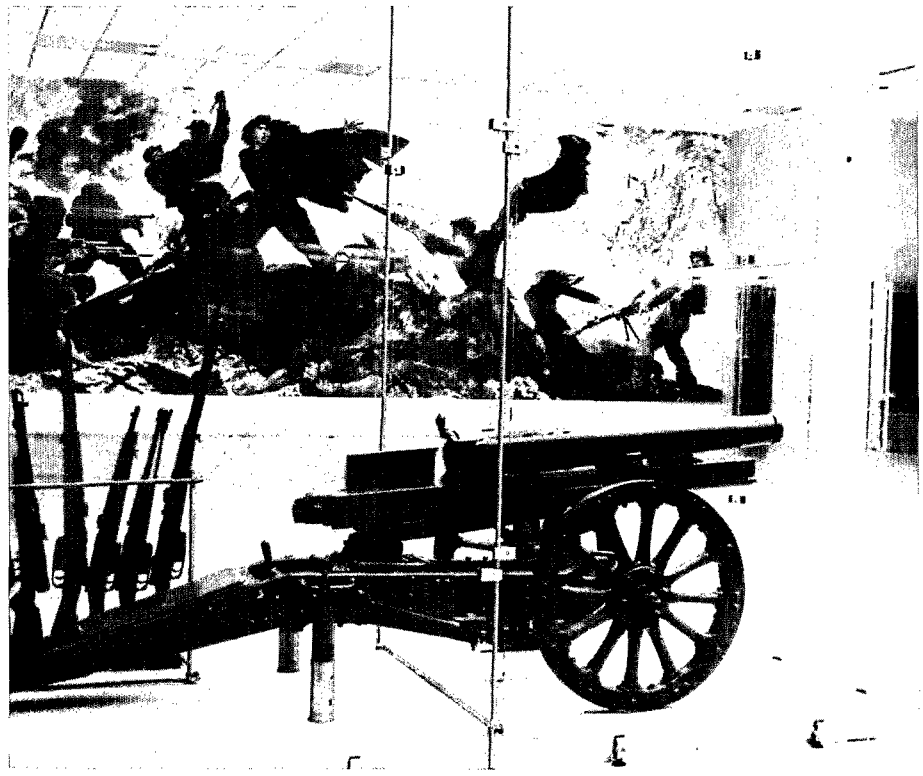
when the Ottoman empire was plunged into a crisis and two great pashalics were established in the region, one in the north at Shkodër by the Bushatli, the other in the south, with its capital at Janina, by Ali Pasha of Tepelenë.

An eventful Renaissance

A very large room in the museum is concerned with illustrating the Renaissance, the period when feudalism broke up and capitalism was born. This room traces the progress of craft industries along the road to capitalism, the strengthening of the Albanian domestic market and its contacts with the European world in the development of popular culture. Here the visitor can learn about the efforts made by the most prominent representatives of the Albanian nation—Naum Veqilharxhi, Jeronim de Rada, Konstandin Kristoforidhi, Thimi Mitko, Zef Jubani, Elena Gjika (Dora d'Istria), etc.—to enlighten minds and spread culture, thereby laying the foundations of the new ideology of national liberation and of the democratic state of Albania. One of the crucial events illustrated in this room is the foundation of the Albanian League of Prizren on 10 June 1878, the first political and military organization of the Albanian people at national level, which aroused the whole population to defend its national rights against the Treaty of San Stefano and the Congress of Berlin.

This event in the struggle for the defence of national unity is also illustrated by a striking symbolical composition: against a background of a large photograph of historic Prizren an eagle appears with weapons in place of feathers and, in the centre, the principal organizers of the League, Abdyl Frasheri, Ymer Prizreni and Sulejman Vokshi. This room contains exhibits concerning aspects of the heroic struggle of the Albanian people for the defence of its territorial and ethnic integrity.

Portraits of leading personages of the Albanian cultural movement, the Frasheri brothers and many others, are assembled here, together with the official record of the Congress of Manastir, which established the alphabet of the Albanian language as it is today. There are objects belonging to patriots who fought with arms or with their pens and sacrificed their lives for Albania. There is a large photograph of the legendary gorge of Kaçanik, which the press seventy years ago described as the Albanian Thermopylae, a gorge of which every stone was soaked in blood for a whole century and which became the tomb of the invaders. In front of the picture of Kaçanik stands the statue of Isa Boletini, one of the most famous heroes of this region, treated so savagely by the Ottoman occupiers and by the Serbs.



The national struggle for liberation. [*Photo:* Albanian Museum of National History.]

The proclamation of independence on 20 November 1912 at Vlorë by Ismail Qemal and his companions is recalled at the end of the visit to this room.

Independence and the Fascist occupation

Another room is reserved for the period 1912 to 1939, also known as the independence period.

The important steps in the story are represented here, namely the activities of the Vlorë national government in the years 1912-14 and its efforts to organize the independent Albanian state and to preserve the country's territorial integrity. One photograph of that time in particular holds the attention: Ismail Qemal, head of the Albanian Government, accompanied by Luigj Gurakuqi and Isa Boletini, setting off for the Conference of Ambassadors in London in order to defend the rights of the Albanian nation. Alongside, a map is displayed indicating the claims of the Vlorë Government regarding the frontiers of the Albanian state, the claims of neighbouring monarchs and the frontiers fixed by the Conference of Ambassadors of the six

great powers of that time, which divided the Albanian people into two, leaving outside the newly created independent state a large part of Albanian territory.

The influence of the October Revolution on the Albanian question is also recorded in this room. Materials, documents, photographs, maps, relief maps, etc. relating to the 1920 congress at Lushnje occupy in this museum the important place due to them. The visitor learns all about this congress, which defended national interests and saved the country from being divided up once more. The armed struggle of the Albanian people against the foreign invaders at Vlorë and in the north is depicted here. A number of weapons dating from that time are exhibited alongside the documents.

Another important event of this period is the democratic movement of 1921-24 and the first democratic government, led by Fan Noli, with its programme and activities. The show-case dealing with the period 1925 to 1930 depicts the economic development of the country in urban centres and the very backward state of the Albanian peasants, but also, through its fight for progress, the struggle of the Albanian people against the feudal violence of the Zog regime, and the activity of anti-Zog organizations in the country and abroad. Pictures and objects recall the workers' and strike movement, and the communist movement, with its first organized groups.

National liberation

Three rooms are concerned with the anti-Fascist struggle for the national liberation of the Albanian people, one of the most glorious pages in its history. This period occupies a central place in the Museum of National History. The resistance of the Albanian people under the Fascist occupation is illustrated by photographs, weapons and articles belonging to the combatants.

Through the many objects displayed in these rooms the visitor can learn about the most striking events in this struggle. Here can be found original documents and photographs of the time of the Peza Conference, which laid the foundations for the political union of the Albanian people in the struggle against Fascism—the first conference at the national level, held in March 1943, which took the decision to mount a general insurrection against the occupier—the battle of the partisans and the reverberations of this struggle outside our country. Many pictures depict the resistance of communists and Albanian patriots in Fascist camps and prisons.

Special stands recall the Përmet Congress of May 1944, which elected the anti-Fascist committee of national liberation with the functions of a provisional democratic people's government. Photographs and documents recall the Berat Meeting, which decided unanimously to establish the anti-Fascist committee as the democratic government of Albania. There is a reproduction of the Declaration of the Rights of Citizens, which guaranteed equality of rights before the law, freedom of assembly, of expression, of association and of the press for all citizens, equal rights for women, etc.

Lastly, the struggle of the Albanian people is recalled in its final battle against its enemies, the liberation of Tiranë on 17 November and of Shkodër and the rest of Albania on 29 November.

A spacious block with three rooms is concerned with depicting by means of documents and photographs the history of the building of socialism: the wounds left by the war; the constituent assembly elections of 2 December 1945 at which the people voted for the first time; and obstruction by reactionary forces both inside and outside the country (e.g. equipment used by subversive agents). In a moving photograph from that time Comrade Enver Hoxha, representing the government which emerged from the struggle, is seen defending the rights of the Albanian people at the Peace Conference in Paris.

This room gives an important place to the first Party Congress which prepared the scientific programme for the construction of the economic basis of socialism that lasted until 1961, when the fourth Congress of the Albanian Labour Party declared that the basis had been achieved. Following that congress, the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth congresses marked the continuation of the building of the socialist society, which is illustrated in the second room. These two rooms also contain models and photographs showing the development of the productive forces in our economy (bridges, hydroelectric power stations, factories and industrial complexes) together with the establishment and growth of new production relations.

The visitor can also follow the socialist transformation of the Albanian countryside from the agrarian reform of 1946 and the establishment of the first co-operatives up to the successful collectivization of agriculture. The path of the cultural development of the country is indicated on display boards, from the first courses for the elimination of illiteracy up to the foundation of the Academy of Sciences, showing the great cultural leap made by our country since the people came to power.

Finally, in the third room large coloured photographs depict various aspects of the socialist life of our country, which will remain imprinted on the memory of visitors to the museum.

[*Translated from French*]

RESTITUTION: COLOMBIA, ECUADOR, PERU

Curator refuses treasure slipped out of Colombia

Linda Ketchum

The author is a freelance journalist in New York City.

The article below first appeared in Stolen Art Alert (Vol. 4, No. 4, June 1983), a bulletin published ten times a year by the International Foundation for Art Research, New York. Its re-publication in Museum *marks the beginning of collaboration between the two journals. Each issue of the* Alert *contains (a) editorial material providing accurate information on legal developments relating to ownership of cultural property, security, prosecutions and convictions, title conflicts, recent recoveries of stolen objects and description of major thefts, and (b) listings of recently stolen objetcs, with illustrations and an index. The* Alert's *sources of information are individuals, museums, dealers' associations, law enforcement agencies, INTERPOL and some national governments. Referring to the latter, Bonnie Burnham, Executive Director of the International Foundation for Art Research, has remarked: 'We have had relatively little success in establishing contact with official cultural property agencies and ministries. I believe that these official bodies would respond much more regularly and positively to our efforts if they were directed through an official international agency, such as Unesco. Not only is there a need for official liaison on the level of psychological acceptance or approval, but from a physical point of view it is very difficult for us to stay in contact with foreign museums and ministries. Most Third World countries, and even many European museums, lack the funds to subscribe to our periodical; we on the other hand find mailing costs to be prohibitive, and cannot sustain many exchanges or complimentary subscriptions. Therefore, the direct international communication that is of paramount importance to us is difficult to maintain, and many of the people who could make the best use of our periodical abroad are unable to receive it.'*

In order to promote that direct international communication Museum *hopes to republish further material from* Stolen Art Alert, *including quarterly listings—a digest—of the most thefts (and recoveries) of cultural objects.*[1]

A careful curator at the San Antonio Museum of Art has thwarted a smuggler's attempt to sell a colonial period monstrance valued at $3 million, which is one of the key cultural monuments of Colombia. Nan Kelker, curator of New World Art for the city's Museum Association, said that when she saw the jewelled gold antique, she immediately deduced it must be hot. 'It had too high a value and too much importance to be on the North American art market,' she said.

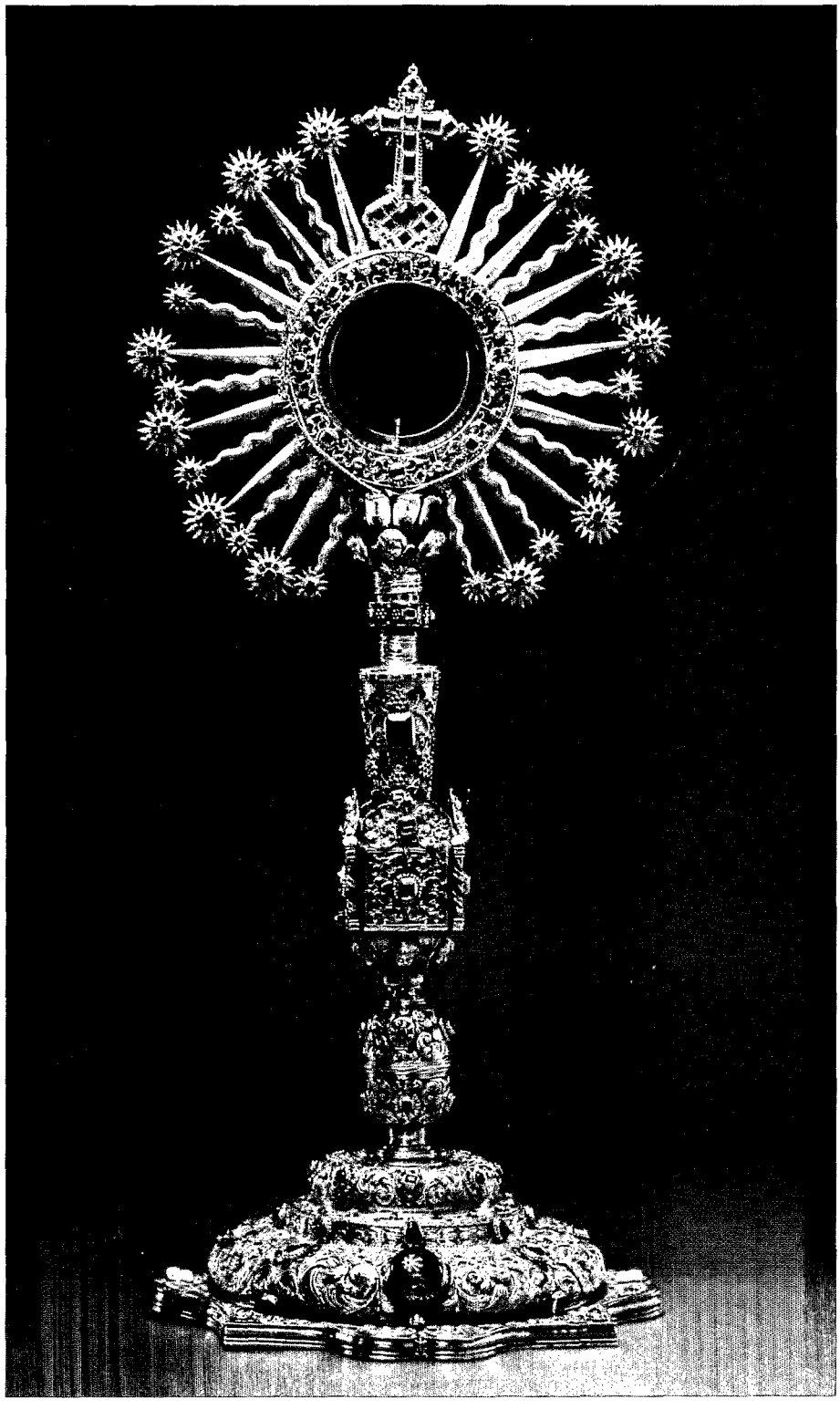
Historical records show that in 1737 the Convent of Santa Clara in the city of Tunja, Colombia, commissioned master goldsmith Don Nicholas de Burgos to create the monstrance. The Spanish monarchy and Tunja residents contributed 813 gold castellanos (coins) and 1,500 jewels including 831 emeralds, 582 pearls, 42 amethysts, 37 diamonds, 6 topazes and 2 rubies. According to the museum, scholars consider this monstrance among the three most important extant art pieces from the Spanish colonial period.

Recently, the convent sold the monstrance, a metre-high gold-carved, jewel-studded liturgical object used to display the host during mass, to a Colombian national. This Colombian antiques dealer then sold the piece to Edouard Uhart, according to the director of the Museo del Oro in Bogotá. Mr Uhart, a Chilean-born

1. We have just been informed that the International Foundation for Art Research has opened an office in Europe (c/o Rouvrex S.A., Avenue Ruchonnet 3, CH-1003 Lausanne). Its New York address is 46 East 70th Street, New York, NY 10021.—Ed.

art dealer with a history of fraudulent activites, paid $95,000. Although these sales were legal, taking the monstrance out of the country was not. According to a 1953 Colombian law, cultural property can be exported only for exhibition at cultural institutions.

Mr Uhart and a San Antonian accomplice called the San Antonio Museum Association's executive director on 28 October 1982. Ms Kelker said that the same people had contacted the museum a year earlier, but at that time no one on the staff specialized in her field. The man proposed a deal that Ms Kelker calls a scam: investors were to put up an amount of money towards purchase totalling less than the monstrance's value, then the dealer would take a tax deduction for donating the difference; the museum was to display the piece for a year and a day, making the investors officially collectors and able to qualify for a tax deduction. The curator asked the men for papers proving that they had legally taken the piece out of Colombia. They showed her only a customs broker's form declaring the monstrance as an antique.



After contacting the Colombian embassy, Ms Kelker learned that the country required a letter from the Museo del Oro, a branch of the Banco de la República, and a permit from Icomex, the international trade agency, for exported cultural property. She wrote to the Museo del Oro's director, Luis Dequet Gomez, to ask whether such papers existed for the monstrance. 'I explained that we were not interested in the piece unless it had been exported legally,' she said. After researching the matter, Mr Duquet found that the dealer had clandestinely removed the antique from Colombia in 1981.

The sellers had a pretty effective argument, conceded Ms Kelker, but they still gave her clues that aroused her suspicions. If the museum did acquire the monstrance, the men advised against national or international publicity. They wanted only the local community to know about the gold and emerald treasure. Also, they advised Ms Kelker not to ask Colombian authorities any questions.

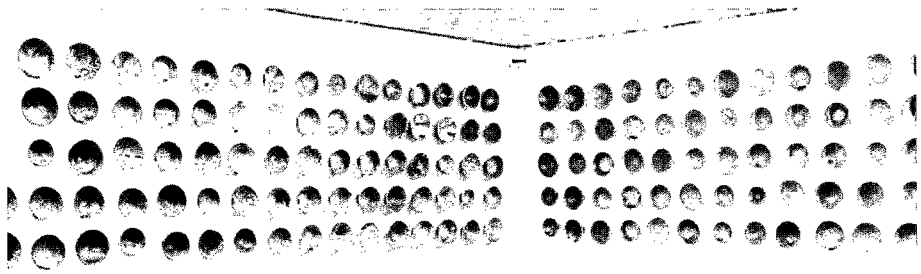
Ms Kelker believes that other museums in the country may not have questioned the monstrance's origin, or would not know what or whom to ask. Unfortunately for the smugglers, Ms Kelker specializes in the art of Colombia.

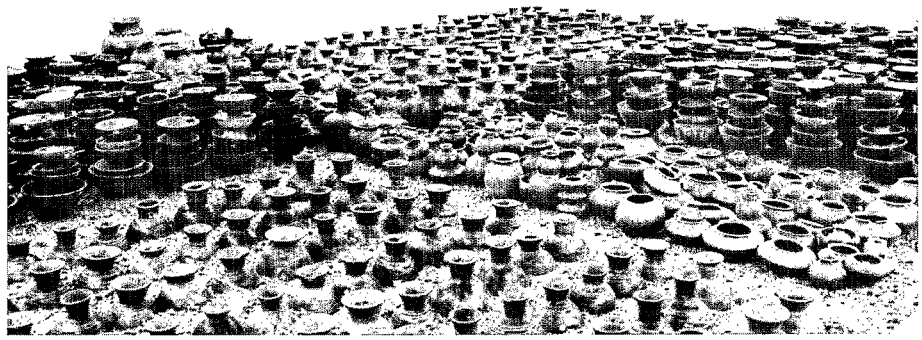
United States Customs seized the monstrance on 21 January 1983, It was later discovered that the object had been brought into the United States in New York City, where the smugglers had falsified customs documents, saying the monstrance came from Spain. Customs agents in New York and San Antonio declined to give details of their criminal investigation until indictments are handed down.

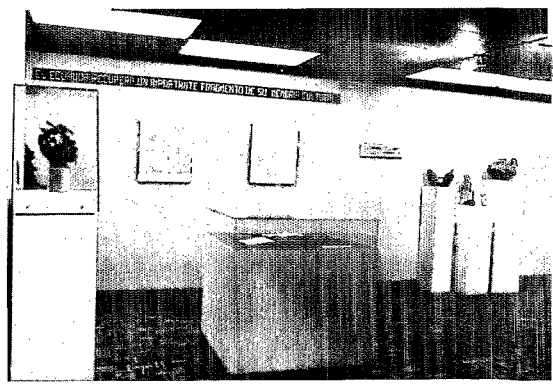
Ecuador Recovers an Important Fragment of its Cultural Memory

An exhibition entitled *El Ecuador recupera un importante fragmento de su memoria cultural (Ecuador Recovers an Important Fragment of its Cultural Memory)* opened on 12 May 1983 at the Museum of the Banco Central in Quito, Ecuador. On display were the archaeological objects whose restitution had been the subject of a long legal battle, fought tenaciously in the Italian courts by the Ecuadorian authorities, described in an article by Rodrigo Pallares Zaldumbide entitled 'Cases for Resti tution' (published in *Museum,* Vol. XXXIV, No. 2, 1982). Thanks to the Turin magistrature's final judgement in January 1983 the collection was restituted to its country of origin in the spring of that year. A special exhibition was immediately organized, so as to explain to Ecuadorians the significance of this restitution and of the need for the people of the country to take part themselves in the protection of their heritage.

Photographs courtesy of the Museo Arqueológico y Galerías de Arte del Banco Central.







Stolen Treasures—Missing Links: an exhibition of art and advocacy

Lee Kimche McGrath

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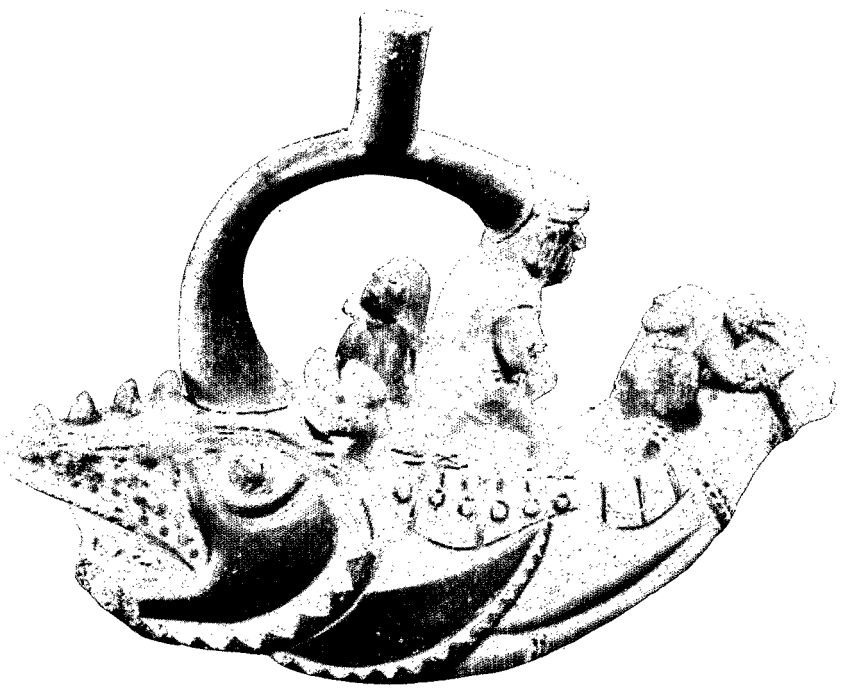
Found on the north coast of Peru and traced to the Moche culture of about A.D. 250, this stirrup-spouted bottle features a mythical hero on a fishing boat, with two captives and animal assistants,. [*Photo:* Victor R. Boswell Jr, courtesy of the National Geographic Society.]



Ever since the late sixteenth century, when Spanish *conquistadores* sold plots on the Gate of the Sun for excavation by treasure-hunters, pre-Columbian gold and works of art have been removed from their resting places and homelands, exported for looters' and dealers' gain. This illegal trade in antiquities deprives the countries of origin of their rightful cultural heritage, not only through the theft of artefacts, but on a basic and more tragic level as well, because the process of clandestine excavation forever destroys the archaeological sites and with them the chance to recreate the fabric of history and the image of a culture.

The problems facing artefact-rich nations of the Third World in their efforts to stem the ransacking of ancient sites are staggering. Moreover, once an artefact is smuggled out of its native land, the victim nation historically has had little legal recourse to reclaim its pillaged treasure. Even though several Third World nations have enacted laws banning or limiting the export of culturally significant objects, or have ratified the Unesco Convention banning the importation of artefacts lacking proper export papers, the co-operation of the art-importing nations is essential. For the most part such co-operation is simply absent. For example, the United States is the only major art-importing country that has ratified the 1970 Convention (with the recent exception of France, whose parliament has authorized the government to do so). But, as the exhibition *Stolen Treasures—Missing Links* graphically illustrates, there is hope.

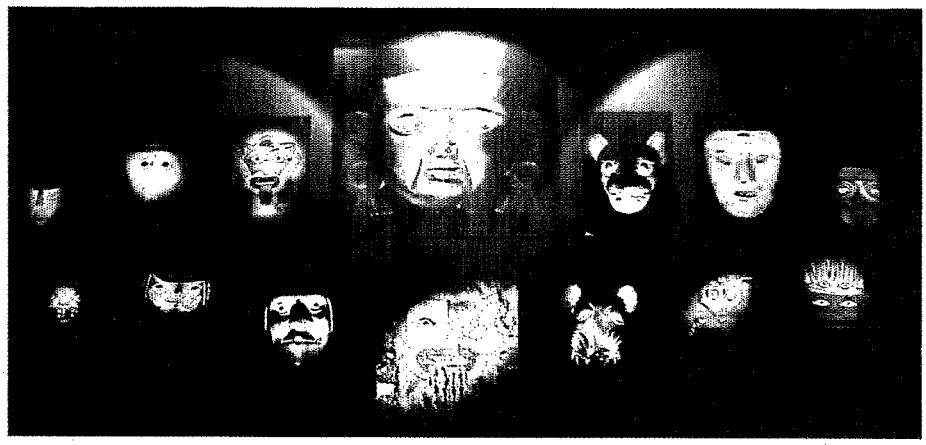
An executive agreement made in 1981 between the Governments of Peru and the United States established a legal means of forestalling the illicit importation of Peruvian works of art. The United States Customs Service, in a landmark case, returned to the Peruvian Government 800 stolen art objects which had been confiscated since 1981 from collectors unable to document their acquisitions. In recognition of this agreement, the Government of Peru, under the auspices of Prime Minister Fernando Schwalb Lopez Aldana, made available to the National Geographic Society for exhibition approximately 500 pre-Columbian objects representing the Chavin, Moche, Nazca, Huari-Tiahuanaco, Chimu, Paracas and Inca cultures. The collection includes a gold death-mask, gold jewellery, pottery and textiles, all of which were confiscated by the United States Customs Service. Beginning in January 1984, the exhibition will travel to eight major American museums, including the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, and the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh.

A fundamental message

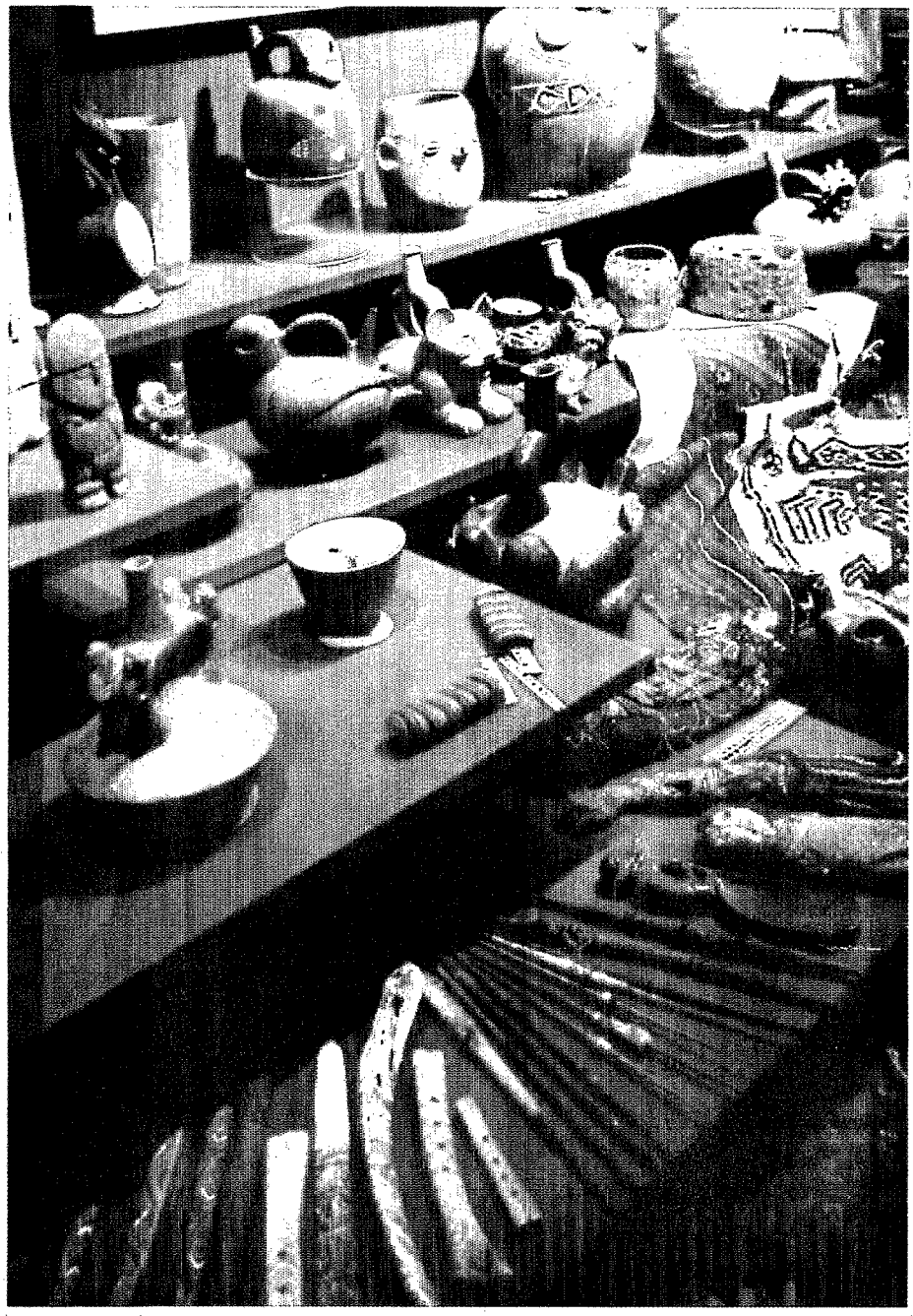
The challenge facing the exhibition's designer, David Sutton, Director of Explorers Hall at the National Geographic Society, was to display this wealth of rare and important archaeological objects, as well as tell their fascinating story. His solution was to incorporate a crucial message into the exhibition: that looters (and by extension, the dealers and collectors who provide the lucrative market) are committing *crimes* against scholarship, archaeology, history, art, and the whole of mankind. The gaps that they create can never be filled, and our knowledge of our ancestors and the past suffers irreparably. By weaving historically and culturally important objects into this message, Sutton illustrates his major points effectively and with dramatic flair.

The exhibition is divided into five mo-

Vicus culture gold mask surrounded by a variety of other masks.
[*Photo:* Courtesy of the National Geographic Society.]

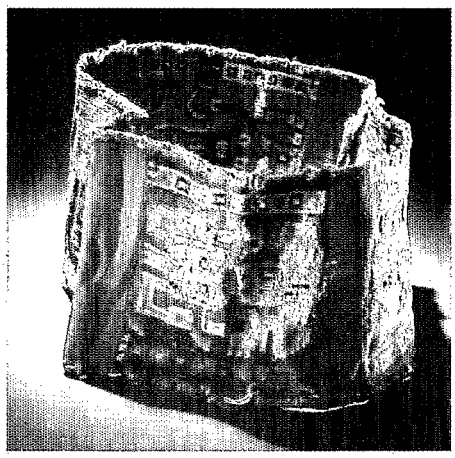


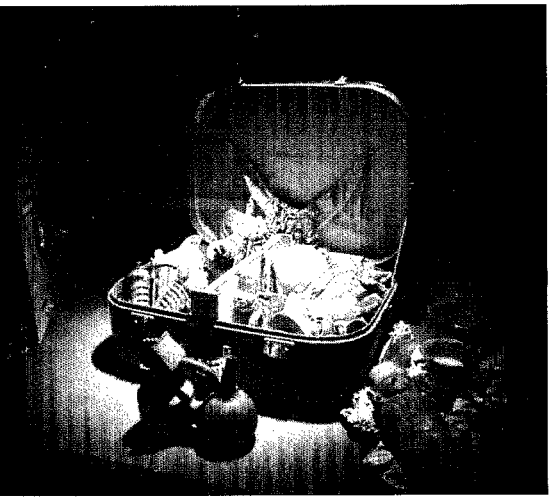
From the exhibition *Stolen Treasures—Missing Links* organized in Washington, D.C., by the National Geographic Society in 1983: Peruvian pre-Columbian ceramics, textiles and tools.
[*Photo:* Courtesy of the National Geographic Society.]



Ceramic vessels of various types.
[*Photo:* Courtesy of the National Geographic Society.]

Tapestry headband with woven figure design, sewn loosely into a ring, Huari, A.D. 700-1000.
[*Photo:* Courtesy of the National Geographic Society.]





Smuggler's suitcase displayed in the exhibition.
[*Photo:* Courtesy of the National Geographic Society.]

dules, each telling a segment of the story, building a sense of mystery and suspense.

The Customs Room. The visitor enters the exhibition as if he were entering a customs room at an international airport. Stacks of shipping crates and suitcases are piled up in the middle of the customs room, with one open for public view. This is the actual suitcase used by David Bernstein, a New York dealer detained by customs officials at Dulles Airport in January 1981. The pungent odour emanating from the mummy bundles inside his luggage aroused the customs agent's suspicion. Inside the suitcase, stunning Inca cups, gorgeous gold and turquoise beads, and beautiful ceramics dating from 900 B.C. to the sixteenth century can be glimpsed. Theatrically illuminated, this section also features enlarged and mounted newspaper articles about smuggling, photographs of pillaged sites, United States Customs Service regulations, and a film of grave-robbers, or *huaqueros,* actually at work, tragically destroying hard archaeological evidence before our eyes.

Andean Cultures. This section places the cultures that evolved in each region within their geographic and historical settings. By the use of glorious original objects, charted time lines and a giant audio-visual display, the cultures are linked to other world civilizations. This section also presents the flow of Andean art from the ancient Chavin culture of the first millennium B.C. to the great sixteenth-century Inca civilization, which was systematically wiped out by the Spaniard Pizarro and his *conquistadores.*

Context, the third section, compares the working procedures of the two types of excavators: the meticulous method and refined tools of the archaeologist versus the destruction wrought by the looters' saws, axes, metal probes and even dynamite. This point is hammered home through the story 'told' by the owl-shaped Moche pot damaged by a smuggler's pick, never to take its rightful place in history—another 'missing link.'

Meaning explores the Andean cultures—their symbols, sacred objects and sites, and their rich traditions, which, through careful study and interpretation, can be recreated for future generations in Peru and the world. Special attention is given to objects dealing with everyday life and the subjects of ritual and curing. Nazca textiles, Chimu ceramic objects, Vicus gold masks and large feather panels are beautifully displayed to show the achievement, quality and strength of the Andean cultures.

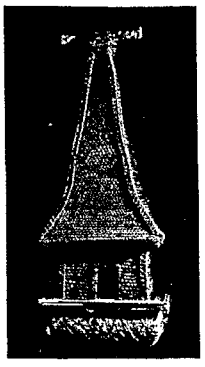
The final section contains a scale model of the new National Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology in Peru, to be constructed at the Parque las Leyendas in Lima.[1] This is also an integral part of the exhibition's message, because the exhibit, a cross-section of Peru's heritage, will not only be returning to Peru after its two-year tour of museums in the United States—it will return to be housed in a modern, technologically advanced building. The institution will also serve as an archives and conservation centre for the Andean region, and indeed, as a model for all of Latin America. This $30 million project has a provisional loan from the Inter-American Development Bank of $25 million. The Peruvian Government has committed a percentage of tourist revenues for the next two years; and a privately supported foundation, FUNDAMUSEO, has been established in the United States of America to raise additional funds for the National Museum of Anthropology and Archaelogy in Peru. The travelling exhibition will be circulated under the auspices of FUNDAMUSEO, and proceeds from sales of certified reproductions of selected artefacts will accrue to the new museum's building fund.[2]

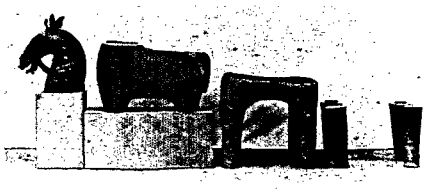
Thus *Stolen Treasures—Missing Links* is an exhibition with multiple missions. It seeks to inform its viewers about the unique cultural heritage of the pre-Inca peoples. It also seeks to educate the public as to the reciprocal responsibilities of governments to the valuable cultural heritage that they contain; actions by governments in 'art market' countries as well as the countries of artefacts' origins are essential to ensure the protection of the world's archaeological treasures. Finally, the exhibition *Stolen Treasures—Missing Links* serves as a powerful statement of the determination of the United States to play its part in the struggle to protect the cultural heritage of co-operating nations against the exploitative destruction of archaeological sites.

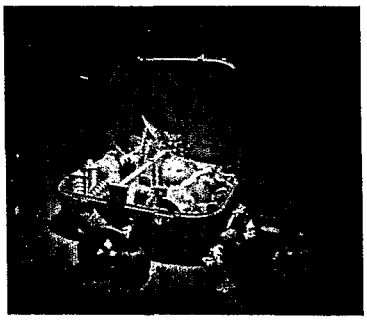
1. See article by Julio Gianella, 'The Future National Archaeological and Anthropological Museum of Peru', *Museum,* Vol. XXXIV, No. 4, 1982.

2. FUNDAMUSEO will publish a catalogue of the exhibition edited by Mary Azoy, National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C., including essays by Dr Betty J. Meggers, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; Elisabeth P. Benson, Institute of Andean Studies, Berkeley, California; Dr Richard L. Burger, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut; Dr Izumi Shimada, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey; and Dr Anne Paul, University of Georgia.

Issues in museum practice







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