REVIEW

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE:

It is official now. As of September 1, the name of the Center has been changed to Research Center for the Arts and Humanities. This coincides with the change in name of the college of Fine and Applied Arts to College of Fine Arts and Humanities. In keeping with this change, a new logo has been designed for this and other publications of the Center.

The broadening of the Center's activities to include more disciplines has been coupled with a change in geographic scope to encompass other countries in Western Europe and this hemisphere along with those previously emphasized - Spain and Portugal and Latin America. What this will mean in actual terms with regard to the research projects and the publications programs of the Center will be partially determined over the next several months by the Director and a newly appointed Advisory Committee comprised of one faculty member from each of the four divisions in the new College: Art & Design; Music; English, Classics and Philosophy; and Foreign Languages. In addition there are two Faculty Associates who will assist in this endeavor to broaden the scope of the Center; one is an architectural historian; the other is a historian.

In this special issue we are turning over most of the space to a paper by Pál Kelemen, a pioneer in the study of Latin American art and an early supporter of our work with the Center. His enthusiastic support is gratefully acknowledged in this issue. Ann Schlosser, our guest editor for this issue, has prepared the Kelemen article for publication and has added a short prefatory note as an introduction to the article.

The rest of this issue is devoted to announcements of our new publications along with some older ones for those of you who may wish to order them. For those interested in obtaining information on funding sources in the arts, the *Directory of Funding Sources for the Arts and Artists* will be available for distribution in October 1982.

The Directory of Latin American Art Historians is still available as well as some of the back issues of the Review.

Finally, it is time also to send out renewal notices for

the *Review* to our subscribers. Although the cost of publishing the *Review* has been going up dramatically over the last several years and our subscription rate has remained unchanged during that time, we will continue to offer the publication at our present rate of \$6.00 a year. I hope we can continue to count on your support.

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It is an honor and a pleasure to introduce the following paper by Pál Kelemen. I first became acquainted with the wide scope of this scholar's knowledge some years ago at the University of Georgia. Dr. Lester C. Walker, Jr. selected Dr. Kelemen's classic *Medieval American Art* (New York, 1943) to be the textbook for his pre-Columbian art course. The following semester, as we went on into colonial art, our text was another Kelemen book, *Baroque and Roccoco in Latin America* (New York, 1951). Thanks to Dr. Kelemen and to Dr. Walker, I was - and still am - captivated by Latin American art.

In his essay "Is Maya Art Primitive?" Dr. Kelemen has given us a thoughtful look at the concept of "primitive" art. Art historians, anthropologists, enthnologists and archaeologists have struggled with this problem concept for many years (see A.G.H. Claerhout, "The Concept of Primitive Applied to Art," Current Anthropology (1965) 6: 432-438. Undoubtedly this will not be the last word on the subject. Review readers are invited to comment.

As he discusses his subject, Dr. Kelemen takes us on a fascinating odyssey through the art world of the last 50 years. His personal encounters with, and comments about, a variety of well-known individuals add vividness to his remarks. These individuals include art patrons, museum people, diplomats, art historians, writers, art critics, archaeologists, ethnologists and anthropologists in Europe and the Americas. I know you will find this essay provocative and enlightening.

Ann Schlosser Guest Editor

IS MAYA ART PRIMITIVE?

Pál Kelemen

In the late winter of 1982 the Metropolitan Museum of Art opened the new wing--Art of Africa, the Pacific Islands, and the Americas. It is dedicated to Michael C. Rockefeller who lost his life on an expedition in New Guinea (in 1961). In the late summer of 1932, this writer came to America with his American wife whom he had met and married in Europe, on what was planned as a visit of about six months. How I postponed my original project and started collecting material to present the pre-Columbian world in the light of its aesthetic and cultural aspects--an endeavor which has continued for these fifty years--is a story outside this study. Today, universal art histories include a chapter at least on the art of the Americas, and this is our point of departure here.

Among the early benefactors of the Metropolitan Museum, J.P. Morgan stands high. His munificence furnished art objects in the traditional taste of the period. Outstanding among the many advisors and dealers who served him was the gentle English painter and art critic Roger Fry. The Havermeyers were Philadelphians, and it was the good luck of the Metropolitan Museum that on their European travels they had the advice of their friend Mary Cassatt, a fine painter. Through her residence in Paris, she was familiar with the Impressionists and she traveled with the Havermeyers even to Spain. Through them many masterpieces from these countries are now at the Museum.

The Rockefeller family came somewhat later into the picture. John D. Rockefeller II, son of the founder of the dynasty, was instrumental in purchasing a collection of architectural sculpture, mainly Romanesque and Gothic from France and Spain, from the sculptor, George Gray Barnard, which had been exhibited in his private garden south of Fort Tryon. This Rockefeller was responsible also for buying the land and expanding the material into the Cloisters, today, a unique jewel of the Metropolitan Museum

It is perhaps understandable that the third generation of an old and well-known family deviates from tradition. Nelson Rockefeller was of a temperament which manifested itself in strong political activity. His New York apartment showed extremes in taste--in the colors of walls and rugs, the shapes of furniture, the diverse style of objects of art--that he was able to tolerate in one room. His collection of contemporary art installed in the Governor's mansion at Albany caused a number of raised eyebrows.

As the clouds of World War II were gathering, the Good Neighbor Policy was pursued with energy, and personalities in the cultural life of the United States were sent by the State Department into a number of Latin American republics as a gesture of friendship, among them Henry Francis Taylor, Director of the Metropolitan Museum, and Daniel Catton Rich from the Art Institute of Chicago. This writer on a somewhat similar mission heard these two especially praised for thanking their hosts by sending books, bulletins, and such matter upon their return home. But a growing anti-

American mood also made itself felt. As Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, Nelson Rockefeller also traveled the same route. When in Buenos Aires he asked who was the best-known personality in the United States and the answer was Mickey Mouse. Returning from the High Andes and Bolivia, I was guest of honor at a luncheon at the presidential palace in Lima, where much of the talk with President Manuel Prado was on what should be done to improve turismo. My right-hand neighbor was Julio C. Tello, increasingly the pope of Andean archaeology and a super-patriot who was even then reluctant to assist legitimate American archaeologists. During a pause in the dialogue with the president. Tello in an indignant tone, demanded why the Americans were plundering Peruvian treasures. -- At that time in Lima, the story was going around that, when Rockefeller was in the capital, he had obtained two unopened Peruvian mummy bundles which he shipped to New York on two Pan American first class tickets. To counter, I asked Tello how many visitors his museum had on a Sunday. The answer was: some sixty to seventy. I told him that at the Museum of Natural History in New York City there might be fourteen to sixteen thousand--the best publicity for Peruvian archaeology.

The ground swell of protest against the plundering and vandalism of ancient art of the Americas became vocal by the 1950s and a person of Nelson Rockefeller's status had to take notice. He was deeply involved in politics and in the affairs of the Museum of Modern Art. His son, Michael C. Rockefeller, never evinced an interest in the art of the Americas; he collected contemporary European, American, and Japanese prints. While still at Harvard he became the organizer and photographer of an expedition to New Guinea. He was made a trustee of the Museum of Modern Art and later, director of his father's *Museum of Primitive Art*.

It is understandable that his father slowly directed his main energy for collecting to ethnological trans-Pacific material, which was easy to acquire in contrast to the ancient American, which was not only in a gray area from the legal point of view but also more difficult to obtain than thirty years before. In this way the American material of the *Museum of Primitive Art* which opened in 1957 came on the back burner, while the trans-Pacific and African collection continuously increased.

In 1932 I joined the College Art Association. I still have their October and some following numbers in which there are contributions on Persian, Chinese, and Egyptian, as well as European art. By the late thirties a considerable number of refugees from East and Central Europe were clustered in New York and vicinity. Most of these were no great stars of art history: some were just getting their doctorates in Europe, some were curators, associate curators in some provincial museum, some keepers of photographs. But by the mid-1950's they were influencing beyond their number the educational apparatus of America. Just when in the United States native humanists were reaching out for their own program, the latecomers, with their Europecentric education, throttled those efforts. The Art Bulletin became more and more centered on a few overworked traditional European subjects--Gothic, Renaissance. Many readers of this paper will know how difficult it was, after this "purification," to place a paper on an Americanistic subject in the *Art Bulletin*. Even Spanish art was more or less nonexistent.

Pevsner's large history of European architecture contained only a few sentences on Spanish art and architecture.¹ When criticized, the refugee author excused himself that he was never in Spain and anyway, because this was a peripheral art he did not feel it important enough to include. It might be of interest that pre-Columbian art was first handled by three major dealers--a Virginian, a Hollander, and a Hungarian.

I made an effort to visit and talk with everyone who was available in the field of pre-Columbian research. In 1933 I spent considerable time in Mexico; the art market there was small. One of the few dealers, an expert on pre-Columbian, colonial and folk art, was the American Fred Davis. His shop on the Calle Madero became a gathering place for the small group of aficionados, and there we came to know the Austrian count Rene d'Harnoncourt, whom the economic situation in Europe had caused to emigrate.

Dwight Morrow, then United States Ambassador to Mexico, with a knowledge for what that country had to offer, was partly responsible that the Museum of Modern Art in New York made their first exhibition of Mexican material. The same year, Nelson Rockefeller made his first visit to Mexico and was helpful in bringing the material to New York. D'Harnoncourt came to New York with the material. The Austrian became the "eye" for Rockefeller in more than one way, and the friendship lasted until his death, more than three decades later.

Alfonso Caso at that time was not in the office at the National Institute of Anthropology and History, because there was no such office. He sat among shabby furniture in a neglected residence turned office, but he already enjoyed personal fame as the discoverer of the unique Tomb 7 at Monte Alban. He enthusiastically supported my plan to show the aesthetic side of those cultures. He offered to telephone to Diego Rivera and Miguel Covarrubias to let me see and photograph the collections which they gathered in their homes. In his review of my book for American Antiquity -- a veritable essay on pre-Columbian art -- he emphasized that without the visual we will never be able even to approach the aesthetic values which lie in the cultures of the pre-Columbian world.³

At Christmas time, 1934, I visited the Ethnographical Museum in Vienna. Professor Frederick Rock, curator of the American section, showed me the famous quetzal-plume headdress. Originally it had been stored for centuries in the Habsburg Schloss Ambras near Innsbruck and around 1870 was removed to Vienna. Most of the golden disks had vanished and had to be replaced with imitations. As I praised the beauty of his pre-Columbian objects, he pointed out that Dürer,

visiting the Low Countries in 1520, had written about them in his diary. In another section of the formerly closed Imperial Library, I was able to peruse some of the original letters which Cortes wrote to Charles the Fifth - a rare experience for 50 Groschen (about a dime) for a half-day.

In the mid-1930s I sat in the soot-stained building of the Museum of the American Indian in New York, with its founder, George Heye, looking out through the curving sunburst window of the second story on the dismal picture of Upper Broadway. He told me how his interest started by collecting Indian arrowheads in his native New Jersey. He complained that his museum had only one curator whose hours were irregular; his photographer was his only stalwart help and knew the material thoroughly. For, the City of New York was not interested in helping him with the expenses which he would not be able to carry much longer.

In Paris, when the French thought that the Maginot Line was impenetrable, I sat with Paul Rivet in a corner of the Sorbonne Library among dusty shelves, lit by a white-stockinged gas flame covered with a paper lamp-shade yellow with the years. He called my attention to the highly individual pre-Columbian art of Ecuador, which he knew well because his wife came from that country. In the Province of Esmeraldas, bulldozers had torn into pre-Columbian tombs, crushed the ancient pottery and plundered the country's metallurgical wonders before they could be recorded. In one pendant, gold, silver and platinum were worked into a single piece without a seam. The pottery showed various artistic influences from Columbia and Peru, together with local designs.

I should mention also Thomas A. Joyce, keeper of the Ethnographical Gallery in the British Museum. Even before writing his books, Captain Joyce had published articles on the collection in such art magazines as *The Studio* and *Burlington Magazine* in London. He was not especially friendly when I requested permission to remove at least twenty pre-Columbian objects to the photographic studio which at that time was on the roof of the building. For, luckily the photographer was old-fashioned enough to do his work by daylight. However, the Maya Maize God as we arranged it and lighted from above, became popular and was widely reproduced.

In a discussion in Mexico the Franco refugee

Nikolaus Pevsner, An Outline of European Architecture, Harmondsworth, 1942.

² American Sources of Modern Art, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1933.

³ Alfonso Caso, review of *Medieval American Art* by Pál Kelemen, *American Antiquity*, 10 (1943): 107-112.

⁴ M. Thausing, Quellenschriften fur Kunstgeschichte - Dürers Briefe, Tage - Bucher und Reime, Wien, 1888.

⁵ Cortes' original letters are dated between 1519-1525. See: Pál Kelemen, Battlefield of the Gods: Aspects of Mexican History, Art and Exploration, London, 1937.

Later, on a cultural mission in Quito, early in 1945, I was visited by the senator from the Provincia de Esmeraldas, who, with tears in his eyes begged that our government should be urged to do something to save the treasures of his land. Only the ancient gold, silver and platinum were being removed from the vandalized tombs of La Tollita and ambience. The pottery, textiles, bone etc. were discarded and plowed under.

⁷ Thomas A. Joyce, "Some Features of Mexican Architecture," Burlington Magazine 19 (1911): 154-163; Joyce, "On an Early Type of Pottery from the Nasca Valley, Peru," Burlington Magazine 22 (1912): 249-255; Joyce, "Ancient American Mosaic," Burlington Magazine 25 (1914): 134-137.

Salvador Madariaga was reluctant to admit the great originality of Spanish colonial art, but expressed admiration for the art of the pre-Columbian world, though waving away the accusation that Spanish indifference and unceasing treasure hunting had destroyed so much of importance.

Years later, such a cosmopolitan esthete as Sacheverell Sitwell (later Sir) showed enthusiasm for the art of the Americas. As he sat on the divan in our living room in Norfolk, stretching comfortably his six foot four inch frame, and with a glass of port wine before him, he questioned me eagerly why the art of the pre-Columbian world has so much fascination for so many people of so many different types. And indeed, his articles and two books on Peru and Mexico show that someone from "outside," with worldwide experience, can also become partisan for the beauty and high quality of this work.8

Among the many with whom I have spoken in the last fifty years, on various lecture tours here and abroad, nobody used the word "primitive" in connection with pre-Columbian art. It might be that Madariaga preferred Velasquez; or that, at the end of my lecture at the University at Athens, my host, Professor Pandelis Prevelakis, art historian and poet, pointed up the long vista to the Acropolis, affirming his loyalties. But always wherever I spoke, there was enough applause to indicate awakened interest in the art and architecture of an unknown world.

My greatest satisfaction came at the University at Istanbul where I was introduced by professor Sevket Ipsiroglu. There the audience acknowledged the beauty of the subject, unhampered by the conventional Europe-centric classical tradition.

In anticipation of the opening of its Rockefeller wing, the Metropolitan Museum of Art devoted the entire autumn number of its *Bulletin* (Fall, 1981) to the Rockefeller collection.⁹ This bulletin and its material can be better understood when we take into consideration also a book published in 1978 entitled *Masterpieces of Primitive Art*, a work of some 263 pages.¹⁰. There Nelson Rockefeller describes how he started collecting this art. The introduction of 15 pages is written by Douglas Newton, former director of the collection and now chairman of the new department at the Metropolitan. Subsequent chapters are entitled "Faces," "Figures," "Animals," "Abstractions."

The Bulletin follows the same sequence but on a smaller scale. In his 9-page Introduction which he calls "The Art of Africa, the Pacific Islands, and the Americas--A New Perspective," he sketches the development of interest in primitive cultures. The text runs to five pages on Africa and the Pacific Islands; four and one-half lines report pre-Columbian art. By that time we have read about objects from the New Hebrides, New Caledonia, Benin, Maori, a register of names. The great trading enterprises of the past centuries of Europe are mentioned, the travels of Captain Cook, with the much-repeated quote from Albrecht Dürer.11 There are a few sentences on Sir James Frazer's book12 and the theories and studies or primitive art from the nineteenth century. We read of Rousseau, Diderot and of Paul Gauguin as "a starting point to look with fascination at African art," followed by remarks by the Polish painter Apollinaire and on to Picasso, Modigliani. Mentioned also are sporadic fads for Chinoiserie and Pompeian decoration in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.14

If this text had been offered as an exercise in scholarship on the graduate level, it would be the work of a teacher to judge it. The Metropolitan Museum has 78,000 members, subscribers, and visitors who take the Bulletin. If each copy is perused by only two, it comes to 156,000 readers. Does this text help to explain what the new wing contains and why it is displayed in an art museum to people who live in the mid-West, the South, the Far West for whom New York City is a distant and alien place? In the chapter on "Faces," will a Papua mask or one from Zaire help us understand Mochika ceramics? Or, in "Figures," a Dan spoon from Liberia, a realistic piece of Aztec sculpture? Under "Animals," we see a wooden object, part of a ceremonial dance costume of the Bambara of Mali placed against a silver deer from Peru. A fragment of Peruvian feather mantel shown in the last chapter cannot be well called an "abstraction." It is a cascade of color, well organized. Newton's final sentence in his final chapter concerns pre-Columbian material. I quote, "Clay and gold may be at opposite ends of the scale in terms of value, but the same rigorous control of form and the degree of sophistication are to be found in ob-

Sacheverell Sitwell, Primitive Scenes and Festivals, London, 1942; Sitwell, Golden Wall and Mirador: From England to Peru, London, 1961. Another distinguished man of letters and renowned art historian wrote me: "Princeton have purchased a figured jar which is certainly one of the most extraordinary pieces of pre-Columbian art I have encountered and makes one revise all one's prejudices. . ." Kenneth Clark, Lord Saltwood (letter to the writer date January 23, 1978).

Douglas Newton, "The Art of Africa, the Pacific Islands, and the Americas," Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin 39, no. 2 (Fall, 1981). The Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, October, 1969, already reports that at a press review held in May of that year, "Governor Rockefeller announced the transfer of the Museum of Primitive Art Collection to the Metropolitan" (p. 93). Thus the term "primitive" enters an art museum.

Douglas Newton, Masterpieces of Primitive Art, New York, 1978.

Albrecht Dürer: [Upon viewing Spanish treasure from America] "These things were all so precious that they were valued at a hundred thousand golden worth. But I have never seen in all my days what so rejoiced my heart, as these things. For I saw among them amazing artistic objects, and I marveled over the subtle ingenuity of the men in these distant lands. Indeed I cannot say enough about the things which were there before me." Translated by Pál Kelemen in Medieval American Art, 2 vols (New York, 1943) 1: 3.

¹² Sir James Frazer, The Golden Bough, London, 1890.

Gaugin's art did not contribute much to arouse interest in African art which is essentially plastic (masks, fetiches, etc.) while his work is primarily two-dimensional, i.e. without much shadow or perspective. As said by Kelemen: "The Tahitian pictures of Gauguin conjure up the mood of the anonymous Maya painter, and through this resemblance the white man can approach a better appreciation of the work of the ancient Mayan." Kelemen, Battlefield of the Gods, p. 189.

Newton, "The Art of Africa, the Pacific Islands, and the Americas."



Mask. Mabuiag Island, Torres Strait, Papua New Guinea. Turtle shell, other materials. W. 25 in. The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial Collection, Purchase, Nelson A. Rockefeller Gift, 1967. Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC. On the Torres Strait Islands off Southern Papua New Guinea, turtle shell was used for masks. Photograph courtesy of Lee Boltin.



Seated Figure Holding a dead? child. Provenience unknown. Olmec Style. Stone, H. 4½ in. The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial Collection, Bequest, Nelson A. Rockefeller Gift, 1979. Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC. The larger person might be offering a sacrifice, as the small figure (child?) appears lifeless, with closed eyes, open mouth, and protruding tongue. The tiny carving, striking in detail and plasticity, is monumental in its effect. Photograph courtesy of Pál Kelemen.



Fragment of carved wooden lintel. Temple IV, Tikal, Peten Guatemala. Classic Maya, (747 A.D.). Wood. ca. 5x7 ft. Museum für Volkerunde, Basle. Represents a Maya dignitary arrayed in Ceremonial pomp, seated in a loop formed by a great feathered serpent. The fine differentiation between the larger motifs that make up the serpent body...and the compact smaller elements on the main figure, successfully throws the emphasis on the human, despite the wealth of detail. Photograph courtesy of Pál Kelemen.



Ceremonial Spoon. Dan, Liberia. 19th-20th century. Wood. L. 18½ in. The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial Collection, Bequest of Nelson A. Rockefeller, 1979. Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC. The large ceremonial spoon from the Dan tribe of Liberia is carried in dances and used to distribute rice at feasts. Photograph courtesy of Lee Boltin.



Figure Seated on a Dog. Kongo, Zaire, 19th-20th century. Wood, glass, pigment. H. 13 in. The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial Collection, Purchase, Nelson A. Rockefeller Gift, 1966. Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC. Kongo fetish from Zaire of a man or spirit riding a dog. Photograph courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC.



Kneeling Figure. Tabasco, Mexico. Early Classic Maya, 5th-6th century A.D. Wood with red hematite. H. 14¾ in. The Michael C. Rockefeller Collection, Purchase, Nelson A. Rockefeller, Gift. Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC. The figure, a Maya dignitary carved in the round with amazing skill, with unsophisticated tools, radiates vitality. Photograph courtesy of Pál Kelemen.

iects made of either material."15 With the use of the word sophistication he belies any placement of pre-

Columbian art among the "primitives."

Primitive living conditions might differentiate the non-European continent from that of the Western world. That the art of those distant cultures should be called "primitive" depends on the Europe-centric ethnologist. But to put the highly sophisticated, to us aesthetically attractive Maya and other cultures of ancient America under the same roof will become as the years go by more and more a matter of subjective iudaement.

In the years when Nelson Rockefeller was working to become President of the United States, he was involved in a maze of political, social and financial enterprises. Among so many hectic activities he could not be uninterruptedly involved in what the art world offered. He was privileged to call his private collection whatever he wished. But when that art was put into a large and expensive building, in the erection and arrangement of which we learn he was deeply involved, then the name comes into public domain as it were, and the use of the word "primitive" at all is open to question.

Jacques Barzun writes that universities, enticed by government largess after the Second World War embraced the idea of relevance, understood as 'meeting social needs.' Many students and teachers, bored by scholarship, had powerful incentives to demote traditional academic standards and humanistic values, to "elevate vague and shifting standards of social utility 'relevance' in the hierarchy of academic values."16

J.M. Cameron, professor emeritus at the University of Toronto, argues that present-day college curricula reflect a mistaken doctrine of philosophy--"the doctrine that all values are equal so that the selection of values, like the selection of items in a cafeteria, is purely a matter of 'taste.' "17

There are only two direct quotes in the Bulletin. One by Roger Fry concerns African art. Mr. Newton con-

"Roger Fry". . .at the time of his death in 1939 had found little to interest him in Oceanic or pre-Columbian art."18 Oceanic or pre-Columbian art is all in one paper bag! This writer would like to quote Fry at further

length:

"In the finest works of the Maya culture which preceded the Aztec, we find a much more surprising freedom from the rectilinear geometric bias, a plastic sense of the rarest kind. I do not know whether even in the greatest sculpture of Europe one could find anything exactly like this in its equilibrium and sensibility." Of the Maya Maize God particularly, he writes, "The oval is of extraordinary beauty in its subtle variations upon the main idea. You will note how a too exact symmetry is avoided by bringing the lock of hair on one

side further over the cheek than on the other. Here we find the expression of a sensibility of a very high order. There is also I think undoubtedly vitality, a powerful suggestion of the inner life--of a strange tension of spirit--of an almost tragic cast."19

The second direct reference is from Franz Boas. Born in 1858 in an East German province which is today Poland he attended the Universities of Heidelberg, Bonn, and Kiel where in 1881 he received a doctorate in ethnology. Toward the end of the century he came to America and after smaller college jobs, he received a position at Columbia University, where he taught for

some three decades.

I arranged a meeting with Franz Boas at Columbia University. He had an illness which showed in his face and in his speech, but he was well enough to continue teaching. And as I sat with him in his room and he discovered that I had been born in Budapest and have, besides the Budapest University, studied in Munich and in Berlin, he insisted on talking German with me. Knowing his field experience in Alaska and among Eskimos, I tried to get some aesthetic observation on what he found among them. But there was no forthcoming opinion. He went around my questions and not wanting to irritate him, I mentioned that in his bibliography I found that in Mexico in 1911 he had published an album of archaeological collections in Spanish.20 But whether he had forgotten it or whether he did not wish to speak of it, my impression was when I left that he was hardened and narrow not only on account of his illness, but that he was unwilling to talk anything on the aesthetic qualities of any field.

Leslie A. White, professor at the University of Michigan, observing the teaching of anthropology under the late Franz Boas at Columbia University, remarks that a compact group of scholars, principally German-born, gathered about the leader and virtually controlled the discipline in the United States. They tended to disparage the views of "outsiders." In an address on the history of anthropology Boas failed to mention the founding of important American ethnological and anthropological departments and institutions.21 One can observe a situation not too

dissimilar in art history.

Boas spent some of the years from 1910 to 1912 in Mexico City and collaborated with Manuel Gamio on an album of archaeological collections.22 That in his books there is practically no mention of Maya, Olmec, Inca, and other American cultures, south of the Mexican High Plateau, can be explained by the fact that at that time even the Mexicans themselves were limited by money, travel possibilities, living conditions, beyond what was possible to cover in the ambience of their capital. Some work was done at Teotihuacan, Tenayuca; even Tula and Mitla had only a watchman.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁶ Jacques Barzun, "The Wasteland of American Education," New York Review of Books, 28, no. 17 (November 5, 1981): 34-36.

¹⁷ J.M. Cameron, "Can We Live the Good Life," New York Review of Books, 28, no. 17 (November 5, 1981): 44.

¹⁸ Newton, "The Art of Africa, the Pacific Islands, and the Americas," p. 10.

¹⁹ Roger Fry, Last Lectures, New York, 86-87.

²⁰ Franz Boas and Manuel Gamio, Album de Colecciones Arqueologicas, Selecionadas y Arregladas por Franz Boas, Texto por Manuel Gamio, Mexico, 1912-1921.

²¹ Leslie A. White, The Social Organization of Ethnological Theory, Rice University Studies, vol. 52, no. 4, (Houston, 1966).

²² Boas and Gamio, Album de Colecciones Arqueologicas.

The ruins of Yucatan could be approached only by narrow gauge train via Orizaba to Veracruz and then by ship to Progreso and then on to Merida. From there everyone was on his own in organizing an expedition to Chichen Itza. Uxmal was visited for a day only with the warning that because of malarial mosquitos one must leave before sunset. Palenque in Mexico, Tikal in Guatemala, Copan in Honduras--those peaks of Maya art and archaeology, were slumbering among tropical impenetrable vegetation with no roads except for mules and no connection whatever by plane or train. They were recorded in their neglected state on the large glass plates of Teobert Maler, an Austrian artillery officer on Emperor Maximillian's staff, who remained in Mexico after the Emperor's execution. The best of his work were preserved in the stairwell in the Peabody Museum at Harvard.

Boas's book Primitive Art appeared in Oslo in 1927.23 he retired from teaching in 1937. He used the material available at the time--the Northwest coast, some of the Southwest, and a few items from Mexico. The book is made up of the discussion of motifs and designs found on pottery, textiles, skin, wood. Little of it is from the pre-Columbian area. There is no discussion of architecture, sculpture, pottery, metallurgy, jade and other items in the repertory of art history. Nothing beyond the Mexican High Plateau. That in 1981 the Bulletin should quote him, directly and indirectly at such length is an affront to what has been written about Middle and South America since 1927. Boas's book falls more into the category of ethnography than what is accepted today as general art history. It cannot be emphasized enough that archaeologists, ethnologists, linguists, and anthropologists are seldom prepared for the visual, aesthetic and cultural approach necessary for the study of the art of ancient America.

When Boas's declining years made the need for a new chairman acute, the name of Ralph Linton came up--Pennsylvania born, with a Ph.D. degree from Harvard. Boas fought his acceptance and for years, Linton was called ''Acting in Charge,'' ''Temporary Chairman'' etc. Linton, with broad field experience and a fine writing style represented a very different and upto-date orientation to the subject, that brought fresh air into the department. His book *The Study of Man* first published in 1936 shows the clarity and rare intellect coupled with an ability to judge widely different art styles with amazing elasticity.²⁴ He knew how to use the word "primitive" and to what to apply it.

According to various dictionaries, and I am quoting, "primitive" is defined as ". . .something at a low or early stage of development"; 25 and ". . .crude, simple, uncivilized." 26

The book Art Museums of America names nearly twenty institutions -- all art museums -- which have ac-

²³ Franz Boas, *Primitive Art*, Oslo, 1927.

comodated pre-Columbian art very well within their walls.²⁷ Notably Cleveland and Seattle have excellently displayed material, collected at an early date. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss have shown how pre-Columbian art can be exhibited tastefully. It should be mentioned here that the Bliss collection was on exhibit in the National Gallery from 1947 to 1962 when it was withdrawn and went back to Dumbarton Oaks.

Another book, *The Imperial Rockefeller* by Joseph E. Persico, is pertinent, written by someone who had worked with Rockefeller for years and covers his lifework. ²⁸ Concerning his interest in art, names are mentioned from Rubens to Brancusi--Picasso repeatedly--but not one word of pre-Columbian art nor of the assistance and the untimely death of Rene d'Harnoncourt without whom it is doubtful that Rockefeller would have 'discovered' the art of the Americas at all. It is becoming evident to many that here is a complex personality. Was he a connoisseur or an *aficianado* on imperial scale?

The Associated Press has a lively eye for what goes on in the United States and their art editor visited the Metropolitan Museum when the Rockefeller wing was opened. In her article "Primitive Art Gets Home at Met," she describes what the Rockefeller wing contains, mentioning the economic basis, the various beginnings and then she adds something of her own: "In fact no one at the Metropolitan wants to call it primitive anymore. The emphasis is on art as art and 'primitive' is just part of the vernacular of the art historians, a convenient label."

How convenient? For what art historians?

LATIN AMERICAN ART: SOME THOUGHTS ON ITS CLASSIFICATION BY MUSEUMS AND THE GROUPS FORMED TO SUPPORT IT

Jacinto Quirarte (The University of Texas at San Antonio)

The field of Latin American art studies has been discussed in previous issues of the *Research Center for the Arts Review* by Bailey, ¹ Boone, ² and Quirarte. ³ In all

²⁴ Ralph Linton, The Study of Man, New York, 1936.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, New York, 1973, s.v. "primitive."

Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language (College Edition), New York, 1957, s.v. "primitive."

²⁷ Lila Sherman, Art Museums of America, New York, 1980.

²⁸ Joseph E. Persico, The Imperial Rockefeller, New York, 1982.

^{29 &}quot;Primitive Art Gets Home at Met," AP News features, January 31, 1982. (Communication from Joan Brunskill, Editor, February 9, 1982).

Joyce Waddell Bailey, "The Study of Latin American Art History in the United States: the past 40 years", Research Center for the Arts Review, Vol. 1, no. 2, 1978, pp. 1-3.

² Elizabeth Hill Boone, "U.S. Universities and Latin American Art History", Research Center for the Arts Review, Vol. 2, no. 3, 1979, pp. 2-3.

Jacinto Quirarte, "The Study of Latin American Art: How Did we get this way?", Research Center for the Arts Review, Vol. 2, no. 4, 1979, pp. 1-3.

discussions, the focus has been on supporting, nurturing and strengthening the professional research, teaching, and publishing carried out by scholars in colleges and universities in the United States and abroad. Much emphasis has been placed on furthering the study of Latin American art by working through existing professional organizations, such as the College Art Association, whose officers and members have traditionally ignored these materials. No thought has been given to recruiting potentially valuable allies among groups of non-professionals in the fight to further the study of Latin American art. There are numerous such groups across the country, but no one has even made a preliminary survey of them.

Sometimes, the impetus for the creation of groups interested in Latin American art is provided by collectors of art. Others may be created by those who simply wish to learn more about a given subject. The Friends of Mexican Art of Phoenix has supported a number of exhibitions and the excellent catalogues which have been published to accompany them. The Ethnic Arts Council of Los Angeles has supported conferences and publications of the proceedings dealing with pre-Columbian materials. On a more modest scale, The Maya Society of Minneapolis supports lectures for its members and sponsors study trips to the Maya area. A similar purpose governs the activities of The Institute of Maya Studies, Inc. in Miami, Florida.

It would be instructive as well as useful to identify the many groups interested in Latin American art. Once identified, they could possibly assist in the efforts to strengthen the study of these materials. The more people there are involved in these efforts the better the chances for success. This would also offset another problem which simply adds confusion to the present situation. The many support groups which continue to be formed under the rubric of "primitive art" which invariably includes the arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas (pre-Columbian epoch), would benefit by the contact with scholars and specialists who deal with that epoch of Latin American art.

The non-professionals and the groups to which they belong suffer from the same kind of neglect scholars have endured from un-comprehending institutions, associations, and other scholars. Unless they have a very specific focus or a large enough core group, such as The Friends of Mexican Art in Phoenix, the result will be the usual clustering of Latin American art (pre-Columbian) with African and Oceanic or Polynesian arts. Other epochs of Latin American art do not fare any better. They are usually considered "Non-Mainstream Art" or "Art of the Third World." The fact that professionals have already clustered the non-Western arts into "primitive," "ethnographic," and other such designations has led to the creation of such "support" groups. The individuals may or may not be interested in all three bodies of work. The clustering under this "other" category is obtained by a process of elimination and represents a failure to see the scope, the scale, and the quality of each body of material.

Such is the case with a recently formed group in the Indianapolis Museum of Art. Interested persons were asked to contact Peggy Gilfoy, Curator of Textiles and Ethnographic Art (317) 923-1331, Est. 70. This is only one of many such organizing efforts.

Another example will illustrate the situation in which collections of Latin American art are not as important as they should be. San Francisco has all the ingredients - distinctive racial, ethnic, and cultural groups - which would provide a basis for the creation of city-supported museums in which American, European, Latin American and Oriental collections of art would be given equal emphasis. This has not been the case. After a promising early start in the collecting of pre-Columbian and modern art of Latin America,9 the focus has been in recent years on building up collections of Oriental art. This has led to the creation of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco which has an extensive exhibitions program. It stands alongside the other two major museums in the city, the California Palace of the Legion of Honor and the M.H. De Young Memorial Museum which are subsumed under the name of The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. 10 Tucked into the latter are collections brought under the rubric of AOA (African, Oceania and the Americas).11 The subsuming of one

The Friends of Mexican Art was formed in 1964 to encourage "an interest in Mexican art and its acquisition, the gathering of a collection of the best books on the subject for donation to the libraries of the various local public institutions and a widening of the appreciation of Mexican art through lectures and studies, including a program of bilingual talks to school children". Zoe W. Levy, Catalogue for the exhibition Contemporary Mexican artists: Phoenix Art Museum December 12, 1964 - February 15, 1965.

⁵ Among the conference publications sponsored by the Ethnic Arts Council of Los Angeles is the one entitled Origins of Religious Art and Iconography in Pre-classic Mesoamerica, edited by H.B. Nicholson, UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1976. The volume contains papers presented at a twoday conference of the same name held at the University of California, Los Angeles, February 25-26, 1973.

The Maya Society of Minnesota was formed in 1978 with the express purpose of promoting "the study and appreciation of Maya culture, both ancient and modern. The Maya Society is open to anyone interested in learning about the Maya or sharing experiences and knowledge related to Maya studies."

⁷ The Institute of Maya Studies, Inc. is an affiliate of the Museum of Science, Miami, Florida. It has published a monthly newsletter for ten years. Volume 11 corresponds to 1982.

Indianapolis Museum of Art, Quarterly Magazine, A Publication for Museum Members, Dec. 1981 - Jan. 1982 - Feb. 1982, p. 25.

See John Hilton, Handbook of Hispanic Source Materials and Research Organizations in the United States. Stanford University Press, 1956, 2nd edition, for information regarding the collection of pre-Columbian art housed in the M.H. De Young Museum. An important part of the collection, presented by Dr. Ernest Forbes, contains gold pieces - earplugs, labrets and pendants - from Ecuador, Colombia and Panama. From Mesoamerica, there are Aztec and Maya vessels and masks, and Zapotec Funerary urns. There are also pieces from the Gulf Coast of Mexico. In the Peruvian section there are pottery vessels from the valleys of Chancay and Chillon; also included are Nazca and Chimu pottery, textiles and metal objects.

Triptych Calendar, November - December 1981, contains information on exhibitions, lectures and special events, and the collections on the Asian Art Museum and The Fine Arts Museums.

¹¹ Triptych November - December 1981, pp. 25-27.

part of Latin American art into the "primitive" or "ethnographic" category along with African and Oceanic art fragments it unnecessarily. This does an injustice to all three bodies of work.

San Francisco is, therefore, the one place where major collections of Latin American art should be found. But there is no overall effort to have a city-supported collection on the art of Latin America which would include all three major epochs, the pre-Columbian, the colonial, and the modern. Instead, there is the usual clustering of pre-Columbian or art of the Americas alongside those of Africa and Oceania. The modern art of Latin America is relegated to a peripheral place in the San Francisco Museum of Art, 12 and aside from the small colonial art collection of the Mexican Museum, there is no major collection representing this epoch. 13

The San Francisco example is not unique. The model for the placement of pre-Columbian art into museums of primitive art goes back to the nineteenth century when the Western world began to move into Africa and other non-Western parts of the world. Even in Mexico City where more pre-Columbian art is found than in any other part of the world, the National Museum of Anthropology was established to house it. The art is exhibited in a context which emphasizes its use as a carrier of meaning rather than for its intrinsic value.¹⁴

This continuing problem of denial of pre-Columbian art by classification distresses and offends most Latin

See John Hilton, Handbook of Hispanic Source Materials and Research Organizations in the United States. Stanford Universi-

ty Press, 1956, 2nd. edition, for information on the collection of modern Latin American art now housed in the San Francisco Museum of Art. Among the artists whose works (paintings,

water colors, drawings, and prints) are included are Diego

Rivera, Ramos Martinez, Carlos Merida, Roberto Montenegro, Rufino Tamayo, Jose Clemente Orozco, Emilio Pettoruti, Joa-

In addition to the collections of modern Mexican and other

Latin American art started more than fifty years ago, there are a

number of murals by Diego Rivera in San Francisco. See Virginia

and Jaime Plenn, A Guide to Modern Mexican Murals. Ediciones

Tolteca, S.A. Mexico 1963, pp. 139-141 for information on the

quin Torres-Garcia, Hector Poleo and others.

Americanists. An aspect of this problem is discussed in the lead essay in this issue by Pál Kelemen. His essay entitled "Is Maya Art Primitive?" focuses on the exhibition of this art along with the arts of Oceania and Africa in the new wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. 15

RCAH NEWS

A NEW PUBLICATION

DIRECTORY OF FUNDING SOURCES FOR THE ARTS AND ARTISTS

The first edition of the *Directory of Funding Sources* for the Arts and Artists has been published by the RCAH. The DIRECTORY contains information on 137 foundations and other private funding agencies offering grant funding for projects in the arts and other endeavors to organizations and individuals. The funding sources are listed alphabetically and identified by numbers in the index for ease of identification. The Index is divided in funding for organizations and funding for individuals. The information under each subheading is listed alphabetically by subject, such as Architecture, Arts, and so forth.

	murals painted by Diego Rivera in San Francisco.
13	The Mexican Museum was envisioned by Peter Rodriguez as early as the mid 1960's; he subsequently became its founder and first director in 1973 and was the initial contributor to the permanent collection. "The primary purpose of the Mexican Museum is to foster the exhibition, conservation, and dissemina-
	tion of Mexican and Mexican American art and culture for all peoples." ("Cinco de Mayo Exhibit" brochure, May 1980, p. 1). Although there are pieces in the collection corresponding to the three major epochs of Mexican art, including Folk art, the most extensive one corresponds to the colonial period. It includes paintings, sculptures, <i>Santos</i> and decorative arts. The Mexican
	Museum is not supported by the city of San Francisco.

The Museum of Primitive Art, founded by the late Nelson D. Rockefeller to house the art objects he began to collect in the 1930's, was located on West 54th Street from 1957 to 1975. The collection was shown at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, initially on loan, as "The Art of Oceania, Africa and the Americas" in 1969. Rockefeller offered it as a gift to the Metropolitan Museum. It was accepted and finally exhibited as part of the permanent collection in late 1981 in the new addition to the Metropolitan Museum of Art - the Michael C. Rockefeller Wing. For more information), see Charlotte Moser, "A grand new showcase for primitive art," Smithsonian. Vol. 12, No. 11 (February) 1982, pp. 38-49.

Although The National Museum of Anthropology was officially established in 1825, the pre-Columbian collection was housed in a large hall provided by the National University. The collection was moved to the first museum site on Moneda Street in December 1865. It was included with "mementos of Mexican History and natural science collections," in a general purpose museum. In 1940, "The Museum was dedicated exclusively to anthropological material." The new museum in Chapultepec Park opened in 1964. See Ignacio Bernal The Mexican National Museum of Anthropology. Ediciones Lara, Mexico, 1968 (English Edition, Thames and Hudson, London), pp. 8-9

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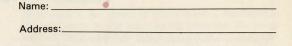
DIRECTORY OF HISTORIANS OF LATIN AMERICAN ART

The 1981 edition of the DIRECTORY OF HISTORIANS OF LATIN AMERICAN ART has been published by the RCAH. This is a new and revised edition of the 1979 DIRECTORY which was compiled and edited by Elizabeth Boone. The 1981 DIRECTORY includes not only art historians and architectural historians but also more of our colleagues the anthropologists who specialize in Latin American Art. In addition to entries for individuals, there are entries for graduate institutions. The DIRECTORY also has an index with scholars listed by interest.

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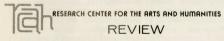
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