

Museum

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**Museums, heritage and
cultural policies in Latin
America and the Caribbean**

museum

Vol. XXXIV, No. 2, 1982

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Cover photo: Restoration of polychrome wood sculpture at the restoration centre in Antigua Guatemala.
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Editorial

*You have also avoided contemplating the cultural heritage and its depositories, such as museums, from the sole viewpoint of material preservation, but have rather regarded them first and foremost as a means of educating and enriching the lives of people, and as the most obvious expression of cultural identity.*¹

The purpose of this issue is twofold. On the one hand, it is intended to provide a platform for a group of museum professionals in Latin America and the Caribbean to share ideas and information with colleagues both within the region and throughout the world. It has another, 'strategic', purpose: to bring the significance of museum development to the attention of the policy- and decision-makers who will be attending the World Conference on Cultural Policies, Mexico City, 26 July–5 August 1982.

Our regional focus was chosen to coincide with this international event taking place on Latin American soil. But the museum problems explored here exist everywhere, particularly in other Third World countries where cultural development—and, *a fortiori*, the role of museums in that process—still awaits the place it deserves.

Volume XXV, No. 3 (1973), of this magazine, entitled 'The role of museums in today's Latin America', was an overview (but excluding the Caribbean) of the situation ten years ago. It opened up new hopes for the future. It is now time to take stock. Furthermore, our Editorial Board has been concerned with the meagre representation in the pages of *Museum* of the museum life in the region, with the obvious exception of that of Mexico.² This special issue—together with additional material received but which cannot be printed here for lack of space—will certainly help fill this lacuna.

Both the thematic articles that open the issue and the monographs in the 'Album' section were solicited and written with the cultural policy framework in mind. What role can and should be given to museums in our societies today? The concrete examples of museums that respond to a deep-rooted need or meet it admirably, each on its own scale and specialized terrain, will, we hope, speak with conviction to the Mexico City meeting. The notion of cultural development launched by Unesco at the first such World Conference, held in Venice some twelve years ago, has indeed come a long way. But certainly not far enough. Quoting that concept, one already convinced decision-maker had this to say about museums:

Their educational role, the opportunity for direct contact between the public and the products of the mind, the juxtaposition they can bring about between works of different cultures, their function of preserving a fragile past, of study and of research on the cultural heritage from the beginning of time, their special role of organizing the behaviour and the outlook of a society towards its own past and the past of others at one particular moment, all amount to fundamental, irreplaceable aspects of a living culture. To give this up, to slacken on the effort that this involves, would be to compromise cultural development irreparably. In this sense, museums are not a survival or an anachronism... *they are a driving force behind cultural development.* Governments or societies who do not accept this idea and all it involves in terms of will-power and effort, in particular the financial implications, are condemning cultural development at more or less short term.³

We hope this issue of *Museum* will help support that claim.

Frontispiece: MUSEO DE ARTE COLONIAL,
La Paz, Bolivia.

[Photo: S. de Vajay.]

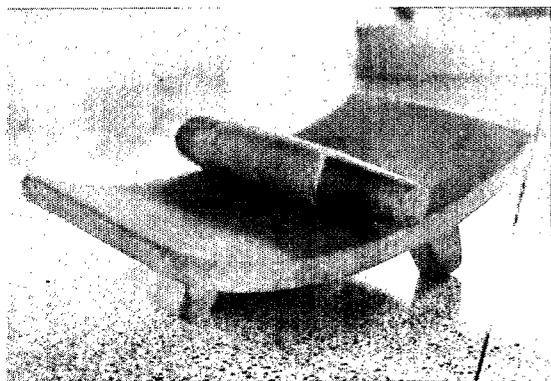
1. Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, Director-General of Unesco, in his closing address to the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean, Bogotá, 20 January 1978.

2. In a recent tally of issues published between 1970 and 1980 it was found that out of a total of 1,910 pages printed only 156, or 8 per cent, concerned Latin America and the Caribbean.

3. Extract from the speech entitled 'Museums: Heritage and Living Culture', given by Jacques Rigaud, Director-General of Radio-Télé Luxembourg and former Assistant Director-General of Unesco, at ICOM's Twelfth General Conference, Mexico City, 25 October–4 November 1980. Printed in *Proceedings of the Twelfth General Conference and Thirteenth General Assembly of the International Council of Museums*, Paris, ICOM, 1981, pp. 44–5.

Museum development and cultural policy: aims, prospects and challenges

With the participation of
Marta Arjona, Frances Kay Brinkley,
Fernanda de Camargo-Moro,
Roderick C. Ebanks,
Manuel Espinoza, Felipe Lacouture,
Luis G. Lumbreras,
Aloisio Magalhaes, Grete Mostny



ARAWAK MUSEUM, Jamaica. A museum that respects the oldest indigenous population of the Caribbean. Stone *metate* and crusher, used by the Arawaks to crush corn. A.D. 1000 to 1500.
[Photo: Arawak Museum.]

The article below was prepared by Museum entirely on the basis of contributions requested from Marta Arjona, Director of the Cultural Heritage, Cuba; Frances Kay Brinkley, a volunteer museologist in the eastern Caribbean; Fernanda de Camargo-Moro, Director-General of Museums, State of Rio de Janeiro; Roderick C. Ebanks, Director of the Museums and Archaeological Division, Institute of Jamaica; Manuel Espinoza, Director of the National Art Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela; Felipe Lacouture, Director of the National Museum of History, Mexico City; Luis G. Lumbreras, archaeologist and former Director of the National Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology, Lima, Peru; Aloisio Magalhaes, Secretary of State for Culture, Brazil; and Grete Mostny, Director of the National Museum of Natural History, Santiago de Chile. The various contributions were sent to the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage at Lima, Peru, where Miss Juana Truel, a linguist and specialist in comparative literature associated with the project, prepared an initial synthesis.

The contributing authors have been in the forefront of the museum movement in Latin America and the Caribbean; many of them are already well known to professional colleagues. Because of the role they play today—whether locally, regionally or internationally—in museum curatorship, management and exchange or in the formulation and execution of national heritage protection policies, Museum asked each of these specialists to send us a few pages on the ‘state of the art’ on the Latin American and Caribbean museum scene. In view of the forthcoming World Conference on Cultural Policies (Mexico City, 26 July–5 August 1982) we asked these authors to explore the problems of museums with particular reference to cultural policies in their countries. Each replied in his or her own terms. The synthesis that follows is neither a thorough objective survey of the situation as it is today nor a blueprint for the future. We hope, however, that it captures the pulse of museological life in the region, whose museums face challenges that are similar to those found throughout the Third World.

Latin America and the Caribbean make up a vast cultural mosaic of autochthonous as well as European, African and, in some cases, Asian contributions.

This cross-cultural identity is still evolving, and the peoples of the region are becoming increasingly aware of the specific values and creative potential of their various heritages. In this process, now that they are at long last perceived as a vital source of inspiration for development, museums are being called upon to play a major role.

The cultural policies of the states of the region are as diverse as the cultures themselves and the political and socio-economic systems that are found here.

In spite of these differences, however, the global definition of culture proposed by the National Institute of Culture of Panama would no doubt be welcomed by all:

The simplest definition of culture is that it is any intentional action taken by man that affects the world of nature. In accordance with this anthropological definition, the concept of culture embraces all sorts of things which reflect material and spiritual values in the historical dimension. It covers everything done by man: the experience acquired in his labours, the mechanisms he uses for communicating his experiences so that they may be reproduced, the methods by which he reveals their importance. Production, technology and the relations established by people among themselves to produce, and to distribute what has been produced—in other words, the very organization of society—are all part of culture.¹

This new approach to culture is both the product and the promoter of a new way of conceiving the role of the museum.

Ten years of evolution

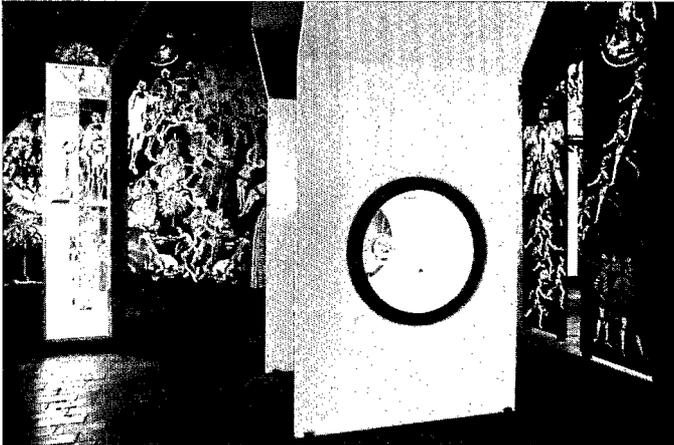
The round table entitled 'The Role of Museums in Today's Latin America', organized by Unesco at Santiago de Chile in 1972, marked a turning-point for

1. Panama, National Institute of Culture, *Cultural Policy in the Republic of Panama*, p. 18, Paris, Unesco, 1978.



MUSEU PARAENSE EMILIO GOELDI, Brazil. Scientific research that includes both nature and culture and is based on field-work is the cornerstone of any global socio-economic plan to fulfil the museum's responsibilities towards the heritage of man. [Photo: Pedro Oswaldo Cruz.]

MUSEO IGNACIO AGRAMONTE, Camaguëy, Cuba. Exhibition hall on the presence of blacks in Cuba and the slave trade.
[Photo: © Paolo Gasparini.]



MUSEO NACIONAL DE BELLAS ARTES, Havana. Exhibition *Furniture in Cuba*.
[Photo: Grandal, Havana.]



the museology of the region. Significantly enough, that meeting was an encounter—no doubt one of the first of its kind—between museum people and specialists in a variety of natural, social and applied science disciplines. Out of this interdisciplinarity, the only adequate approach to contemporary reality, emerged the idea of a particular social mission for the museums of the region and the definition of the ‘integral museum’. These ideas would surely be valid anywhere, and in the Latin American context they required as much transformation of the institution’s role as they did entirely new ideas and conceptions.²

Previously, museums had tended to be static institutions primarily concerned with the custody and scientific classification of a heritage all too often detached from the needs of present-day society, or—in the case of the art museums—dedicated to the values of European art. In the last decade, however, museums have taken on the challenge of making this heritage relevant to contemporary cultural development and creativity.

The new conception naturally brought with it a new set of principles and criteria. Ten years later, what sort of assessment can be made? Are those ideas still valid? What are the current preoccupations and new directions? If so how can we assess their implementation? What impact have they made on the policy-makers and decision-makers?

The first answer would be to say that the lesson of Santiago is still of fundamental relevance.

In Mexico, for example, museological practice has certainly kept up with statements of principle. Yet even Felipe Lacouture, Director of the Museo Nacional de Historia (National Museum of History) in Mexico City, warns that ‘museums cannot stand apart from the major national needs and problems. Because of the place of the continent in the international division of labour, large numbers of people do not have access to the type of life enjoyed in the industrialized nations... Likewise, a situation derived from the social division of labour affects the culture of a large segment of the population, which has no access to education and lives in the most precarious conditions. We certainly cannot afford the luxury of an unstructured type of museology, one that is mere dilettantism. It must be based on a global view, in order to integrate man into his total context.’

Roderick C. Ebanks, Head of the Institute of Jamaica’s Museums and Archaeological Division, emphasizes the fact that ‘the implications of the concept of cultural identity are great, especially in a country like Jamaica, characterized by cultural pluralism based on European, African, mulatto and Asiatic heritages. Out of this plurality of forms and concepts, a new nation emerged

2. As neatly expressed by Mario E. Teruggi in the issue of *Museum* devoted to the round table, ‘the Santiago round table introduced a new way of posing problems in connection with museums, for a little reflection shows us that a subtle difference has crept into the approach to museums as cultural institutions. Up to now a museum has only been conceived in terms of the past, which is its *raison d’être*. Museologists assemble, catalogue, conserve and exhibit the works, including the throwouts, of previous cultures, close to or far removed from our own. In the temporal dimension, the museum is a vector which starts in the present and whose far end is in the past. With the round table’s agreement that the museum should take on a role in development, it is simply intended to inverse the direction of the temporal vector which we now get with its starting-point at some moment in the past, with its far end, the “arrowhead”, reaching the present and even beyond it into the future. In a certain sense the museologist is being asked to cease merely scavenging the jetsam of the past and become, in addition, an expert on the present and forecaster of the future.’ (*Museum*, Vol. XXV, No. 3, 1973, pp. 131–2.)

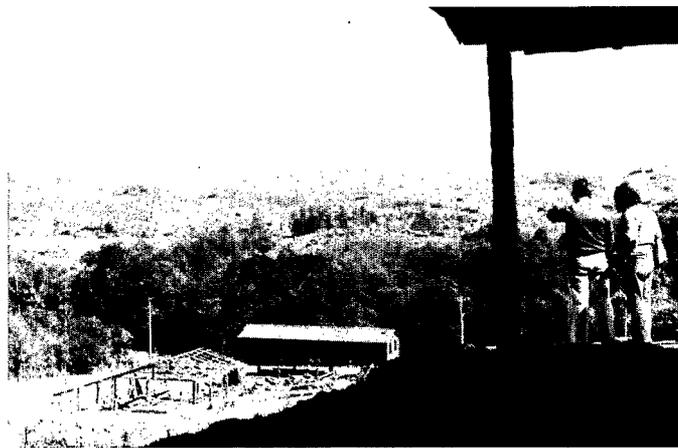
MUSEU DA RUA, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. A group of photographic panels, ready to be set up in different parts of the city, attract a new type of public and display contemporary social and urban problems.

[Photo: Gabriel Carvalho.]



MUSEU AO AR LIVRE, Orleans, Brazil. The museum under construction in 1980. Local artisans and masons from the area are themselves building their museum, using traditional techniques. The town of Orleans can be seen in the background.

[Photo: Museu ao Ar Livre.]



in 1962. These different heritages, often antagonistic to each other, have to be reconciled. Thus, museums in Jamaica have the challenging role of assisting in the fulfilment of our national motto: "Out of many, one people".³

Manuel Espinoza, Director of the Galería de Arte Nacional (National Art Gallery) in Caracas, also believes that museums in developing countries are essential in determining and strengthening the personality of the nation: 'If museums formerly looked to what was being done and appreciated abroad, today their task is to promote national identity.'

Cuba, a country with only seven museums in 1959, has more than sixty museum facilities throughout the country today. A characteristic of the Cuban cultural policy has been the interest placed on national roots. Marta Arjona, Director of the Cultural Heritage in Cuba, recalls the words of José Martí, which, though written in 1891, are very applicable to today's situation:

The history of America, starting with the Incas and up to the present, must be taught thoroughly, even though the history of Greece is not taught. Our Greece is preferable to the Greece which is not ours. It is more necessary to us.... The rest of the world must be grafted on our republics, but our republics must constitute the trunk.

'When analysing museums and their relation to culture,' says Marta Arjona, 'it is essential to bear in mind the reality of America's history. If we want to help rescue the cultural values of our nations by means of the museum, we must start by rescuing historical truth. Can we study the presence of blacks in our lands without mentioning the savagery of slavery? Can we talk of our natural resources without mentioning the exploitation of the Indian, the first element of our identity? Can we mention our geography, the beauty of our natural resources, without pointing to the destruction brought about by insatiable foreigners who violate it?'

Another clear example of the affirmation of national values is the Museo del Hombre Panameño in Panama, which occupies, symbolically enough, what used to be the terminal station of the former Panama Railroad Company. This American company, inaugurated in the middle of the nineteenth century, represented a long period of economic and cultural domination by the United States in the Isthmus. Today the museum exhibits an extraordinary collection of objects testifying to a national culture synthesized through centuries of cohabitation among at least a dozen ethnic groups. In its different didactic exhibits—Synthesis of Panamanian Culture, Archaeology, Gold, Culture Contact and Ethnography—a material summary of the past and present of Panamanian man is displayed.

3. Jamaican museology began to stir in a more modern spirit during the mid-1970s. For the first eighty years of its existence the collections of the Institute of Jamaica comprised Arawak and Amerindian finds and natural history specimens. The collections have expanded rapidly in the last twenty years, and today the institute's Archaeological Division operates seven museums: the African Museum, based on objects from the west coast of Africa; the Arawak Museum at Whitemar, located at the site of Jamaica's largest Amerindian settlement; the Fort Charles Maritime Museum at Port Royal; the Military Museum; the National Museum of Historical Archaeology, which includes an explanation of the archaeological process; Old King's House Archaeological Museum (which was the governor's residence up to 1872); the Peoples' Museum of Craft and Technology, based on a collection of indigenous crafts and industrial elements used and created in Jamaica over the past 300 years.

Communicating

Luis G. Lumbreras, archaeologist and former Director of the National Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology of Lima, agrees with Felipe Lacouture when he states: 'We cannot talk of a culture of "products" without mentioning the "producers". In many of our history museums the people are absent.'

Lumbreras is convinced that museums must help create a social conscience which is projected positively to the future; he warns against the regressive connotation which some archaeological museums communicate. 'Museums which enhance the past', he says, 'to the detriment of the present and the future give a false image of history. Pride in the past is a false pride if the permanent character of social change is not put forward as well. Museums should show the tasks already carried out by the people, and those still to be undertaken.'⁴ This global approach to the historical process will be taken into account in the museography and displays of the new National Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology of Lima. (An article on the project will appear in a future issue.)

Such intentions as those just described denote clearly that the educational role of the museum is at the heart of the ambitions expressed by the region's museologists. It was already implicit in the formulation of a 'social mission' that was put forward at Santiago. A more recent cultural policy statement from Costa Rica puts it directly:

Museums should not be buildings in which historic and artistic objects are accumulated, but centres for education and diversion, equipped to supplement the education and cultural training of the people. They should be one further component in the complex machinery of education, which is designed to enable all the members of society, without discrimination, whether intentional or not, to live an active cultural life.⁵

Felipe Lacouture recalls that, having defined the museum as 'a centre of communication by means of objects', the Santiago round table stressed 'the advantage of setting up permanent methods of evaluating exhibitions, in order to know whether the community was truly profiting by them'.

'The problem of communication', points out Lacouture, 'is especially acute in Latin America, where museum visitors have traditionally been inhibited and uncritical. Communication means dialogue, not imposition. In order to have dialogue, we must have feedback. If not, we only transmit a message, but do not know how it has been received.'

'It is essential to get to know the public in our continent,' he continues, 'its reaction to exhibits, its ability to understand them. We must take into account visitors' opinions and suggestions. Unfortunately, this dialogue with the public only takes place in a few of the large museums.'

It is all very well to define museums as 'mass education centres'. But how can one reach a public that does not visit museums?

The population of the region was about 63 million at the beginning of the century. Today it is 523 million. At the end of the century it will have reached 630 million. Says Felipe Lacouture: 'Mexico City, at the beginning of the century, occupied an area of 40 square kilometres; today this area surpasses 500 square kilometres. Now, traditionally, the problem of museums was solved by building large ones. We may well ask ourselves: "How do these museums function today in such vast metropolitan areas?" We cannot continue to conceive our museology in terms of these great "banks of objects", whose action is so limited. Museums must reach the public at large. Some efforts have been made, but the time has come for each of the large national museums to establish true "branches" in the different urban areas. These would form a network of small entities not only dedicated to the museum's traditional functions, but where the active participation of the community could also be tapped.'⁶

In Chile, for example, museums and universities work in close collabor-

4. Sylvio Mutal, Chief Technical Adviser and Regional Co-ordinator of the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage, recalls that often the collections in archaeological museums have been established following aesthetic criteria alone and do not reflect the whole history of the period: 'The art shown, of which we feel proud, is the product of a dominant social class, often a theocracy. But a museum must be the reflection of the whole historical process: it must show how the common people lived, what they produced. Only thus is it possible for the common visitor to identify himself with past history.'

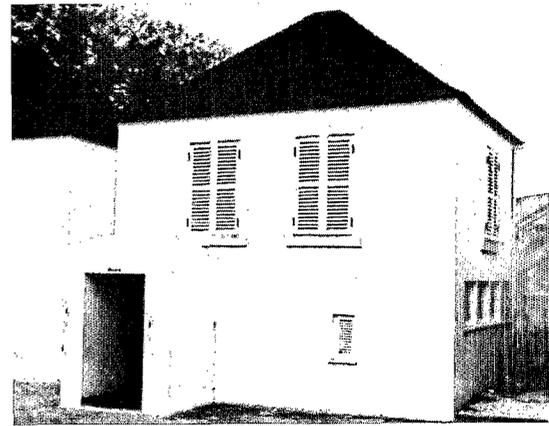
5. Samuel Rovinski, *Cultural Policy in Costa Rica*, p. 49, Paris, Unesco, 1977.

6. Reacting precisely to the urban explosion, museums in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil, sought to go beyond their own walls by participating in the 'Museus da Rua' (street museums) experiment. Exhibits and panels were set up in the streets in different parts of the city.

ation; often the higher-echelon museum staff, apart from doing research, also teach at a university. Many museums publish their own scientific reviews. Dr Grete Mostny remarks, however, that 'we need to establish a pedagogy suited to the museum—still lacking in Chile—in order to develop a strategy for the communication of knowledge'. Nevertheless, a number of experiments launched by museums, such as the 'Juventudes Científicas de Chile' (Science for the Youth of Chile) and their 'Ferias Científicas Juveniles' (Young Peoples' Scientific Fairs) have become an important national movement and receive the support of the National Committee for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICYT) and the Academy of Sciences of the Instituto de Chile.

In Jamaica, museologists planning exhibitions that tie the different heritages into the others and try to reveal as much as possible of the continental histories are careful to prepare didactic exhibits that take into account the fact that 60 per cent of the population is illiterate. In order to make this information accessible, museum attendants have been trained to carry out guided tours. In addition, a three-dimensional exhibition script format is being developed, starting at a basic literate level and going up to a high-school fifth-form level.

At this stage, in the light of such hopes, the critical observer will be justified in asking how well practice has corresponded to theory or, to put it more bluntly, to what extent the means available have been adequate to the ambitions expressed. Museums in Latin America and the Caribbean—with the possible exception of one or two of the most prosperous countries—share the scarcity of financial resources and the relatively low priority in the hierarchy of state-supported services that are the lot of museums throughout the developing world. At an informal consultation on the 'state of the art' with respect to the preservation and presentation of the cultural heritage, organized by Unesco in Paris in June 1981, it was pointed out that many countries lack a 'clear national policy for the protection of the cultural heritage, defined operationally as part of the overall development planning process. The problem is both one of decision-making and of a society-wide approach. At government



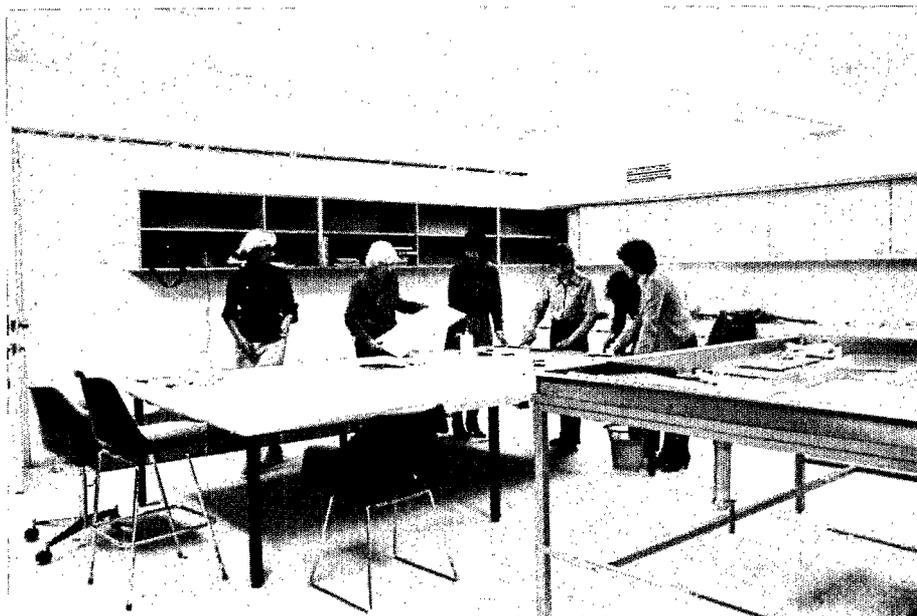
FORT CHARLES MARITIME MUSEUM, Port Royal, Jamaica. A museum devoted to maritime history and technology in the region, created in 1978 and installed in Nelson's House.

[Photo: Fort Charles Maritime Museum.]



Latin America's rich architectural heritage is given a new life as museums are created in historic buildings. The courtyard of the Palacio de la Real Audiencia, a neoclassical building dating from 1804, the former seat of the supreme colonial authority, which is being restored to its original character and will house the Museo Histórico Nacional de Chile.

[Photo: Museo Histórico Nacional de Chile.]



MUSEO CHILENO DE ARTE PRECOLOMBINO, Santiago de Chile. Conservation and laboratory infrastructure is still lacking in many institutions. This museum, inaugurated in December 1981, has a well-equipped textile conservation and restoration workshop.

[Photo: Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino.]

7. *Museum* hopes nevertheless that the material presented here will prove to be sufficiently thought-provoking to justify some frank self-evaluation that might be published in a future issue.

8. Eduardo Martínez, *La política cultural in México*, pp. 67–8, Paris, Unesco, 1977.

9. Solana explained that 'in keeping with the first of these principles, the government considers museums above all as attestations of freedom of creativity and cultural expression. All museums, each according to its character and purpose, must testify to the unrestricted development of culture, be it at the international, national, or local level. They must not hamper spontaneity and genuine art, scientific discovery or historical facts with temporary official interpretations. Museums are by nature generous, hospitable and essentially anti-dogmatic institutions.'

'The increase and improvement of our museums are evidence of the support and stimulus that the Mexican Government, by virtue of the second principle mentioned, is giving to cultural creativity.'

'The state's intervention in ensuring the accessibility, dissemination and distribution of cultural properties—the third principle—applies especially to museums. The government considers them to be an integral part of education and it intends to convert them into dynamic instruments of a truly democratic education. In particular, it is encouraging teachers to use museums as an educational resource and to introduce their pupils to the habit of visiting and enjoying them.'

'Finally, museums are an invaluable help in preserving the national cultural heritage, the fourth of the principles guiding Mexican cultural policy. This last point is particularly relevant in view of the title theme of this conference: "The World's Heritage—the Museum's Responsibilities".'

'Every country must preserve and disseminate the cultural properties that constitute the particular characteristics of its peoples. Artefacts produced by man last longer than he does and have the virtue of evoking the human realities that gave rise to present forms of cultural expression. Governments have a duty to preserve the cultural heritage of their countries and to stimulate the creativity of their peoples. This duty goes hand in hand with the obligation to strengthen sovereignty and national independence.'

level, as at the level of the general public, preservation and presentation of the heritage are viewed as something apart from life and culture today.'

Among the specific points noted were the following:

Insufficient protective legislation, which is the basic instrument of decision-making.

Personnel and human resources—the instrument of implementation—to protect cultural property are not adequately provided by states, even when the latter adopt legislation that indicates the necessity of such infrastructure. The necessity to clarify the processes of policy-making in relation to the cultural heritage. Who are the policy-makers? What expertise is required for policy-making? How can the policy-makers be influenced?

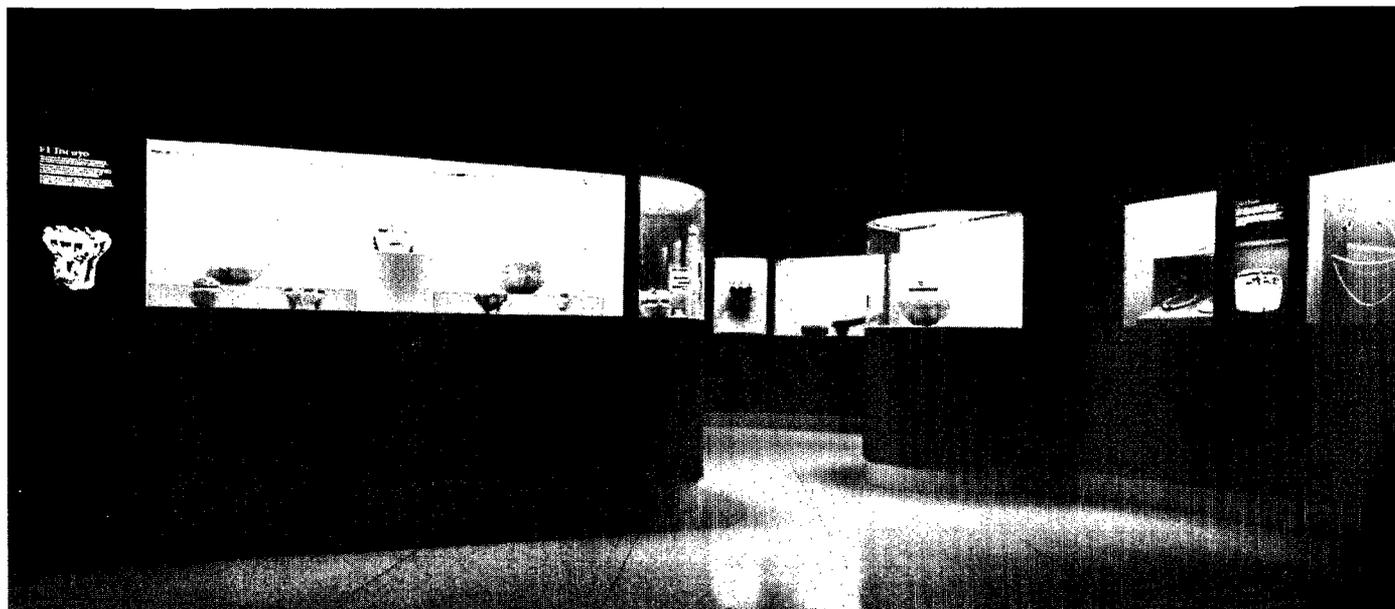
Shortcomings in the way the region's museum professionals themselves have attempted to overcome these obstacles to this situation have been implied in the observations cited above. Too implicitly perhaps, and some readers may find the self-assessment, together with the comments formulated in other articles, somewhat lacking in critical force.⁷

Be that as it may, and in defence of museum workers themselves, it cannot be denied that many governments of the region have not yet realized the place of museums in the success of their cultural policy. There are noteworthy exceptions. In Mexico and Venezuela, for example, museums are an integral part of a programme clearly stated in national development plans. Thus Mexico's National Plan for 1977–82 states:

With a view to promoting a better knowledge of the nation's history and of the archaeological and ethnographical characteristics of the population, the National Plan foresees, among other things, the establishment of a National Organization of Museums. Existing museums in both small and large towns would be linked to it. As a result, the inhabitants of the country will be able to have a view as complete as possible of the historical and cultural heritage of the nation and of the world. This will be done in a programmed manner. An endeavour will also be made to initiate students in the study of museography, at different educational levels, by organizing small museums in each school, where objects of a purely local or even personal significance could be shown.⁸

Delivering the inaugural address at ICOM's Twelfth General Conference in Mexico City, Fernando Solana, Mexico's Minister of Public Education, made it clear that the four principles underlying his government's cultural policy—'freedom for creation, encouragement of cultural production, participation in the distribution of cultural properties and services and preservation of the nation's cultural heritage'—also applied to the development of museums.⁹

'Venezuela', says Manuel Espinoza, 'constitutes a unique case in the context of Latin America. Its democratic experience has generated a level of conscious-



ness in cultural matters which demands of the government . . . the clear formulation of a “model of cultural development” required in a democratic and plural society, with full participation of its members.’

The Sixth National Development Plan for 1981–85 has incorporated, for the first time, a special chapter devoted to the development of culture, drawn up on the basis of data furnished by the institutions themselves. In this sense, the museums have established their own Five-Year Plan.

‘Venezuela’s museums’, says Espinoza, ‘had been the promoters of a type of art produced and valued internationally in the world’s capitals, ignoring the cultural and historic requirements of their own community.’ The 1970s brought a growing awareness of a true domestic role and responsibility. (See article by José Balza in this issue of *Museum*.)

One of the tasks of the National Culture Council (CONAC), the leading organism for cultural development in Venezuela, is to stimulate museum activities. Improvements in the infrastructure and the use of available space in the principal museums and galleries will be made. Likewise, training courses for museum personnel will be established, museum publications programmes will be supported, and conservation and restoration centres will be set up. Aid will also be given to the National Centre for Information and Documentation on the Plastic Arts.

In Chile, on the other hand, where no centralized institution exists, there has been an extraordinary revival of museums in recent years. As elsewhere, the first Chilean museums were created in the early days of independence. The National Museum, known today as Museo Nacional de Historia Natural, dates back to 1830. At the turn of the century, Chile had 8 museums; in 1972 there were 61. Today they number 150.

From definitions to living museums

Museum professionals deplore the gap between cultural policies that postulate a comprehensive and living definition of culture and the actual support governments extend to museums, which may still be derived from limited and élitist notions. In Brazil, however, Aloisio Magalhaes, Secretary of State for Culture, Director of SPHAN (Sub-secretariat of Historical and Cultural Heritage) and of the Pro-Memória Foundation, points out that ‘culture constitutes a global process. It is not separate from environmental conditions. One cannot enhance products (a house, a temple, an artefact, a dance) to the detriment of the conditions of the ecological space in which these products were made.

‘Culture and education are considered an indissoluble whole, that is to say, that the learned knowledge of the professional who plans a building, a house,

GALERÍA DE ARTE NACIONAL, Caracas. To show the *Huellas* (‘Traces’) exhibition, presenting ancient pre-Columbian civilizations, the museum adapted and remodelled its spaces.

[Photo: Galería de Arte Nacional]

a school, a church or a city finds its equivalent in the popular know-how of those who, from childhood, have learned from the local craftsmen the skills applied in agriculture or fishing, or in the production of ceramics and textiles.

'This orientation of our cultural policy led us to place special attention on small, regional museums, called the "everything" museums, linked to the rural environment.

'We try to transform these museums into increasingly active community centres, which will come nearer to the "integral museum" concept.

'This policy is centrally conceived and administered by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Institutional mechanisms have been created to promote both artistic creativity—literature, theatre, music, cinema and the visual arts—and the preservation and presentation of cultural property. Taken together, both of these areas are of capital importance in regard to the new concept of museums and of their role in society.'

For example, the Museu do Ar Livre of Orleans (a town in the state of Santa Catarina in southern Brazil) was planned with and handed over to the local community by SPHAN and the Pro-Memória Foundation. The museum shows, in a dynamic way, the technological culture of the nineteenth-century immigrants and their descendants so as to revitalize the cultural life of the region and give support to local schools by sponsoring 'learning experiences' where children come into contact with the culture of the area. It was proposed to the federal institutions and educational organizations by the local people themselves, who actually carried out the project.

They used traditional building techniques to construct the museum, employing local craftsmen and masons. A special effort was made to preserve harmony with the surrounding environment. Endangered species among the region's flora were conserved.

Another museum organized by the community is the Museu Casa Setecentista, located in the Casa da Princesa in the city of Pilar de Goiás (State of Goiás). This is literally a 'live' museum, since the premises are used for community meetings and other activities. The museum was inaugurated on 28 June 1981, the day of the celebration of the popular feast of the Holy Spirit. Both this house and the Casa de Câmara e Cadeia, in the same city, were restored by SPHAN/Pro-Memória. Following suggestions made by the community, the Casa de Câmara e Cadeia will become the headquarters for the youth clubs of the city.

Self-help comes first

These few examples remind us that in Latin America and the Caribbean, as elsewhere, museum development cannot afford to turn its back on private initiative, especially when the contribution of the state may be supplemented—or indeed replaced—by a commitment that is not necessarily the finance provided by the commercial or industrial sector (see article, p. 84 below) but rather the labour of individual members of a community. Indeed, unless personal commitment is actually achieved, how credible are the museum's claims to be serving its community?

Frances Kay Brinkley, Curator of the Carriacou Historical Society Museum, tells the unusual story of this museum, created by the community on this island dependency of Grenada, only 24 km long and 8 km wide. The museum was established without any government funding.

At the time of the creation of the museum, Carriacou had a population of about 7,000, mainly small farmers, fishermen, sailors and boatbuilders. Says Brinkley: 'It was not, you would think, very fertile ground in which to start an historical society and museum. Ninety-five per cent of the population didn't know what a museum *was*. The idea began floating around in 1974. Some of the island's inhabitants (the hotel administrator and his wife, a young bartender, the wife of the island's only planter, an artist) had been collecting old stoneware jars, and digging for Amerindian artefacts. These were really the nucleus when the floating idea was verbalized.'

Before starting, the group made a general inventory of the specific heritage of the material culture of the islanders which needed to be preserved and of which the latter should be made aware. The group had to decide what the collections would contain and on what basis the museum would function. They also considered whether to ask the government for aid or not.

Since Carriacou has three cultural heritages—African, Amerindian and European—the museum was planned with a section for each culture. ‘As to funding,’ observes Frances Kay Brinkley, ‘considering the political situation at that time, it was decided not to ask for the government’s help. The main source of funds would be membership dues. These came from Regular and Associate Members and Patrons. A Special Associate Membership was established, open only to Carriacouans living on the island. We did not want anyone saying he was not a member because he could not afford the fee. The minimum due was set at 1 EC a year (2.70 EC = \$1).’

Another important decision was what to include in the museum’s collection. The criteria were the amount of space available, achieving a balance of collections and securing public interest: ‘The first two are obvious restrictions for all museums. The third took a form that is perhaps something that would not occur to a European museologist. If you have succeeded in giving people an affection for and a pride in their museum, they are going to start bringing you things they have at home. Naturally, sometimes there will be things you will have to refuse. But it is better to take them and store them (if they are not welcome, or are absolute horrors) than damping the enthusiasm for the museum born in the donor’s heart.’

But in the final analysis and despite such success stories, museums must continue to rely heavily on state support. Roderick C. Ebanks reminds us aptly that ‘the task of museum development in Third World countries passing through an economic crisis is a very real challenge. But the lack of financing is not the major factor in the lack of development. Rather lack of knowledge, of trained people, of clearly defined objectives, of advanced planning and of integrated cultural services all play havoc with the best intentions.’

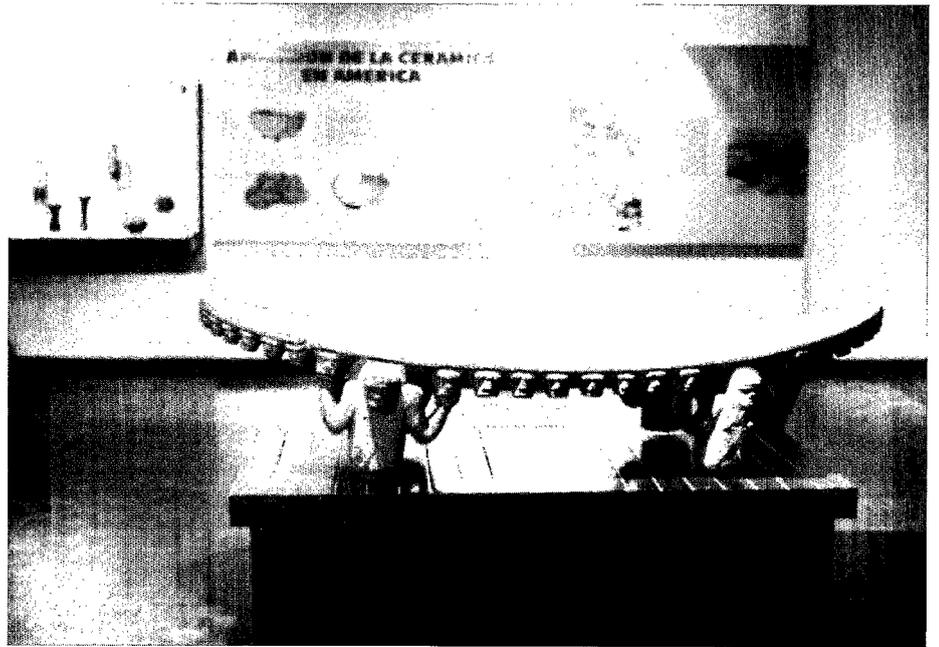
The solution proposed by this museum expert is, in the first place, to motivate professionally the museum staff and to educate the public. Among the latter are the politicians and administrators of cultural affairs, who ‘are not informed about museums and their demands: they think about museums as storehouses for national exotica, or as a way of enticing a few more dollars from the tourist’s pocket. Consequently, they are not encouraged to invest funds in a museum. We must make these senior decision-makers and policy-makers aware of the museological process.’



BANCO CONTINENTAL, Lima. Children and museums.

[Photo: S. Mutal.]

MUSEO DEL HOMBRE PANAMEÑO, Panama.
Interpreting the history of the region's
material culture.
[Photo: Sylvio Mutal.]



MUSEO ARQUEOLOGICO Y GALERIAS DE ARTE
DEL BANCO CENTRAL DEL ECUADOR, Quito.
Christ being baptized by John the Baptist.
[Photo: S. Mutal.]

Museum financing: taking up the challenge

Sergio Durán Pitarque

Born in Quito, Ecuador, in 1949. Studied economics at the Universidad Central del Ecuador. Attended courses at the Churubusco Centre, Mexico, and the First Course for Directors and Administrators of Museums of Latin America at the School of Restoration and Museology, Bogotá. Visiting lecturer, Second Course for Directors and Administrators, School of Restoration and Museology, Bogotá. Deputy Director of the Museums of the Central Bank of Ecuador. Professor of Museology and Museography at the Instituto Tecnológico Equinoccial, School of Restoration and Museography, Quito, Ecuador. Member of the Board of Directors of the Ecuadorian Association of Museums. Has written articles for various periodicals.

Belén Rojas Guardia

Born in Caripito, Venezuela, in 1945. Anthropologist. Worked for ten years as a producer of documentaries, mostly in the area of scientific and technological development. Head of Production of four feature films: *Fiebre*, *Santana*, *Se solicita Muchacha* and *El Vividor*. Head of the Research Department at the National Art Gallery; at present Deputy Technical Director with responsibilities for planning and co-ordinating the museum's technical activities.

In Latin America and the Caribbean—as throughout the developing world—the overriding museum problem is the lack of funds.

Their poverty explains why most museums operate as static institutions, incapable of reaching out to the community of which they form a part. The same complaint from museum directors and staff can be heard time and again: 'We can't do anything because we haven't the money.' Many simply cannot afford to employ the necessary qualified staff; while others, which do have staff skilled in modern museological techniques, find that their projects are thwarted because they do not possess the means to set up their exhibitions properly or store their collections in suitable conditions. Museums are more often than not unable to acquire new objects or establish efficient security systems.

Some countries with a rich historical tradition—especially pre-Columbian—are more inclined to allocate a share of their budgets to archaeological museums, since the authorities regard them as tourist attractions and consider that any increase in tourism means earnings for the country. This argument is not valid, however, for all countries and, more important still, side-steps the real role of the museum: an educational establishment designed for the community. It strengthens our conviction that museums will receive adequate financing only when governments recognize how important they are and that the object of every museum (whether it deals with history, science, technology or natural history) is to present all aspects of the country's cultural identity and its development. Museums will be allocated sufficient funds—of the same order as those earmarked for health, education and social welfare—only when governments consider them to be part of the country's integral development.

Unfortunately, there is no detailed comparative analysis based on concrete financial data of how funds are allocated to museums in the various countries. As a general rule, the budget for state museums is taken out of funds allocated to the 'cultural sector' as a whole, some of which are earmarked for museums. The amounts vary according to the priorities established for each country's cultural sector.

Significant changes have nevertheless oc-

curred in recent years. In Brazil and Venezuela, for example, the government has given substantial financial support to museums. In Ecuador and Colombia museum activity has been encouraged by contributions from the state and private banks alike. The private sector is now more aware of the value of museums, and its help in financing them is increasing, albeit in an ad hoc and sporadic way.

Financing is also a field in which museologists need to receive specific training. Ideally, economists and managers should always be part of the team administering a museum. As Jacques Rigaud pointed out at ICOM's Twelfth General Conference in Mexico City, 'the time has come to proclaim this truth: museums have become enterprises in the fullest and most modern sense of the word. Here again, their lot is not very different from that of other cultural institutions committed to creativity, conservation, and dissemination, and faced with the same managerial problems, whether it be in the field of the theatre, of audio-visuals, or of multiple cultural activities. In every case it is difficult to gain acceptance of the idea that cultural institutions are both original entities because of their objectives and also, in a certain way, enterprises, that is to say communities for work and exchange, with an autonomous responsibility for combining all the means available to achieve their goals.'

Ecuador and Venezuela—one with a struggling economy and the other a member of OPEC—both provide interesting examples of how the museum sector can break the vicious circle of finance. Sergio Durán Pitarque, Deputy Director of the Museums of the Central Bank of Ecuador, and Belén Rojas Guardia, Deputy Technical Director of the National Art Gallery in Caracas, responded to Museum's request for information. Somewhat condensed versions of their two articles follow.¹

1. We should like to record our gratitude to Juana Truel and Sylvio Mutal at the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage in Lima, Peru, who prepared this introductory section. The summary versions of the following two articles were also drafted by them.

Sergio Durán Pitarque

What can be done?

Whether they house collections that depict a country's archaeological wealth or colonial past, its historical development, its contemporary visual arts or architectural development, museums are economically and administratively dependent on two distinct systems: (a) central or regional governments or municipal bodies; (b) private individuals, foundations and organizations.

Government authorities at the various levels generally include museums in their annual operational budgets. They almost invariably allocate minimal annual amounts that barely suffice for the upkeep of exhibition rooms with poorly organized museography, totally lacking in any didactic function.

Because of the museums' lack of administrative and economic autonomy such budgets are not made directly available to the museum directors. The result of this is that the latter are never quite sure what resources they can definitely count on for carrying out their programmes. The budgets are quite inadequate to the genuine needs, which are in fact declared in the annual museum budget *pro forma*. Government approval is usually given for budgetary allocations for fixed expenditure. But, generally speaking, there is no allocation of stable, let alone increasing, budgets that would allow museums to augment their collections. This is probably the most important reason for the pillaging of the cultural heritage of Latin America and Caribbean countries.

In the case of private museums, funds generally depend on the economic solvency of their owners and the interest on capital invested that is made over to the management. This kind of museum has greater autonomy and often a larger budget, enabling it to reach out actively to the community. It is true, however, that there are also private museums that do not adequately carry out their museological functions, even though they are so financed.

Museums do not only incur expenses. They also earn income in the form of entrance fees; photographic, film and televi-

sion rights, etc; donations (including contributions from the 'Friends of the Museum' in their different categories); sale of reproductions, books and other articles in the museum shops; rental of premises; cafeteria; subscription to publications, etc. These earnings are not generally administered by the museums themselves, however. On the contrary, they are deposited in the treasury through the Ministries of Finance or in the bank accounts of institutions or foundations. The result is that not only do museums remain short of the resources they need, they also are unable to recover the funds they themselves generate.

It is also true that the directors of many museums adopt a rather devil-may-care attitude. They are often elderly people dedicated to writing 'memoirs', whose frames of reference are *élitist*; in other words, museums are run by 'refined people' who need give no thought to reaching the general public. It is worth while to remember the words of Hernán Crespo Toral, Director of the Museum of the Central Bank of Ecuador: 'The museum cannot be restricted to its premises, nor its message to a selected few: the museum must reach everyone, be completely involved in existing problems, or else disappear.'

What can be done to brighten such a gloomy situation? The main challenge to be taken up is obviously that of creating the necessary awareness among government authorities. We must help them to realize that the preservation and presentation of the cultural heritage constitute an essential basis for harmonious socio-economic development. We museum people must expose the bitter paradox of multi-million-dollar budgets for the acquisition of war material that serves only for man's destruction of man, on the grounds that we must be 'in a position to defend our native soil', when we are frequently ignorant about our own history.

We also need to stimulate the establishment of independent national funds for the support and promotion of artistic and cultural activities. Private firms could play a very important role in this field.

On a practical level additional funds may also be obtained through initiatives taken directly by museum directors and their staff, e.g.:

Stimulating passage of a law allocating to museums revenue received through the main export products from the area in which they are located.

An administrative decision to allocate to museums part of the receipts from sales of seized contraband goods.

A similar measure could provide for a small tax to be imposed on admission fees for different public shows, such as the cinema, sports meetings, etc.

Some museums could hire out unimportant art works in order to raise funds.

Encouraging ICOM's National Committees, national museum associations or ministries of education and culture in all the Latin American countries to carry out objective analyses of the state of our museums, so that we may identify genuine needs and find possible solutions to the problems.

There are certainly many innovative ways of financing museums. For example, in order to assist a small, well-established museum of religious art in one of our small towns—with a not very religious community—it was suggested that the inhabitants should be consulted about the possibility of each owner of an electricity meter donating to the museum the equivalent of \$3 per month over and above his electricity costs. The consultation yielded positive results, and it is expected that the equivalent of \$2,900 per month will be collected.

In many countries, institutions such as financial concerns, private banks with national capital, and autonomous state bodies, especially the central or reserve banks, have taken cognizance of this problem and have begun to lend decisive support to museums. In these cases, the government offers tax concessions to private businesses that donate such a percentage of their profits. These firms frequently acquire museum pieces, realizing their excellent investment value, since cultural property never depreciates as other assets do; rather, the reverse is true, since the price increases as time goes by. As for autonomous state institutions, their officials have grasped the fact that a country's socio-economic development cannot be separated from its cultural development, and have also realized that properly presented the cultural heritage stimulates demand for enjoying it and leads to an increase in its economic profitability.

Thus the Central Bank of Ecuador has acquired archaeological, ethnographic and numismatic collections as well as colonial and modern art. Thousands of objects are now made accessible to Ecuador's people through the bank's museums in Quito, the capital, and in the cities of Guayaquil, Cuenca and Manta, as well as its galleries in Esmeraldas, Ambato, Latacunga, Riobamba and Loja.

In addition to the budget it earmarks for the running of its museums, the bank also donates funds each year exclusively for carrying out projects of archaeological and anthropological research and the safeguard of monuments. Funds amounting to as much as 35 million sucres a year (about a million dollars) are also earmarked to set up museums and present exhibitions throughout the country.

This example could usefully be followed by similar establishments in other countries. Already the Banco de la República of Colombia is carrying out a similar task, with the Museo del Oro and its archaeological research programmes.

If the museums of Latin America and the Caribbean could rely on the understanding of those who govern them and therefore on sufficient funds, they could well become the most efficient vehicles for promoting and disseminating culture, by delivering valid messages and rendering real service to our countries, helping our people to overcome the bitter reality of so many political, social, economic and cultural problems. Effective museum activity will be the key that unlocks the door to better days for the nations of Juárez, Bolívar and San Martín.

[Translated from Spanish]

Belén Rojas Guardia

A fair share in Venezuela

How museums obtain sufficient financial resources, whether from state budgetary allocations or through contributions from the private sector, will depend on a series of factors and circumstances. These include the priorities established for the cultural sector in any particular development model, as expressed in a country's national plans, and the museum authorities' skill in implementing a bold and innovative fund-raising strategy.

The institution's efficiency, dynamism and scope are obviously decisive elements of museum financing. The quality of its exhibits, its degree of responsibility and professionalism, its training and educational activity, its capacity to attract every kind of public—in short, any action that confirms its historical role in shaping an authentic cultural identity—will be a positive asset. Venezuela has a democratic, pluralist and participatory political system, and an economy now grounded in oil wealth, all the basic industries of which are managed by the state. The latter assumes a clear responsibility to promote and encourage other sectors (non-productive in the strict economic sense) that form part of an overall development model, the final aim of which is to stimulate the capacity for innovation of individuals and communities in a harmonious relationship with the environment.

The state is the greatest, and almost exclusive, financial source of a large proportion of the country's cultural institutions (whether they are governmentally administered or not). In 1977 the new National Art Gallery (see the article p. 105) first took the initiative of directly and independently presenting its draft budget separate from the general budget traditionally submitted to the National Cultural Council (CONAC). Logistically, this move attracted the attention of organizations concerned with budgetary decision-making at the highest level to the problems facing the country's museums. It also temporarily separated the gallery from CONAC by a 'strategic' action that was perfectly legal yet imaginative enough to dramatize the state of our

museums, justifying their claim to be allocated resources as befits their role.

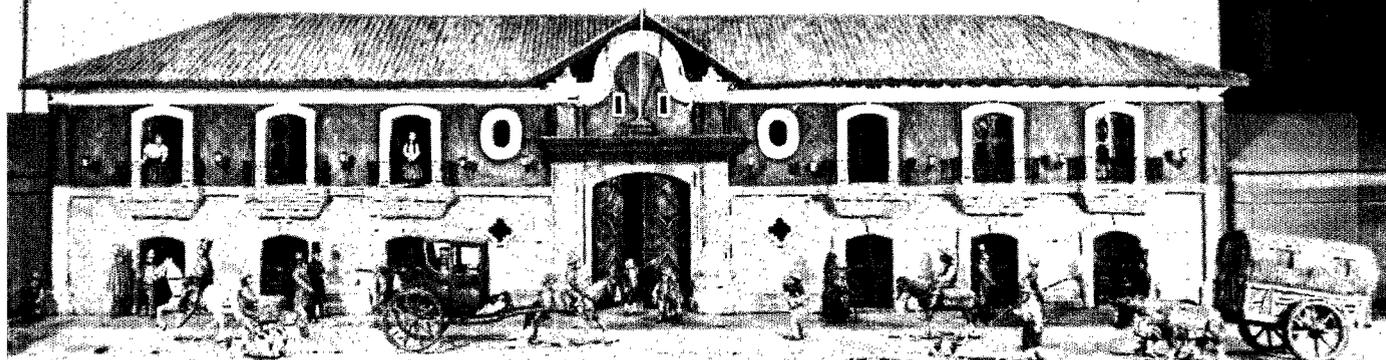
The success achieved by the gallery in its first year, the formation of a team of professionals whose will and dedication were revealed by putting theory into effective practice (eighteen itinerant exhibitions that travelled all over the country; research, conservation and preservation) allowed it to obtain the targeted budget that year. This sum was approximately equivalent to the budget for the previous ten years combined. It did no more than meet a need that had long been ignored.

This unprecedented measure gave rise to controversy about the rights of decentralized cultural institutions to go directly to the legislature for their budgets. The debate was resolved in our favour, and the country's museums were given the go-ahead to implement projects vital to the country's cultural personality, enabling them to consolidate their situation. In 1980 21 per cent of the total allocations of the National Cultural Council was set aside for the museum sector.

The museum's active and dynamic presence in our society has generated a climate of confidence. New avenues of financing are being opened up. These include the private sector, which is becoming increasingly aware of the need to participate in and contribute to the development of an institution that belongs and caters to everyone.

[Translated from Spanish]

En el transcurso de la vida de una ciudad
suceden hechos que incumben a todos quienes la habitan.
Importantes y más simples; patrióticos y ejemplares;
festivos y tristes; todos estos sucesos van escribiendo
páginas vivas de la historia de la ciudad.
Aquí se muestran escenificados algunos de esos
momentos cumbres que tuvieron por escenario
a nuestra ciudad de Santiago.



MUSEO DE SANTIAGO, Santiago de Chile.
Tracing the history of the urban
community: model of the former residence
of the Count of the Conquest.
[Photo: Museo de Santiago.]

New directions in museum organization

Fernanda de Camargo-Moro

B.A. and postgraduate degree in museology, M.A. and Ph.D. in archaeology. Assistant Professor and subsequently holder of the Chair of Archaeology in the Faculty of Museology of the Museu do Homen, Rio de Janeiro, 1968–71. Associate Professor of Anthropology at the Pontificia Universidade Catolica of Rio de Janeiro, 1974. Director of Cepi (Iconographic Research Centre), 1972–73, and Mouseion (Centre of Museological Studies and Sciences of Man) from 1973. Director of AMICOM–Mouseion seminars, Real Gabinete Portugues de Leitura, 1973–79. Supervisor of Museology at the Museum of Images of the Unconscious from 1973. President of the Rio de Janeiro Museums Foundation, 1979–80. At present Director-General of Museums in the State of Rio de Janeiro (FUNARJ), President of the Council for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage of the City of Rio de Janeiro, Chief Curator of the E. Klabin Rappaport Collection, Director of the ICOM–Brazil Museological Documentation Centre, President of the Brazilian Committee of ICOM and Member of the Executive Council of ICOM 1981–83. Author of books and articles on museology, archaeology and preservation. Has carried out several museological consultant missions for Unesco.

It is certainly an enormous responsibility to discuss museum organization in Latin America and the Caribbean in one short article. Fernanda de Camargo-Moro, who has considerable professional experience in her own country, Brazil, and more than passing acquaintance with various programmes in other parts of the continent, stresses that the views she expresses below are highly personal and still evolving, as is the entire process of museology in the region.

Volume XXV, No. 3, of *Museum*, entitled 'The Role of Museums in Today's Latin America', appeared too soon after the Santiago round table of 1972 to reflect the radically new approach the museums in the region were to adopt in response to the ideas developed during that meeting.

The changes have taken time to materialize. The geographical configuration of Latin America, with the slender strip of Central America joining Mexico to South America and the long expanse of the latter broken up by the barriers of the Andes, the Amazon basin and the Pantanal, restricts the scope for effective implementation of joint programmes. On the other hand, our common heritage and the pervasive Iberian influence since

colonial times, which bequeathed to us the essential medium of communication of cognate languages, are still powerful factors of cohesion.

Our efforts are greatly inhibited, however, by the difficulties of international travel within the region. In most cases, we are dependent on the air services linking capital to capital, which are usually very costly. Distances are enormous. Rio de Janeiro, for instance, is closer to Lisbon than to Mexico City. Overland travel is easier on the Atlantic side, but the problem of distance is compounded by the curvature of the Brazilian coast and the indented coastline of the southern zone. Transcontinental overland routes from the Atlantic to the Pacific are rare and in all cases time-consuming. And sea travel, even via the Panama Canal, which is still in use, is extremely circuitous.

These difficulties, combined with the world economic crisis, have tended to hold up the spread and implementation of the new museological ideas. But now that ten years have elapsed, we can begin to take stock of the changes in Latin America and consider the extent to which the new approach has also had an influence in the Caribbean and created linkages with the continent.¹

1. Jamaica has embarked on a vigorous museum organization programme and is forging strong links with the African museum movement. The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has already implemented an extensive museum renovation and expansion programme initiated in 1976 with Unesco's support.

Most of our museums were established in the nineteenth century in the image of European museums, generally those of the country wielding the greatest influence in the region at the time. Although the collections, generally transferred and donated by ruling or governing families² or assembled as a result of scientific and artistic missions from Europe, were of a very high standard, the underlying conception of the museums was extremely partial. The collection and preservation of local objects were entirely neglected; many of these objects were exported, and the remainder were displayed in the light of a foreign interpretation. There was no documentation of either imported or exported collections. Local material was ordered according to conceptions that led inevitably to its identification as natural history collections: the indigenous peoples and their cultures were shown side by side with exotic flowers and animals. A further anomaly was the exclusion of the cultures of Asia, Africa and our own continent from the rather insipid fine arts museums or their discriminatory classification in terms of ethnography rather than art.

Up to the end of the 1960s modernization work on our museums served purely decorative purposes. Changes were made only in items of equipment, for instance display cases and coloured panels. Although the essential link between museums and education was recognized, very little was done to turn this fact to account. Only a limited amount of research was conducted, with no attempt at interdisciplinarity. The notion of conservation was non-existent, the only work carried out under this heading consisting of the restoration of paintings. Between 1950 and 1960 the number of museums—national, state, municipal, private, encyclopedic and monographic—increased substantially, without basic organization or structural conception. They were obsolete from the outset and devoid of any prospect of development. Static in concept, designed primarily with a view to elaborate inaugural ceremonies, they rapidly degenerated into a formless conglomeration of bric-à-brac. At the beginning of the 1970s, when all sectors were faced with financial difficulties, the museums, already struggling to make ends meet, were particularly hard hit. It was clear that they were not accomplishing their crucial mission of preserving the cultural heritage; something was missing—a firmer bond uniting them with the population and stronger participation

by the community in their activities. This was the key to survival.

The redefinition of the museum concept called for at Santiago implied a concomitant redefinition of our heritage and hence a change in the mentality of the cultural élites of our countries, in many cases still steeped in the Europeanizing concepts of the nineteenth century. In order to disseminate the new ideas, it was decided to set up a Latin American Association of Museology (ALAM). The association was established at the beginning of 1973 at an intensive and lively meeting in Quito, but despite the enthusiasm of some of its members it never really got off the ground. In the meanwhile, the seeds of the new philosophy of museums had found fertile soil and the first fruits were beginning to appear.³

The creation of the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City in 1964 is considered by some as a turning-point in the museological movement in Latin America. In our opinion, however, it was merely an isolated event whose implications were more museographical than philosophical. Far be it from us to belittle the extraordinary achievement that the Mexican museum represents or to question its undeniable beauty. It altered many preconceived ideas in the region. Museums were no longer seen as musty storehouses of crumbling relics rather than living memories, but became instead political instruments, sources of prestige and monuments to our indigenous ancestors, affording greater objectivity and clarity of definition in the archaeological rather than the ethnographical field. But for a better understanding of contemporary Mexican culture as a whole, we must turn to the magnificent Museo Nacional de Historia in Chapultepec Castle.

The National Museum of Anthropology, while attaining a very high standard of display, tends to lay undue emphasis on the monumental in an aesthetic context, and it does not enter into a dialogue with the population, least of all with communities in the most deprived areas.⁴

Towards 'museums on a human scale'

The idea of a museum on a more human scale that evolved in 1972 did not succeed in preventing all the capitals of Latin America and its neighbours from slavishly copying the famous Mexican museum without the slightest attempt at adaptation to national realities. Even to-



MUSEU PRIMEIRO REINADE, Rio de Janeiro. Reaching out to the disabled: a deaf-mute child being taught rhythm. [Photo: © Edson Meirelles.]

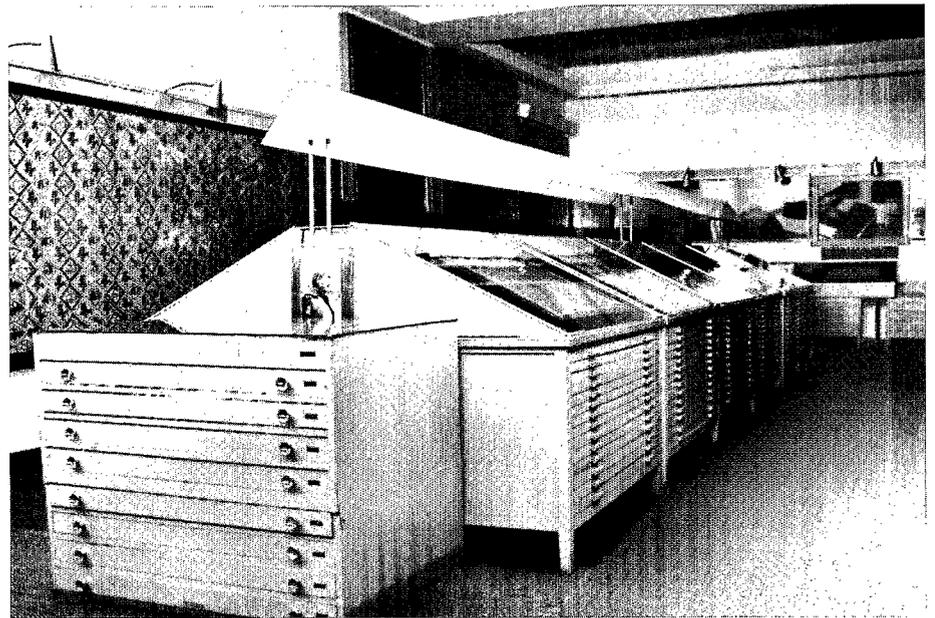
2. For example, the Etruscan collections brought over by Tereza Cristina, Empress of Brazil, which are now in a natural history museum, the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro.

3. As evidence of the impact of the new ideas in various parts of the region, we may note, in the first instance, the plans for the Archaeological Museum and Art Gallery of the Central Bank of Ecuador, El Salvador's Houses of Culture and travelling exhibitions (1974), Brazil's proposals for community ecomuseums and the Museum of Images of the Unconscious (1973-74), the programmes of the Museum of Natural History of Santiago de Chile (1973-74), the Casa del Museo in Mexico (1973-74) and the restructuring of museums launched by Trinidad and Tobago in 1976.

4. This aim was to be fulfilled by the Casa del Museo, a project brought about by the new ideas which have permeated all of its programmes. Mexico is also pursuing a successful policy of dialogue with the population through smaller museums.

MUSEO AMANO, Lima. Attaining and preserving technical standards: a small, privately owned museum of pre-Columbian textiles.

[Photo: Museo Amano.]



A sustained concern to preserve both the cultural and natural environment is emerging: extramural activity to promote understanding of agriculture carried out by museums in the Rio de Janeiro network.

[Photo: SMU-FUNARJ.]

day it is quite common for the technocrats of our countries to return from a visit to Mexico City utterly obsessed with the idea of copying the National Museum of Anthropology, forgetting that each country has its own scale of collections, historical background and aspirations, and that its museums must take all these elements into account. It is by no means easy to persuade these technocrats, trustees and financial authorities to take an interest in simpler activities on a smaller scale, just as it is not easy to secure support for the preservation of museums and their collections. It is and always will be easier in many parts of the world to obtain financing for costly prestige projects of colossal dimensions than to meet the more modest cost of viable projects conceived in human proportions.

Nevertheless, the idea of a museum tailored to community needs is gaining ground and is gradually becoming a characteristic feature of the region. Despite all difficulties of communication and exchange, the reaction has spread through the collective unconscious of the region. A sustained concern to preserve both the cultural and natural environment is also emerging.

Museum collections are now being studied from a multidisciplinary point of view. Objects used in daily life are seen to be worthy of preservation. Small museums tracing the origins of urban and rural communities have been set up, and the principle of decentralization of collections has begun to be observed. The practice of despoiling a community of collections providing information about its background and origins has been abandoned. Collections are increasingly in keeping with the specific character of the museum and the interests of the local community.

A crucial development was the elaboration of non-formal educational programmes, within which museums began to be used as three-dimensional information systems. A new spirit of creativity is abroad, with inventiveness taking the place of luxury and grandeur in each new museographical project.

An excellent case in point is Ecuador's recently developed museological project, which is extensive in conception but closely linked to the aspirations of the population. Systematic studies in the field of anthropology have confirmed that the country's cultural history dates back at least 12,000 years, a conclusion that is borne out by very rich archaeological material. The Central Bank of Ecuador laid

the foundations of a modern and dynamic museology by inaugurating the Archaeological Museum and Art Galleries of the Central Bank at the beginning of the 1970s, a project commensurate with the human realities and aspirations in our region. In addition to the Quito museum and gallery, the programme also provided for decentralization through the establishment of new museums in other parts of the country, the organization of archaeological missions and the development of research.

In Brazil an example of the extensive form of organization is the system of museums that is gradually being established in the state of Rio de Janeiro by the General Directorate of Museums attached to the Arts Foundation of the state. This Directorate, which is the successor to the State Museum Foundation, a body formerly responsible for a group of museums operating in airtight compartments completely divorced from the population, is at present engaged in constructing an integrated system, based on two major criteria: conservation and dynamic development. In the field of conservation, the Museology Department of the General Directorate lays down technical standards governing inventory, conservation and maintenance in respect of museums and their collections, controls the research and museographical planning activities of the twelve museums or houses of culture and organizes an extensive programme of temporary exhibitions that travel to all parts of the state. In the field of dynamic development, the educational action programme acts as a stimulus to the programmes of the twelve museological units, draws their attention to municipalities that are still without museums and promotes integration of the programme with the local community. The programme is headed by the *Primeiro Reinade* Museum in Rio de Janeiro, which carries out pilot projects and analyses their results for the benefit of the system. The impact of the programme is gradually being felt at all levels of society, in both urban and rural areas, thus forging links between the museum and the various local communities.

Another series of extremely important extensive projects based on community integration is being implemented by the interesting *Museu do Homem do Nordeste* in Recife (Pernambuco), the *Dom Diogo de Souza* Museum in the southern part of the country and the State Museums Division in São Paulo. This is

a recent programme and is already yielding favourable results. For technical support, it relies on the ICOM-Brazil Museological Documentation Centre.

An activity of major importance in the region, which exerts a direct influence on museum organization in Latin America, is the UNDP–Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage. This project, which has its headquarters in Lima, has been the motive force behind a series of activities in the region. As well as promoting the organization of new museums by offering encouragement and technical support, it also helps to restructure old museums and has initiated invaluable training activities. (See article below, p. 94.)

The seeds of a new museology have been sown and have already begun to bear fruit, although a full harvest is yet to come. Our museums have shed their gaolhouse image and are gradually assuming the aspect of the agoras of ancient times.

[Translated from Portuguese]

Aspects of staff training

Felipe Lacouture

Born in Mexico in 1928. Studied architecture at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma of Mexico, 1947–52; also read archaeology and art history. École du Louvre, 1952–53. Taught architecture at the Universidad Iberoamericana at UNAM 1956–59. Lectured in aesthetics at post-secondary level, 1965–68. Professor in museology at the Latin American Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property, Mexico City, 1971–77. Director of the Museo de Arte e Historia at Ciudad Juarez, 1964–70. Head of the Department of Regional Museums, INAH, 1970–73. Director of the Museo de San Carlos, 1973–77, and Head of the Department of Graphic Arts of the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1974–77. Director of the Museo Nacional de Historia, Mexico City, since 1977. Has practised as an architect-restorer, has carried out various missions for Unesco and the OAS and has attended numerous international meetings of specialists.



A photography theory class at the School of Conservation, Restoration and Museology at the National Centre of the same name, Bogotá, 1980.

[Photo: Colcultura.]

The Republic of Argentina has played a pioneering role in the provision of systematic training for museum staff since 1922, when a course to train experts in museum work was established in the Faculty of Arts of the National University of Buenos Aires. This course continued to be given for thirty-seven years, and subsequently other institutions were created for the same purpose, so that there are now in all four such institutions in existence, offering seven different courses of museology at various levels.

Although efforts have been made in many Latin American countries, or are now being made, to provide training on a systematic basis, as in Argentina, there have also been attempts to set up on-the-job training schemes, which are largely autonomous. This is the case in Mexico, which took its first steps in the field of museographical presentation in 1934, establishing many of the features that are still characteristic of museum work in Mexico today with the foundation of the Museo Nacional de Artes Plásticas, in which such outstanding artists as Julio Castellanos were involved and which, it might be added in passing, marked the beginning of the 'decorativist' bias in Mexican artistic activity. I should also like to mention the efforts made by the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) to retain the emphasis on the educational function of museum exhibitions, which is so necessary for a public not familiar with the subject-matter of anthropology.

However, these two tendencies within museography, which came to represent real extremes, were finally fused in 1964 as a result of the work of a team of anthropologists and architects led by a general co-ordinator trained in history, art and architecture as well as anthropology. Many of the features that formed the basis for the development of Mexican museography thus evolved not in an academic context but in a strictly practical way.

Later the need was felt for a hierarchical structure and systematic organization, and a grading commission was therefore set up within INAH so that different levels could be established for members of staff according to their knowledge and experience. A series of definitions was drawn up so that all museum profession-

als could be classified into five categories ranging from Grades A to E, and on the assumption that each category after Grade B was capable of passing on to the next grade. In this way, through constant practical experience and a certain amount of necessary additional study, the museum worker may hope to become better qualified and so obtain promotion on the professional grading scale.

Two approaches to staff training

What results are obtained by the Argentinian and Mexican approaches, or systems, in the context of staff training? Each gives rise to its own problems, including that produced by the liberal approach of establishing a school and taking on students who have no guarantee of work when they have finished their studies.

In Argentina the School of Museology started giving courses for school-leavers in 1951. There are two courses, the first to train museum auxiliary staff, which lasts two years, and the second for a degree in museology, which lasts an additional two years.

The Higher Institute for Technical Training and Education in Museology also trains people who have completed their secondary studies to become museum assistants or museologists, and offers an interesting one-year course for qualified teachers that enables them to qualify as museum educators. In Latin America, as elsewhere, a problem has always been posed by schoolteachers who, for all their knowledge, do not know how to make appropriate and worthwhile use of museums in their teaching. (In Mexico attempts have been made to solve this problem by individual museums that have taken the initiative of providing special courses for teachers so that they will learn about the museums themselves and thus be able to pass on the knowledge to their students.)

In 1972 the Escuela Superior de Conservación de Museos (Higher School for Museum Conservation) under the auspices of the Argentinian Institute of Museology established a three-year course to provide technical and professional training for those who have obtained their secondary school-leaving certificate.

Mention should also be made of the National Course of Museology, which comes under the National Commission for Museums, Monuments and Historical Sites, which provides courses lasting three years at the post-secondary-school level to train specialists for historical museums. For a period, a somewhat similar kind of training was provided by the Universidad de Luján, but the course was subsequently abolished.

In Mexico, the training programme organized since 1968 by INAH's National School of Restoration in Churubusco to train graduates in restoration work includes a systematic introductory course of museology, considered essential in view of the fact that professionals of this type are mainly required to look after the collections belonging to the INAH museums.

Later on, in 1971, Mexico realized the need to provide intensive courses, in view of the increasing importance of museums in the country and the urgent need to train personnel for them. This situation coincided with the creation of a course of museographical training as a result of an agreement with the Organization of American States (OAS). It was decided that the course would last nine months, offer one OAS fellowship for each member country of the organization and be held in the INAH School of Restoration. It was given for nine consecutive years and trained a total of 255 people, of whom approximately 40 were Mexican.¹

The course was divided into three levels: a theoretical level approaching the study of museums through the social sciences, psychology, cultural anthropology and pedagogy; a second level covering the organization of museum work, ranging from research and documentation to education and cultural activities, with emphasis on display techniques; and a third level where the student was free, on the basis of his own subject interests, to choose a particular kind of practical work, which was then carried out in one of the various national museums.

However, this plan, which appeared so well organized, encountered serious problems in practice, as Churubusco was never able to intervene directly in the selection of students, who were mostly chosen by the OAS member states themselves, with the result that secondary-school



Practical work on mural-painting restoration in the Templo de Santa Clara, Bogotá, as part of the course on restoration of movable cultural property.

[Photo: Colcultura.]

students were just as likely to be sent to the school as Argentinian museologists. It therefore became necessary to provide preparatory courses and at the same time to determine an appropriate stage or level of instruction, which could only be decided upon when the students' educational background was known.

As part of a generally liberal policy, which was not specifically directed towards the personnel of institutions, there was established in Mexico in 1979 a master's degree in museology within the above-mentioned Churubusco school, which had by that time been renamed the School of Restoration and Museography. On the one hand, it was decided, in general terms, to adopt an integrated approach to the various techniques of museum work, starting with the subjects of collection, research, documentation, conservation and restoration, before going on to display techniques, the use of explanatory material, education and the diffusion of information and, finally, market research techniques designed to improve communication with the museum's public. On the other hand, attention was also given to the whole range of knowledge that can be presented in a museum, including cosmology, geology, biology, ecology, palaeontology, palaeoanthropology, archaeology, cultural anthropology, ethnography, history, technology and art. All this clearly demonstrates the

1. Unfortunately this course has now been temporarily suspended owing to administrative problems.—Ed.

Working group during an interdisciplinary retraining seminar carried out by the SMU-FUNARJ in Rio de Janeiro. [Photo: © Edson Meirelles.]

Mexican desire to create an integrated approach to museology in which culture is seen as a structured whole.

According to this approach, a museum professional is regarded as a generalist who co-ordinates a series of techniques and sciences in order to carry out museum work successfully. The master's degree was therefore organized so as to give graduates in various subjects training in museum work at the postgraduate level. Up to the present time, two complete courses have so far been given and a third is about to begin.

Training initiatives elsewhere

The training courses organized in Bogotá by the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage in co-operation with Colcultura are described separately (see p. 94); suffice it to explain here that the aim of the course for administrators was to provide them with the necessary basic knowledge to develop training courses within their own institutions and thus, as far as possible, create a multiplier effect. The situation is so serious that it is not possible to go through the slow and lengthy process of training personnel with high academic qualifications, who would have to be recruited on an unconditional basis, with a high probability that they would never in fact work in the museums in the area. To succumb to the temptation to organize admissions to schools of museology on a liberal basis and allow things to find their own level on the *laissez-faire* or *laisser-passer* principle would, within the Latin American context, represent an enormous waste of effort. This has been amply demonstrated in other fields of activity, although it is difficult to understand this



in countries where all areas of life and work are influenced by liberal ideals. The situation in Ecuador is of great interest. The School of Restoration, Antiquities and Museography set up by the Instituto Tecnológico Equinoccial has established a specialized training course lasting three years, which may be extended for a further two years in order to reach degree level. The particular interest of this course lies in its attempt to provide joint training in restoration work and museography. Extension of the course up to degree level, which has already been mentioned, will give the student the opportunity to choose in which of these fields he wishes to specialize. It must be admitted that very often the generalist trend in the training of museum professionals tends to provide them with insufficient

knowledge of those basic techniques that are so essential in restoration and conservation work and that moreover provide basic knowledge about the intrinsic nature of the objects themselves, which in the last analysis are the be-all and end-all of the work of a museum.

Ecuador has eighty museums, which have, for the most part, been established as a result of private initiative in association with the recently founded National Institute for the Cultural Heritage and also with the Banco Central del Ecuador, a state-controlled body that plays an extremely active part in the country's cultural life (see article by Sergio Durán Pitarque, p. 84). The scene is set for the further development of museology and the recruitment of graduates of the school by existing institutions.

The Directorate of Museums and Monuments in Cuba has introduced courses of museology, recently establishing for this purpose a School of Museology, where specially selected personnel are trained for work in museums. They have been a powerful force in spreading awareness of the role of the people in social and economic development. The School of Museology provides training in six-month seminars on the organization of cultural activities, general museology and museography, cataloguing and classification, conservation and restoration work and Marxist philosophy. After he has finished his studies, the student of museology is guaranteed continued work in museums if his results are satisfactory, and thus the effort he has put into his studies is fully rewarded.

Finally, mention should be made of the courses that exist in Brazil, including those given by the University of Rio de Janeiro at the Centre of Human Sciences. These courses, which are undoubtedly the longest established in Brazil, are given in the city of Rio de Janeiro itself since 1932 and also in the city of Bahía. In both cases, they are at university level and are also open to those who are not already working in museums. The private university Estacio de Sa also provides courses at university level for the training of museum professionals.²

Courses are also organized in the city of São Paulo by the Foundation School of Sociology of São Paulo, which is linked to the university of the same city. This master's course for postgraduate students is divided into three interesting 'units', the second two of which can only be embarked upon when the preceding unit has

been passed. The first unit deals with the humanizing function of small museums in developing countries and with the techniques of gaining a wider public. It lasts a total of 375 lecture hours. The second unit concentrates on the social and humanistic function of fine-arts museums and history museums in the developing countries. It lasts 375 lecture hours, with additional hours for planned reading. Finally, the third unit deals with science, industrial and technical museums and lasts 375 lecture hours, together with additional hours for planned reading.

A possible change in government policy could bring about changes in the work of the school if, for example, the government were to encourage the development of science or industrial museums. This would call for academic flexibility and an organic and functional approach that would take political factors in the country into account. In addition, it is expected that there will be widespread job opportunities for the graduates, both in museum work itself and also in teaching.

Finally, it needs to be repeated that, in the face of so-called liberal attitudes concerning admissions of courses, in Latin America and the Caribbean it is never possible to disregard the basic specific needs of the institutions concerned, which in many cases are urgent and require imaginative solutions.³ Nor can the problem of guaranteeing work for those who have attended such courses be ignored, on account of the human and economic effort that all this work represents for economically weak, developing nations.

[Translated from Spanish]

2. Fernanda de Camargo-Moro has pointed out that 'these courses are not sufficient to meet the needs of the roughly 500 Brazilian museums spread throughout the country. For a time, Rio would systematically reserve a certain number of grants each year for the various states of the federation, but this practice was dropped a few years ago. The detailed survey of Brazilian museums which was formerly conducted by the Association of Members of ICOM-Brazil (Rio de Janeiro) and is now carried out by the ICOM-Brazil Museological Documentation Centre, with its headquarters in Rio de Janeiro, drew attention long ago to the need for training facilities of this kind in other Brazilian universities in order to meet the growing demand of the country's museums. It is also noted that while training at university level is quite sufficient for the purposes of the small museums, postgraduate studies in a specialized field or in museology for graduates in neighbouring disciplines are becoming more and more necessary for museums with medium- or large-scale collections. The General Directorate of Museums attached to the Arts Foundation of the state of Rio de Janeiro is attempting to solve this problem by organizing practical postgraduate training courses and periodic retraining seminars in conjunction with ICOM-Brazil. Its aim in so doing is to lay the groundwork for the introduction as soon as possible of a master's degree in museology.'

3. As Grete Mostny has pointed out, 'Most important, we require trained personnel, capable of applying the techniques. In many museums, museography is still improvised, and conservation is non-existent. However, one should be aware of the dangers of importing models not suited to the conditions of the country or the region. It has been the experience of several countries that sending personnel abroad often has negative results. The courses taught tend to be inadequate or inapplicable to situations in the Third World, and the costly equipment used for conservation, presentation and inventory is much too expensive for these countries to buy. Often, too, the highly trained personnel cannot find a job at home on coming back. This creates frustration and destroys creativity. Many of these people look for jobs in other areas, and are lost for the museums.' For R. C. Ebanks (Jamaica) 'the best way to achieve an integral solution to this problem would be to set up regional training and records centres, where people educated within the cultural milieu would organize training courses, wholly applicable to the cultural peculiarities of the region'.



Museology diploma students at the Escuela Nacional de Conservación, Restauración y Museografía 'Manuel del Castillo Negrete', Mexico City, with a model for an exhibition project.

[Photo: Felipe Lacouture.]

Participants in the Second Regional Course for Museum Assistants engaged in practical work on museological design at the National Centre for Conservation, Restoration and Museology, Santa Clara, Bogotá, 1980.

[Photo: Sylvio Mutal.]



Sylvio Mutal

Chief Technical Adviser and Regional Co-ordinator of the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage, Lima, Peru.

Museology courses organized by UNDP, Unesco and Colcultura

One of the principal objectives of the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage, which operates in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia, Chile, Panama, Peru and Venezuela, is to disseminate information on various subjects relating to the conservation and contemporary relevance of cultural property as a factor in a multidimensional type of development.

As contributors to this issue have already pointed out, most of the museums in the region are severely lacking in the infrastructure and trained staff needed to ensure the proper conservation, restoration and presentation of their collections.

In order to help fill the gap the Colombian Cultural Institute (Colcultura) and the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage decided to organize a series of regional courses. These were inaugurated in Bogotá in 1979.

Background to the courses

At the invitation of Colcultura, the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage organized at Bogotá an International Symposium on Museology and the Cultural Heritage in November

1977 in collaboration with the Italian-Latin American Institute.

At the meeting museologists, architects, anthropologists, social scientists and educationists discussed problems of museology from the conceptual, technical and economic points of view. The museum was defined as a place in which the work of man and his relationship with the environment may be perceived, and it was affirmed that museums should be part of the social and environmental context in which they operate.

As the city of Bogotá already had a restoration centre, as well as other appropriate facilities, it was recommended, in agreement with the Colombian Government, that regional training courses in museology should be organized in Bogotá. To this end, the Government of Colombia joined with Unesco and UNDP in a cultural development project, which included a special museology component.

At the end of 1978 and beginning of 1979, Colcultura organized working meetings with Unesco and UNDP which brought together national and international experts from different continents, for the purpose of establishing the programme and content of the courses for 1979-81. For the courses in 1979 and



Sergio Durán Pitarque (second from right), Administrative Director of the Museum of the Central Bank of Ecuador, surrounded by other museologists taking part in the First Regional Course in Museology for Directors of Museums in Bogotá, 1979.

[Photo: E. Tavera.]

1980, Colcultura obtained additional funds from the Andrés Bello Convention. The Italian-Latin American Institute (IILA) in Rome also expressed its interest and support by sending lecturers from Europe.

First regional courses in museology—Bogotá, 1979

A first regional course for museum directors and assistants was organized from October to December 1979. It was attended by twenty-four directors and twenty-four assistants from museums in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Peru and Venezuela. Central American participation was arranged through the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for that region.

The programme of the courses—intended for persons working in museums of anthropology, archaeology, history and art—was designed to take into account, for the different areas and subjects, the actual stages through which a cultural object passes when it becomes part of a museum collection: (a) cataloguing and archives; (b) conservation and preparation of specimens; (c) exhibition and museography; (d) communication and social projection of the museum. These areas were complemented by themes such as the museum and culture and the history and concept of the museum. Specialists from museums in Latin America, Europe and the United States gave the courses.

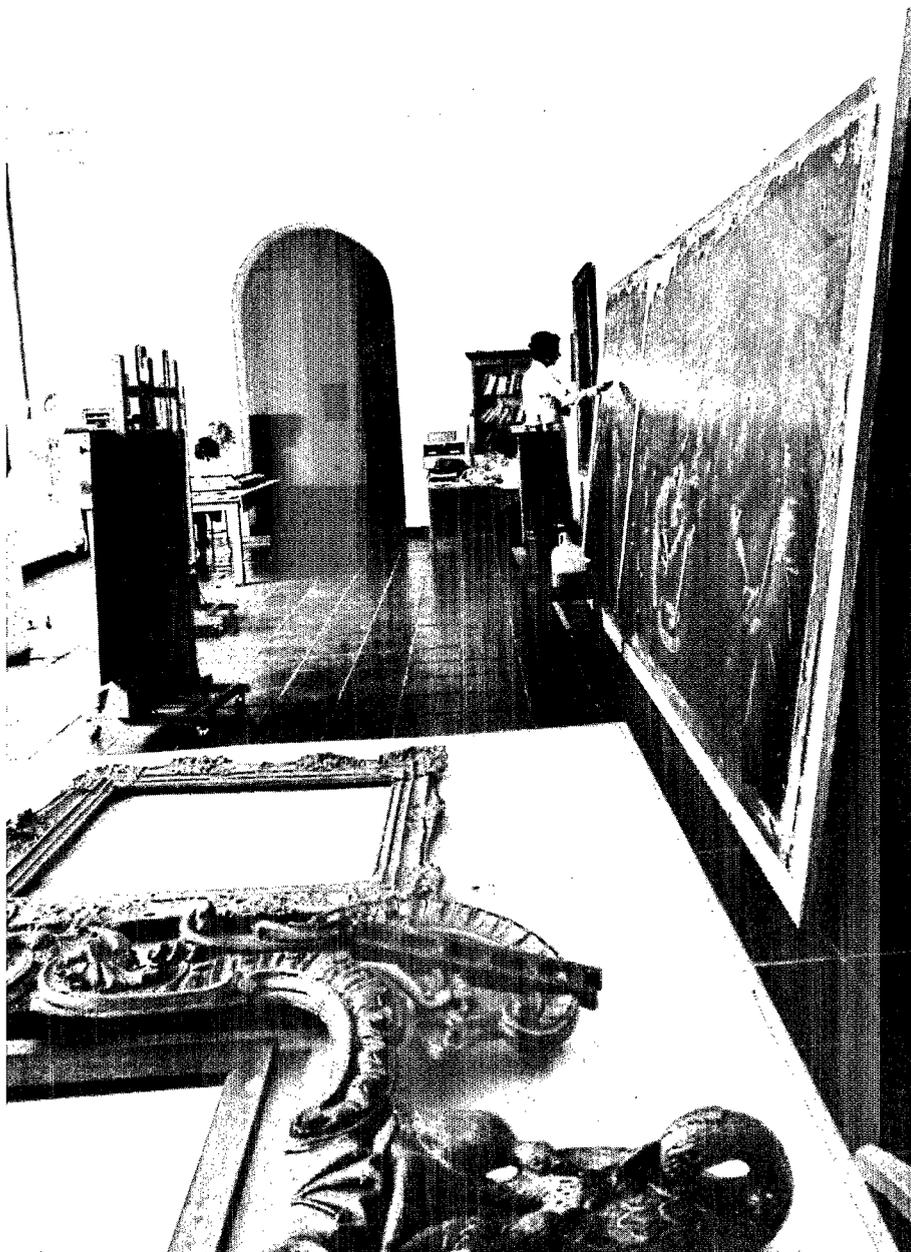
Refresher course for museum directors. The aims of this course were: (a) to determine the academic level and experience of museum directors in Latin America, (b) to discuss the most important problems concerning museums in Latin America, (c) to update knowledge by reporting on developments throughout the world in the field of museology, (d) to analyse and discuss the present situation of museums in Colombia, (e) to propagate the courses throughout Latin America and the Caribbean and (f) to exchange experiences between different countries.

The course lasted two weeks, from 19 November to 1 December 1979. Round tables and lectures were devoted to topics such as museums and culture, museum programming, museum planning and organization, museum administration, museums of the future, semiotics applied to the museum, visual aids and communication in the museum, children and museums and museum security.

The lecturers included Marta Arjona (Cuba), Luis Lumbreras (Peru), Jorge Kliecer Ruiz (Colombia), Claude Pécquet (France), Alfonso Castrillón (Peru), Fernanda de Camargo-Moro (Brazil), Felipe Lacouture (Mexico), Eduardo Terrazas (Mexico), Eduardo Porta (Spain), Sebastián Romero (Colombia), Omar Calabrese (Italy), Angel Kalenberg (Uruguay), Danièle Giraudy (France), Lloyd Hezekiah (United States), Regina Otero de Sabogal (Colombia) and George Schröder (Netherlands).

Initial technical training course for museum assistants. The purpose of this eight-week course (23 October–15 December 1979) was to train staff for museum work, to provide general information on museology and to encourage the exchange of experience.

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND MUSEOLOGY, Santa Clara, Bogotá. General view of the painting restoration workshop. [Photo: Colcultura.]



Lectures and debates covered topics such as the concept and history of the museum, the administration of collections, the museum and education and museographic presentation. The lecturers included: Alfonso Castrillón (Peru), Grete Mostny (Chile), Jaime Camacho (Colombia), Amada Ojeda (Colombia), Gaël de Guichen (ICCROM), Cecilia Alvarez (Colombia), Guillermo Joiko (Chile), Beatriz González (Colombia), Regina Otero de Sabogal (Colombia), Emma de Vallejo (Colombia), Cecilia Coronel (Colombia) and Eduardo Serrano (Colombia). The theoretical part of the course was complemented by specialized practical work carried out in various museums in Bogotá.

Second Regional Course in Museology—Bogotá, 1980

This course was also held in Bogotá, at the headquarters of the Santa Clara National Centre for Conservation, Restoration and Museology. The seminar for directors and administrators of museums on the planning, financing and organization of museums was held from 6 to 17 October 1980; the workshop for museum assistants and technicians on museographical presentation and explanation from 25 August to 17 October. The courses were also supported by the Secretariat of the Andrés Bello Convention (SECAB). The courses, given by lecturers from Colombia and other Latin American and European countries, were attended by fellowshipholders from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Seminar for museum directors. This seminar focused on the planning, financing and organization of museums. It was designed to cover a range of subjects useful for updating the knowledge of those in charge of the museums of the region so that, on returning to their countries, they might put into practice the principles of modern museology. The various themes and fields dealt with during the course were: legal questions concerning the museum, Gustavo Palomino Gómez (Colombia); financing, Manuel Espinoza (Venezuela), and Sergio Durán Pitarque (Ecuador); fundraising for museums, María Victoria Robayo (Colombia); programming, Claude Pécquet (France); concepts of museum organization, Fernanda de Camargo-Moro (Brazil) and Felipe Lacouture (Mexico); children and museums, Danièle Giraudy

(France); and museological criteria, Franca Helg (Italy). The co-ordinator of the course was Alice Aguiar de Barros Fontes (Brazil).

At the suggestion of the participants, the course took the form of discussions and round tables. The afternoons were set aside for visits to various museums in the city—the Museo del Oro, the National Museum, the Modern Art Museum and the Archaeological Museum—which enabled participants to make a practical assessment of the theoretical criteria.

Workshop for technical assistants in museums. The workshop for technical assistants was intended to provide the technical staff of the museums in the region with basic training in the mounting of exhibitions. It therefore covered the following subjects: introduction to museology, photography, design, psychology, semiotics, conservation and aesthetic appreciation. Analysis and practical work were geared to giving the skills needed to improve their own museums as needed.

Museological theory was discussed by Alfonso Castrillón (Peru) and practical design by Jorge Guitierrez (Colombia); Macarena Aguero (Chile) gave a lecture on defining the typical museum visitor's profile. The photography course was given by Antonio Castañeda (Colombia) and the course on graphic design applied to museums by Claude Dieterich. Conservation was dealt with by Cecilia Alvarez, Guillermo Joiko, Darío Rodríguez and Martha de Garay, from the Santa Clara National Centre for Conservation, Restoration and Museology. A programme of lectures was arranged for the last two weeks, during which the architect Franca Helg presented her projects and those of the architect Franco Albini for the remodelling of ancient buildings; Danièle Giraudy, Head of the Children's Department in the Georges Pompidou Centre in Paris, discussed aspects of education and the museum; Claude Pécquet, programmer for several French museums, explained the programming method used at the Pompidou Centre and at other museums throughout the world; Felipe Lacouture spoke on travelling exhibitions, and Fernanda de Camargo-Moro dealt with general aspects of museology, using examples from Brazil.

Third Regional Course in Museology—Bogotá, 1981

The Third Regional Course in Museology was held from 17 August to 2 October

1981 at the Santa Clara Centre. The theme of the course was 'Technical Training in Museum Conservation'. The principal aims of the course were: to provide instruction on methods and techniques of conserving museum collections and buildings; to impart basic knowledge on the composition of museum exhibits and the factors affecting their stability; to teach the basic rules for cleaning, handling and storing exhibits; to impart some notions of didactics to enable participants to pass on the knowledge acquired.

This course was designed for conservators and curators, as well as technicians. It was attended by twenty-seven fellowship-holders from Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Panama and Venezuela.

The lecturing staff for this course included: Agustín Espinoza, Felipe Lacouture and Rodolfo Vallin from Mexico; Emma Araujo de Vallejo, Jaime Moncada, Germán Téllez, Jaime Salcedo, Martha de Garay and Mireya Vallín from Colombia and Fernando Joiko from Chile.

The subjects included: introduction to the cultural heritage; museology; supervision and security in museums; conservation of objects and monuments; causes of deterioration and methods of diagnosis; prevention and simple conservation; conservation of buildings; classification and recording; storage and packing; educational aspects.

Activities for 1982 and 1983

Under the auspices of the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project and with the collaboration of ASEM and SECAB, a course was organized in Quito in January 1982 on museums and education.¹ Two others will be held, in Caracas on the museum and the community and in Bogotá on museology and conservation. For 1983, a course is planned in Brazil on the museum as a centre for cultural communication; other specialized events are scheduled in Argentina, Chile and Bolivia.

The UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage is also sponsoring a study on 'Diagnosis of Museum Problems' in all countries of the region, a similar study having already been carried out in Colombia, Chile, Ecuador and Venezuela.

[Translated from Spanish]

1. An article on the subject in the Latin American context will appear in a future issue of *Museum*.

MUSEO ARQUEOLOGICO Y GALERIAS DE ARTE
DEL BANCO CENTRAL DEL ECUADOR, QUITO.
Pre-Colombian treasures in the museum's
collection.
[Photo: S. Mutal.]



BANCO CONTINENTAL, Lima. Children and
museums.
[Photo: S. Mutal.]



MUSEO NACIONAL, Havana. Restoration.
[Photo: S. Mutal.]

Table of professional training courses

Prepared by the Unesco-ICOM Documentation Centre

Country	Institution in charge	Start, duration	Admission requirements	Subjects	Certificate or diploma
Argentina	Instituto Argentino de Museólogos. Escuela Superior de Conservadores de Museos. Marcelo T. de Alvear 2084, 1122 Buenos Aires, Tel. : 83.9621.	1972. 3 years.	Secondary-school diploma.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Museology; history of civilization; communications; natural sciences; aesthetics; museography. Exhibition; organization and administration; conservation and restoration; art history; history of Argentina; archaeology. Lighting; architecture; anthropology; ethnography; applied arts; pedagogy. 	Museum curator.
	Escuela de Museología, Facultad de Ciencias de la Información de la Universidad del Museo Social Argentino. Av. Corrientes 1723, Buenos Aires.	1959. 1st cycle: 2 years, 2nd cycle: 2 years.	Secondary-school diploma.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to museology; organization and administration; general culture; French. Conservation and restoration; practical museography; French language and civilization. History of the sciences; sociology; art history; pedagogy. American history; art history; archaeology; applied arts; museography. 	Upon termination of the first 2-year cycle: museum technical assistant (<i>auxiliar técnico de museos</i>). Upon termination of the 2nd 2-year cycle: B.A. in Museology (<i>licenciado en museología</i>).
	Instituto Superior de Perfeccionamiento Técnico y Docente en Bibliotecología y Museología. Attached to Ministerio de la Educación de la Provincia de Buenos Aires. Diagonal 74 entre Calles 5 y 43, La Plata.	1968.	Secondary-school diploma.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Technical assistant: 2-year course. Museology and museography; conservation and restoration; history of civilization and of Argentina; foreign languages; museography workshop. Museologist: Requiring one year of additional studies following the 2-year technical assistant course. Archaeology; general history and history of art of America and Argentina; applied arts; natural sciences; museology; foreign languages. Educational personnel: 1-year course. Pedagogics of museology; natural sciences; communication techniques; prehistory and archaeology in America; folklore; social psychology; history of art; the cultural evolution of Argentina. 	
	Curso Nacional de Museología, Comisión Nacional de Museos, Monumentos y Lugares Históricos.	1973. 3 years.	Secondary-school diploma.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Museology and museography; history; sociology; education; architecture; administration. Conservation workshop; chemical and physical analysis; photography. Archaeology; iconography; numismatics; heraldry; folklore; naval and aeronautic terminology. 	Specialization in historical museography.
Bolivia	Instituto Boliviano de Cultura. Museo Colonial. Sponsored by the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage. La Paz.	1978. 4-6 months.	Graduate of fine arts academy or school. Painters, sculptors.	Conservation of easel paintings; murals; stone; wood.	Certificate of attendance.
Brazil	Escola de Belas Artes, Universidade Federal de Bahía.	2 years.	Student of fine arts school.	Conservation of paintings.	

Country	Institution in charge	Start, duration	Admission requirements	Subjects	Certificate or diploma
	Universidade Federal da Paraíba, CCT-DSH Campina Grande, Paraíba. Curso de museologia.	1977. 360 hours.	Diploma in a field relative to museums.	4 courses including the following subjects: museum history; organization; types of museums; regional problems; acquisition; cataloguing; conservation and restoration; communications; exhibition.	
	AMICOM (Association of Members of ICOM-BRAZIL). Avenida Ataulfo de Paiva No. 1079, Rio de Janeiro, Tel. 294.19.46.	1977. A four-week museology seminar, twice per year.	Certificate.	General museology including history, art history, natural history, anthropology, science and technology; administration and organization; documentation; research; architecture and equipment; exhibition; conservation; education.	Certificate.
	Curso de Museus Universidade do Rio de Janeiro/Museology course of UNIRIO. Rua Xavier Sigaud, No. 290, Rio de Janeiro.	1932. 4 years.	Secondary school diploma; knowledge of two foreign languages.	Museum history; legislation; administration and organization; registration and inventory; architecture; presentation; conservation.	B.A. in museology.
	General Direction for Museums of the Rio de Janeiro State Foundation for the Arts (FUNARJ). Avenida Portugal, No. 644, CEP 22291, Rio de Janeiro, Tel. 295.19.96.	2 years. Advanced university courses and periodical recycling seminars organized with ICOM-Brazil.		Museology; history; art history; natural history; conservation and restoration; anthropology. Advanced university courses and periodical recycling seminars organized with ICOM-Brazil.	Certificate.
	Escola Nacional de Belas Artes, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro. Rua Arango Porto Alegre, Rio de Janeiro GB ZC 21.	2 years.	Student of fine arts school or eligible for admission.	Conservation of paintings. Theory and practice.	
	Conservation Laboratory of the National Museum of Fine Arts. Av. Rio Branco 199, Rio de Janeiro GB ZC 21.	22 months (1,600 hours).	Two years university studies in physics or chemistry or museum school or fine arts certificate.	Conservation of archaeological materials and paintings.	Certificate.
	Fundação Escola de Sociologia e Política de São Paulo. Instituição complementar da Universidade de São Paulo. Rua General Jardim 522, São Paulo CEP 01223, Tel. 256.46.73, 256.15.52.		University level.	3 specialization courses: 1. Small museums. 2. Art and historical museums. 3. Museums of science and technology.	Certificate of specialization leading towards a master's degree.
Chile	Mínisterio de Educación Pública. Museo Nacional de Historia Natural. Centro Nacional de Museología. Casilla 787, Santiago de Chile.	1968. 3 years (24 hours a week).	Secondary-school diploma.	Natural sciences; knowledge of materials; conservation; preparation; museology; regional museums; presentation; documentation.	Certificate of preparator (upon completion of 2 years). Certificate of museology (upon completion of 3 years).
	Museo de Bellas Artes, Santiago de Chile. (Sponsored by the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage.)	1978. 4-6 months.	Graduate of fine arts academy or school. Painters, sculptors. Preference to those working in museums, national services, teachers.	Conservation of easel paintings; murals; wood; stone.	Certificate of attendance.
Colombia	Instituto Colombiano de Cultura (Colcultura) and the Andrés Bello Convention 'Escuela Regional de Museología' (organized on the initiative of the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage). Bogotá.	1978. Short course.	Director of a museum signatory to the Andrés Bello Convention or participating in the regional Unesco-UNDP project. University diploma.	Short seminars on specific subjects. A. Recycling course for museum directors: 2 weeks. Anthropology; social psychology; education sciences; museography; organization and administration. B. Vocational training for technical personnel: 8 weeks. Documentation; conservation; museography; educational techniques.	

Country	Institution in charge	Start, duration	Admission requirements	Subjects	Certificate or diploma
Cuba	Dirección de Museos y Monumentos. Escuela de Museología. Havana.	1979. 6-month seminars.		General museology and museography; cataloguing and classification; conservation and restoration; Marxist philosophy.	
Dominican Republic	Centro Taller Regional de Restauración y Microfilmación de Documentos para el Caribe y Centroamérica. Calle Modesto Díaz No. 2, Santo Domingo, Tel. 532.25 00/08/09.	1979. 30 days.	Personnel of archives and libraries of the Dominican Republic and other Caribbean countries.	Restoration techniques of graphic documents. 1. Definition of cultural property. 2. History of graphic documents. 3. Preservation of graphic documents. 4. Restoration of graphic documents. 5. Deterioration of graphic documents.	
Ecuador	Dirección del Patrimonio Artístico Ecuatoriano. (Sponsored by the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage.) Convento San Agustín, Quito. Escuela de Restauración, Antigüedades y Museografía, Instituto Tecnológico Equinoccial.	1978. 4-6 months. 3 years.	Graduate of fine arts academy or school. Painters, sculptors. Preference to those working in museums, national services, teachers.	Conservation of easel paintings; murals; wood; stone. Restoration and museography.	Certificate of attendance.
Honduras	Instituto Hondureño de Antropología e Historia. Villa Roy, Tegucigalpa.				
Mexico	Universidad Iberoamericana. Avenida de las Torres, Mexico City. Escuela Nacional de Conservación, Restauración y Museografía 'Manuel del Castillo Negrete' INAH-SEP. Centro Churubusco, Ex-Convento de Churubusco, Xicoténcatl y General Anaya, Coyoacán 21, D.F. Museo Nacional de Historia. Bosque de Chapultepec, Mexico City.	1979. 2 hours per week during two academic semesters. 1978-79. 1980. 8 sessions.	University diploma in a subject related to museum activities, such as history, art history, archaeology, anthropology, architecture, natural history, design.	Teach students enrolled in humanities courses about the work and role of museums in society. Courses on acquisition; research; conservation; presentation; circulation; evaluation; cataloguing; documentation; restoration; interpretation; education; communication. Courses intended to inform school teachers how to make use of resources offered by museums to improve their courses on the history of Mexico.	Master's in museology (<i>maestro en museología</i>)
Peru	Instituto Nacional de Cultura. Apt. 775 Colegio de Santo Domingo, Cuzco. Museo Nacional de Antropología y Arqueología. Plaza Bolívar, Pueblo libre, Lima 21.	1977. 4 months. 1977. 1st part: 12 weeks. 2nd part: 5 months.	Graduate of fine arts academy or school. Painters, sculptors. Preference to those working in museums, national services, teachers. Archaeologists, conservators, textile artisans.	Conservation of paintings and sculpture. Conservation of pre-Columbian textiles.	Certificate. Certificate of attendance.

OPINION

A hundred years of solitude?

ICOM's stake in the development of museums in Latin America and the Caribbean goes back to the very beginnings of that organization. Its Twelfth General Conference in Mexico strengthened ICOM's presence in the region, boosting its membership there, placing a heavier demand both on its Paris-based secretariat and on the capacity of Latin America's museologists themselves to work together more effectively in the cause of the institution they serve.

Focusing as it does on the Latin American and Caribbean variants of a worldwide problem—the still inadequate place of museums in contemporary cultural development and cultural policy—this issue is in a sense a manifesto for the whole international museum movement. This is why Museum sought the views of Luis Monreal, whose direct contacts with museums in Latin America have multiplied in recent years. He has read through the articles in this issue as a highly committed observer; he speaks not exclusively as ICOM's Secretary-General, but also as a colleague and friend of Latin American and Caribbean museum professionals.

MUSEUM: How would you assess the progress made since the Santiago de Chile round table of 1972, which for so many Latin American colleagues has become the benchmark?

MONREAL: First of all, we are simply not in a position to make a detailed assessment. As an outside observer I would hesitate to make any sweeping statements. But I think we cannot escape the fact that progress has been slow. Conceptually, little fresh ground has been broken since Santiago. New ideas have been scarce, and the implementation of the most forward-looking intentions has at best been uneven. The great revolutionary museums of Latin America date from the 1960s; despite the defects some people are now inclined to find in it, the Museo Nacional de Antropología in Mexico City is still an avant-garde museum. Aloisio Magalhaes has talked quite rightly of 'everything museums, linked to the rural environment',¹ but there have been few of these. The basic cause lies not, I feel, in some inadequacy of the region's museologists but in the lack of professional motivation, a crucial point mentioned by Roderick Ebanks.² Museum people have simply not been given the status they deserve, not even equivalent to that of the teacher or the research worker. This is just one of the most perceptible, at individual level, of the structural problems mentioned in the introductory article, which arise from the fact that museums are neglected in the formulation of cultural policies, in the management of cultural resources and in the national definitions of cultural needs.

MUSEUM: Are the definitions behind the policies themselves restrictive?

MONREAL: Indeed they are. The 'heritage' for example is still very largely understood in the high-culture sense, which leaves room for little but art treasures and archaeology. Living ethnic heritages are to a great extent forgotten because of the risk of political conflict they might involve. Bolder definitions of the cultural heritage must be defended and the very real interdependence between the man-made and the natural environment given its right place in policy formulation and execution. Similar problems arise in some African countries, where one rather partial version of 'cultural identity' as defined by the state is in evident contradiction with the broader, real identity that is meaningful to millions of citizens, particularly those outside the big cities. This brings us to the problem of the museum's discourse, of the message it has to get across to the people outside that urban standard—an artificial 'language' in developing countries. The problem is as much one of physical access as it is of explaining a collection of objects in more than just scientific terms. This is crucial as much within the Latin American city as outside it. Museums must be able—as they have begun to do in Cuba, in Brazil, on Carriacou Island—to respond to the needs of urban and rural 'micro-communities' that also want to preserve and reaffirm their own particular identity. Think of Macondo in Gabriel Garcia Marquez' *Cien años de soledad*³ as the prototype of such a Latin American micro-community. All the world's Macondos need their museums!

MUSEUM: How well are the basic museum responsibilities being shouldered—collection and conservation for instance?

MONREAL: Well, to begin with there is little evidence of a collection policy at local level that respects the significance of, say, a 'family' heritage in the small community. At national level only a few states have defined a systematic approach to the building up of collections, based on an understanding of the total heritage of the country concerned. Why? Both the lack of a national plan in this respect and the lack of resources are obvious factors. For the same reasons museum professionals still have little scope in the protection of the heritage *extra muros*, in combating illicit traffic, for example. How many directors of archaeological museums in Latin American countries are given the chance to sit on government committees that screen the export of cultural property, or have any author-

ity over excavation sites?⁴ How many museum ethnographers have the satisfaction of co-ordinating or at least participating in inventory and salvage campaigns? The right linkages still don't exist, partly, of course, because there just aren't enough posts for qualified personnel.

Concerning conservation, of course the overriding problem is the lack of infrastructure such as laboratories and training courses. Many exceptions are indeed mentioned in this issue; what about those museums and countries that are not so fortunate? This is a need that certainly cannot be met by the museums or governments alone. Multilateral co-operation, but in imaginatively conceived forms, is the only solution. International organizations such as the OAS and Unesco need to reassess the conservation infrastructure requirements subregion by subregion and renew their efforts to create the necessary facilities.

MUSEUM: Surely not only material infrastructure but human resources as well; the lack of trained staff has been underlined time and again.

MONREAL: Well, a look at the training facilities available will speak for itself (see table, p. 98). Adequate training in general museology is scarce, let alone more specialized training in education and cultural action. This is a deliberately chosen example, for to talk about services in a community sense is idle speculation if you do not have people who know how to do it. But there are other areas: museum programming and architecture (paradoxically, the region has produced some of the best museum architects!) exhibit design and display techniques. Certainly a country such as Mexico has excellent professional training programmes, as just mentioned by Felipe Lacouture. There are also the courses at Bogotá. But all together these are still drops in the ocean.... Even more serious is the lack of employment. Argentina, for example, has four schools of museology; they turn out perhaps one hundred trained people every year, but there cannot be more than ten posts to be filled per annum! It isn't a question of creating museums merely to absorb the unemployed; rather, as Cuba has done, the right specialists need to be trained for the right slots. The continent's museums must surely be about 80 per cent understaffed! The ratio

1. See p. 80.

2. See p. 81.

3. Published in English as *A Hundred Years of Solitude*.

4. See article on illicit traffic by R. Torres de Araúz, p. 134.

of professional posts to collections (number of objects) or square metres of exhibition space is extremely low indeed.

MUSEUM: Few posts because of limited funds, no doubt. The examples given in the article on financing plus other cases of almost 'entrepreneurial' initiative in launching museums would perhaps justify optimism.

MONREAL: ICOM is now completing a study on the financing of museums, prepared for the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture. We see that in Latin America, as throughout the developing world, financial support for museums is and can only be mainly governmental. Those budget ceilings are almost impossible to budge. Private investment is still only piecemeal. In Ecuador the artist Oswaldo Guayasamin is creating a new museum on the basis of his own personal archaeological collection, and the Fundación Hallo is conducting a fascinating although

modest experiment involving the conversion into museums of several old buildings in Quito. Excellent, but how many gestures or experiments can you expect? As already argued, it is the state that must be made to realize the need to give more to museums, to allocate those funds directly or at least in such a way that gives the institution the power of decision and financial autonomy that are essential if it is to innovate and ramify.⁵ This is far from being an impossible challenge; there is a great potential of goodwill—political, administrative, entrepreneurial—that remains to be tapped. International organizations must be associated with this effort. Bodies such as the OAS are beginning to build museum support programmes. The World Bank on the other hand is proving slow to commit itself. Unesco's resources of pre-financing, stimulation and incitement have not yet been fully mobilized. And there are other avenues that the region's museologists seem largely to ignore—bilateral funding of fellowships and other training activities, costly but with an enormous multiplier effect, that could be provided by such organizations as SIDA in Sweden and similar state-supported development agencies in Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States of America and in many other industrialized countries. Finally, lest I be taxed with having a 'neo-colonialist' bias, what about the richer Latin American countries themselves? Can they not also be brought to commit themselves to creating a museum support structure or network for the region?

A single example is sufficient to prove that the situation is dramatic and has to be urgently changed. Peru, for instance, has over fifty thousand identified archaeological sites—this is just the tip of the iceberg—and only thirty-six museums (national, provincial, local), with a professional staff that can be evaluated at perhaps no more than 150 persons. Millions of objects in the ground are exposed to the greed of *huaqueros*—archaeological looters—and to uncontrolled land use for agricultural or other purposes: industrial, public works and tourism. The living heritage too is threatened by imported technologies and mass-produced products that quickly—and irreversibly—alter traditional life-styles and environment. The disproportion between the heritage that has to be urgently saved and the human, technical and financial means made available for its preservation is staggering. Every day, every minute, a significant part of the *world's* heritage disappears forever.

5. See the article on financing, p. 83.

CARRIACOU HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM, Carriacou, Grenada. A locally made 'show-case' for donated objects.
[Photo: Carriacou Historical Society.]



ALBUM

Rock art throughout the continent

Rock paintings or carvings are found throughout the American continent, from Alaska to Patagonia. The areas in which examples of it have not been found either lack suitable formations—caves, shelters, outcrops—or have not yet been prospected.

Some regions have long been famous for their outstanding rock-art sites. Recent archaeological research has proved that such art is much more widespread than was first believed. Some of the newly discovered sites are indeed much more important than the already well-known ones.

Owing to the disparity of the means employed, the differences between research teams, the fact that in some regions research has been conducted solely by amateurs, knowledge of American rock art is at present not very coherent and, above all, differs greatly from one country or zone to another.

The knowledge available

The geology and the geomorphology of the vast South American continent are most varied, for it extends from 12° N. to 57° S. Very wide in the north and narrow in the south, it has a great many climates and biotopes owing to its physical features, ranging from zones situated at sea-level to the snowy peaks of the Andean Cordillera. This variety is reflected in the cultures and hence in the rock art.

Research in Brazil has so far yielded the earliest dates for American prehistoric paintings (17000–14000 B.P.).¹ With the setting up of a number of university centres for research in prehistory our knowledge of the rock art in this country has evolved rapidly, especially since the end of the 1960s. Several research projects are under way. Their object is to reconstitute the total cultural contexts of these paintings or engravings. The most important projects concern the states of Goiás, Minas Gerais and Piauí. In the latter state it was possible to connect the rock art with hunting populations: pieces of wall with red ochre lines were dated back 17,000 years, and the evolution of these hunters and their art was followed

through to 5,000 years ago. A farmers' art emerges around 3000–2000 B.P.

Some paintings and carvings exist in Argentina, from the far north to Patagonia. As in Brazil, human and animal figures are found alongside geometrical figures, called 'signs' in the specialized literature. Some authors in recent times have attempted, without any really new scientific grounds, to group the old styles in three stages—archaic, intermediate, late. The first stage would be dated about 9000 B.P., the others spaced out in time (some paintings represent the Spanish invaders).

In Chile the same types of figure are found, but geometrical engravings predominate. No comprehensive classification or certain dating has been proposed by researchers as yet. In Peru, on the other hand, excavations carried out in a painted cave led to the obtaining of a date around 9500 B.P., but there is no obvious link between the strata dated and the paintings, which represent armed men and *Camelidae*. These motifs occur most frequently in paintings; the engravings are often geometrical. In the equatorial forest of Colombia, painted surfaces are to be seen on huge isolated rocks. The subjects are zoomorphic, anthropomorphic and geometrical. Paintings are to be found on the Colombian/Venezuelan border, and there are many engravings in Venezuela. In Bolivia the paintings represent llamas and felines. They seem to date back to between 3200 and 1300 B.P. In Uruguay engravings are more numerous, but there are also a few paintings with geometrical motifs. In the humid regions of Guyana geometrical engravings clearly predominate. Anthropomorphic or zoomorphic motifs also appear in paintings.

The rock-art heritage and its importance

Prehistoric rock art is not to be judged or analysed on the basis of criteria specific to the history of art. Here we use the word 'art' in its original sense derived from the Latin *ars*, practical skill in making something in accordance with certain

Niède Guidon

Born at Jau in São Paulo State, Brazil. Degree in natural history, zoology, biology and physics at the University of São Paulo. Studied prehistory at the Sorbonne, 1961. Commenced research for the CNRS under the direction of A. Laming-Empeiraire of the Musée de l'Homme, 1966.

Excavations in Brazil from 1970 onwards, specializing in rock art. Doctorate (thesis on Brazilian rock paintings) in 1975. Assistant Professor at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, from 1976. Chief archaeologist on the Franco-Brazilian Piauí Project since 1976. Research assessor at the Federal University of Piauí at Teresina since 1978. Unesco consultant for the Salto Grande (Uruguay) archaeological salvage project.

1. B.P. stands for 'before present', the dating reference prehistorians now use in preference to the Christian (or any other) era.

Toca da Extrema II cave, Brazil—human figures and cervidae. The rock is damaged by termite streaks.

[Photo: Niède Guidon.]



Toca da Entrada do Pajau cave, Brazil—human figures around a tree with cervidae; the sandstone surface is flaking.

[Photo: Niède Guidon.]



methods and processes. Rock art is part of the rare evidence of the spiritual life of prehistoric man and an invaluable source of data in attempting to reconstitute his daily life.²

Take, for example, the Nordeste tradition in Brazil. The paintings represent scenes depicting zoomorphic, anthropomorphic and geometrical figures. The subjects of these scenes are fairly clear and can be connected with ceremonies, dances, sexual relations, childbearing, hunting. So it is possible to direct research efforts towards the interpretation of the scenes. We can show that these hunters did not have the bow, that they hunted jaguars with slings and javelins and that armadillos were clubbed.

We can doubtless also apply to certain prehistoric paintings or engravings in America adjectives implying an appreciation based on our artistic frames of reference—outlines with a care for detail, simplicity, purity of line, exuberance in the treatment of figures, creativeness, unusual movement, expressiveness.

Then again, there is an aspect not to be overlooked, the prosperity of the region. Rock art is often present in very poor districts. A typical example is the Archaeological Park of the region of São Raimundo Nonato in the south-east of the state of Piauí in Brazil. This semi-arid zone of the *sertão* is one of the most disadvantaged regions in the world. The number of painted sites, their beauty and diversity together with the charm of the landscapes, are a source of earnings on which a tourist complex, carefully planned and controlled by the authorities and the research bodies, could thrive.

All these sites must be preserved. Each

one is a special case with a different configuration. We cannot be content with studying a few sites and extrapolating from them to the others, a procedure that would lead to largely erroneous conclusions.

What dangers threaten the rock-art sites of South America?

Various kinds of threat exist, some of which are purely natural while others are connected with the deliberate or unwitting destructive action of man. Since the nineteenth century, in settled regions such as Lagoa Santa in the state of Minas Gerais in Brazil, nearly all the sites have been destroyed, disturbed or partially damaged. The discovery of sites in formerly isolated regions, preserved from industrial expansion and lacking roads, today sounds their death knell. In the region of São Raimundo Nonato in Brazil, for instance, ten years after the discovery of painted shelters and three years after the building of asphalted roads, no protective measures having been taken beforehand, 50 per cent and more of the paintings had been destroyed on the readily accessible sites visited by sightseers and casual tourists, who broke the rock to obtain fragments of the painted surface as souvenirs. The sandstone of which these shelters are made crumbles and disintegrates into sand. The very rare cases of figures painted on pebbles have also been largely destroyed, for it is possible to detach the pebble from the puddingstone and get away with the booty.

Besides this destruction by looters, there is the involuntary destruction resulting from local practices or customs.

For instance, the farmers light fires to clear the land for cultivation and also to get rid of spiders, scorpions and snakes. This has caused the destruction of a number of painted sites in Brazil.

The building of roads is also a major cause of destruction. The felling of trees in front of certain shelters leads to an increase in sunlight, which hastens the process.

Erosion due to water, wind and the presence of animals, the chemical action of elements of the rock or salts dissolved in the runoff, are also destructive agents. In Brazil a careful study of the rock surface revealed the formation of crystals a few millimetres below the paint. These crystals cause the flaking of the rock and hence the disappearance of its surface.

Studies on increases in the density of rocks and fragments of rock surface that have fallen off in archaeological sites, together with studies on the evolution of the climate, may enable us to ascertain whether there is a correlation between this factor and the natural destruction of the rock surfaces.

It is also important to emphasize another danger. Research, excavations and surveys of rock-art sites are often carried out by amateurs or persons who are not properly qualified researchers. At every stage of research errors resulting from inadequate mastery of methods and poor basic training are frequent. Data are not reliable, conclusions are hasty and without scientific grounds. The paintings are damaged by crude procedures: a

2. As described by Emmanuel Anati in his article 'The Origins of Art', in *Museum*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 4, 1981, pp. 200–210.

number of so-called researchers wet the paintings when making surveys or photographs. Engravings are soiled with chalk, which eats into the rock. Badly conducted archaeological excavations mean data for ever lost. It is important and urgent to consider the destructive action of these researchers and to forestall it by establishing university courses for the training of local teams of qualified people to carry out complete studies in these archaeological zones.

Steps to be taken

In view of the importance of this heritage and the dangers that we have just mentioned, it is necessary to take certain steps urgently. This responsibility concerns international organizations, national govern-

ments and research centres, and universities entrusted with the training of young researchers.

International bodies and governments might convene specialists to advise them with a view to the setting up of the legal and administrative structures for the protection of these sites. The establishment of national parks is one museological option available so as to ensure the protection of this heritage and control its exploitation for the purposes of tourism. Research centres—including museums—and universities should establish standards to be met by research teams before being authorized to carry out their work. Such requirements should be worked out by a group of specialists in this field.

The role of the continent's museums

becomes apparent once it is realized that rock art cannot be studied on its own. It is not just the rock surfaces that should be researched and protected but the entire archaeological context, the environment and the interaction between that environment and man—not in prehistoric times alone but from the time human settlement began in the region up to the present. This is the only reliable means of establishing the age of the art, the way in which it has stood up to the action of man, the hastening of the process of destruction as a result of population increase, economic change and advances in technology. The safeguarding of this heritage is a specific and complex task, which should be undertaken as quickly as possible.

[Translated from French]

The Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas

The ending in 1936 of a long period of dictatorship prompted Venezuela to establish its first museum: the Museo de Bellas Artes, created by Carlos Raúl Villanueva in Caracas.

It is well known that Venezuelan visual art is outstanding for its continuity, coherence and maturity. The visual, which among us seems mysteriously to have acquired a highly original personality, displays in the plastic arts a remarkable technical and conceptual unity that has not yet crystallized in other disciplines.

The Museo de Bellas Artes was thus a first attempt to provide Venezuelan art with its own show-case. The fact remains that, owing partly to the novelty of the experiment and partly to the natural reaction of uncertainty that new movements in art inspire, it preferred to make its space available to recognized Venezuelan masters and to well-established international works that happened to come the city's way. Although in time the museum succeeded in becoming more flexible and included new generations of artists in its collection, its capacity for advertising Venezuelan creativity did not go beyond the invariably temporary exhibiting of the works of individuals or groups.

Creation of a new national gallery

The admirable pioneering spirit and enthusiasm of the former Museo de Bellas Artes accomplished vitally important work in the country for many decades. None the less, various factors—such as the emergence of Venezuelan-born international figures and major innovators, the appearance of well-defined movements and trends in the plastic arts and the need to reconsider the history of Venezuelan art (both since Columbus and long before the discovery of America) made it necessary and possible to pass a decree in 1974 establishing the Galería de Arte Nacional, inaugurated in 1976. The prime reason for the founding of this museum was the absolute need to put the Venezuelan people in contact with the work of their own artists.

As the outstanding Venezuelan poet José Antonio Ramos Sucre so aptly put it, both 'law and art are means of transforming reality'. By interpreting, reflecting or modifying reality art is able to represent both the appearance of things and their content. The Venezuelan public, however, has lacked the opportunity (apart from the temporary exhibitions ar-

José Balza

Born in the Orinoco Delta, Venezuela. A novelist and essayist, he calls all his works 'exercises', thus making unexpected connections between fiction and the essay. He is the author of the following novels: *Marzo anterior* (1965); *Largo* (1968); *Satecientas palmeras plantadas en el mismo lugar* (1974) and *'D'* (1977). He has also published several volumes of short stories, including *Ejercicios narrativos* (1967) and *Ordenes* (1970), as well as a number of essays. His unpublished works include a book of short stories entitled *Un rostro absolutamente*, the novel *Percusión*, and two books of essays: one on the painter Armando Reverón and the other on the musician Antonio Estévez.

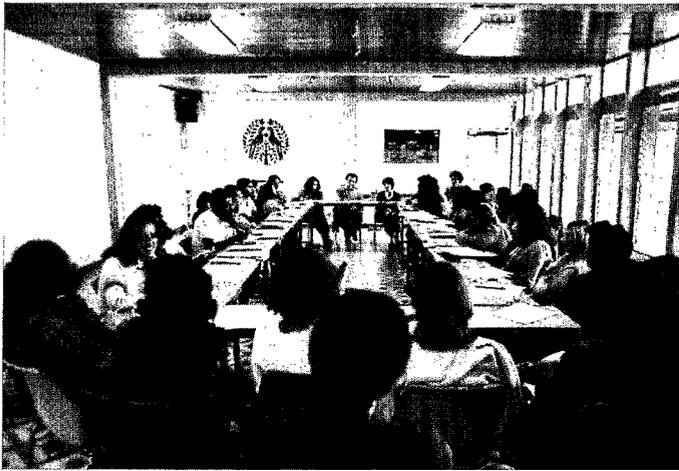


GALERÍA DE ARTE NACIONAL, Caracas. Main entrance to the building, constructed by the architect Carlos Raúl Villanueva between 1936 and 1938.

[Photo: GAN]

The annual evaluation and planning seminar at Pozo de Rosas, which is attended by all the gallery staff. Here decisions on planning, organization and activities concerning the community are taken.

[Photo: Humberto Febres.]



On the first Sunday of each month the Galería organizes concerts, poetry-readings or plays as a way of integrating different forms of artistic expression. Performing here is the folk group 'Con Venezuela'.

[Photo: Humberto Febres.]



ranged by the Museo de Bellas Artes and the occasional exhibition of interest in private galleries) to evaluate this transformation or reflection. For hundreds of years, private collectors and official institutions, by keeping works of art hidden away, have removed them from the epoch in which they were created and thus stunted the growth of knowledge of such works. If to this we add damage, loss and sales to foreign collectors, it is clear that this essential record of our development as a people has suffered considerable deprivations.

In the five years of its existence, the Galería de Arte Nacional has launched itself with passion, but also with care and judgement, into the task of studying the whole course of Venezuelan art, in an attempt to identify its constant features, its variations, its origins and evolution, its great masters and its general movements. In this task, meticulously planned year by year, newspaper reports, autobiographical writings and critical works have been drawn upon in a search for a global approach to Venezuelan art. To this must be added the attractive presentation of the works, the informative guides produced, the large-scale publicity activities—all designed to promote the revelation of the great fresco of art throughout our history.

All these promotional activities, however, whether they are welcomed or viewed with suspicion, are of course but the tip of a huge iceberg, concealing beneath the surface the patient work carried from out from day to day by the gallery's staff. An important feature of its functioning is its departmental organization,

whereby each activity (mounting an exhibition, for example) is based on teamwork and involves the whole staff. Thus instead of a possibly excessive degree of specialization in each stage or movement of Venezuelan art, its staff members have an overall knowledge of artistic development in the country. This new approach, which in no way implies superficiality, is perfectly suited to our circumstances, to the lack of specialist personnel in museological work and to the need to establish a solid body of staff who will bring cohesion to scattered individual actions in these fields.

A three-cornered methodology

These activities are effectively carried out through the operation of three special devices. In the first place, there are the interdepartmental meetings, during which problems are analysed and the initial outlines of future plans emerge. These small committee meetings take place as often as circumstances require. In the second place, there are the consultative councils, which are held weekly and attended by a representative from each department and from each unit. Here a wide-ranging agenda drawn up in the interdepartmental meetings (and to which immediate problems may be added) draws upon the different approaches and views of the staff as a whole. As a result of these meetings, the day-to-day operations of the gallery are infused with new life and vigour. Finally, mention should be made of the annual seminars held outside Caracas in Pozo de Rosas. These have become the keystone in the task of carrying

out long-term evaluation, analysis and planning for the museum. Over a period of three days the staff of the gallery make an exhaustive study of their work during the year, amend or reaffirm the policies being followed and decide on plans for the following period.

These three devices provide a human and organizational structure for monitoring the continuous development of the gallery. It is perhaps this integrated approach that is the key to the organization of the institution and, of course, to the working habits that have given the gallery a completely original character.

The continuous and effective channels of communication offered by the staff meetings (at their various levels) have made possible great flexibility, in which both human relations and the objectives of work are handled with a strong sense of responsibility and in a frank and comradely atmosphere. Thus, the functioning of the gallery itself constitutes an original social experiment, a form of collective art.

In this museum the task of transforming reality, which the poet Ramos Sucre conceives to be the aim of beauty, goes beyond the isolated function of the work of art itself or the originality sought by the artist, and has become a sacred mission linking the gallery with the people (and vice versa) and forming a permanent point of contact between the greatest possible number of human individuals.

[Translated from Spanish]

The interior gardens provide a background for sculptures by Venezuelan artists.

[Photo: Humberto Febres.]

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Galería de Arte Nacional facts and figures

Address:

Plaza Morelos, Los Caobos, Caracas,
Venezuela
Apartado Postal 6729 P. O. Box
Caracas 101, Venezuela

Date of foundation:

6 April 1976

Collections:

The visual arts of Venezuela from
the pre-Hispanic period until the
present day.

Number of items in the collection:

4,700 works (drawings, paintings,
sculptures, works of graphic art,
metalwork, photographs, etc.).

Staff:

Manuel Espinoza, Director
Francisco D'Antonio, General
Assistant-Director
Belén Rojas, Technical
Assistant-Director
Adriana de Briceño, Administrative
Assistant-Director

Objectives and fields of activity

The Galería de Arte Nacional is the lead-
ing state museum. It is devoted specifi-
cally to Venezuelan plastic arts of all
periods, and its tasks include the acqui-
sition and preservation of works of art, car-
rying out research, spreading information
about Venezuelan art and making people
aware of its importance, and also encour-
aging activity in this field. On account of

its wide range of functions, it is, in effect,
the museum of the history of Venezuelan
art.

Venezuelan art is understood as in-
cluding all those works of the visual and
plastic arts created by native and adopted
Venezuelans, both within the country
and abroad, and including painting,
drawing, graphic work, designs, photog-
raphy, textiles, ceramics, experimental art
and popular art, from early indigenous art
up to the present day. It also includes the
work of foreign artists of any period
which concerns aspects of Venezuelan
life.

The Galería was established by Resolu-
tion No. 105 of the Instituto Nacional
de Cultura y Bellas Artes (National Insti-
tute for Culture and the Fine Arts) (IN-
CIBA) on 1 October 1974 and was
brought into being on 6 April 1976 by
the Consejo Nacional de la Cultura (Nati-
onal Cultural Council) (CONAC),
under whose auspices it operates and
whose general cultural policy approach it
follows.

The Galería has legal possession of its
land and property and is autonomous in
planning and administration. It works
closely with the Museo de Bellas Artes
and other institutions in the country in
order to promote Venezuelan art abroad
and it participates in any action at the
international level that is likely to in-
crease people's appreciation of the work
of Venezuelan artists.

On account of its specific role, its ac-
tivities and its links with the other
museums in the country, the Galería acts
as the main advisory centre in the plan-
ning, organization and implementation
of a national system of museum services.

The gallery's Educational Department
provides guided visits for school parties,
foreign visitors or any organization that
requests them.

[Photo: Humberto Febres.]



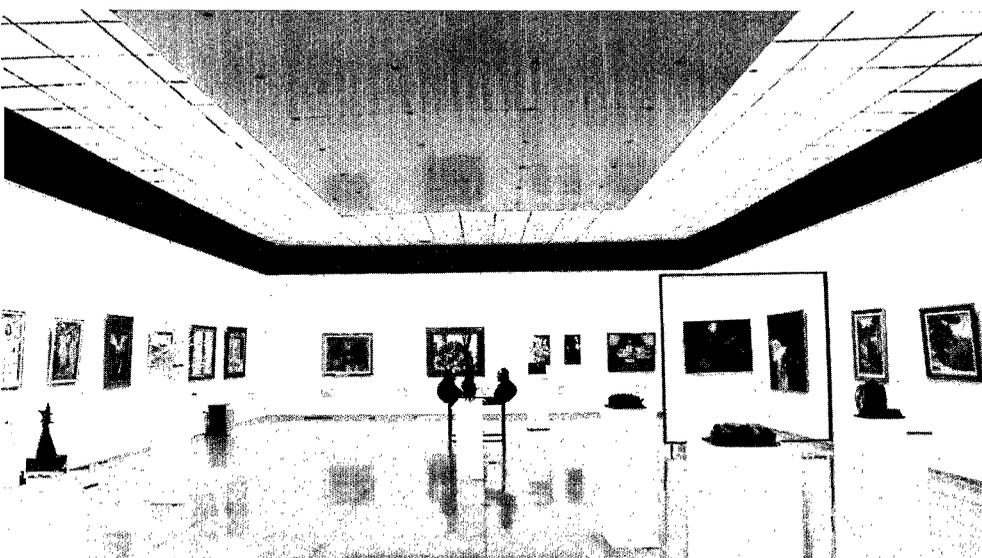
General objectives

Research: to establish the foundations for
systematic, methodical and continuous
research on Venezuelan art of all periods
as a constant process, employing the
widest possible varieties of approach,
analysis and interpretation. To establish
itself as the centre for the deposit, organi-
zation and dissemination of documentary
information on Venezuelan art, through
the National Information and Documen-
tation Centre on the Plastic Arts in
Venezuela.

Education: to assist in the overall educa-
tion of the individual, as a member of a
community which is in the process of
achieving real cultural identity. To do
this by contributing to the development
of his creative potential and providing as-
sistance so as to create awareness of the
importance of common action and dem-
ocratic participation in the work of so-
ciety. To act as an essential educational
tool on behalf of lifelong education and
the active integration of different forms
of cultural expression.

Conservation and restoration: to conserve
the national artistic heritage by means of
programmes to prevent the damage, de-
struction, loss or deterioration of artistic
property and also to help to increase
the understanding, appreciation and safe-
guarding of the national and internati-
onal cultural heritage, thereby contributing
to the formation of a feeling of mutual
understanding and universal solidarity.





Collection and organization of works of art: to increase the nation's artistic heritage through the collection and acquisition of works of art and through the development of programmes and initiatives to encourage the donation of such works. To establish contacts and joint programmes at the national levels with other cultural institutions, in order to organize systematically their holdings with the aim of establishing common systems for classifying and cataloguing those works of art which constitute our cultural and historical legacy. To promote the establishment of a National Centre for the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Property.

Dissemination: to disseminate information on the whole history of Venezuelan art on a permanent basis, both nationally and internationally, with the assistance of the anthropological and historical sciences. To co-ordinate and organize permanent and temporary exhibitions in accordance with a wide-ranging and coherent policy on exhibitions, both within the gallery itself and outside. This involves moving radically away from the concept of the museum as a static institution, by presenting the work of art as a dynamic expression of the human individual, which means avoiding passive scrutiny of works of art and achieving instead an active communication with them at a variety of levels.

Promotion: to encourage creative work in the plastic arts at all levels, and to help to provide Venezuelan artists with the fullest possible assistance in publicizing and promoting their work.

Training of personnel: to co-operate with the relevant state organizations specializ-

ing in this field in developing a system to forecast and maintain staffing levels and to train managerial, technical, administrative and general staff for museum work.

Museum services: to act as the basic nucleus for the promotion and development of a national system of museum services.

Number of volumes in the library:

3,000.

Periodical: GAN Bulletin

(three-monthly).

Exhibition catalogues: approximately twelve a year.

Exhibition area: 2,700 m².

Organizational structure

The organizational structure of the Galería de Arte Nacional is the result of systematic and continuous practical experience, which itself is based on a theoretical model reflecting its spirit, concepts and principles. By virtue of its comprehensive approach and its dynamism, its functions include both the technical aspects of the plastic arts in Venezuela and also the purely administrative fields. With regard to its actual operational activities, the Galería de Arte Nacional contains advisory and consultative bodies, programme planning units responsible not only for planning and co-ordinating but also for the implementation of programmes and, finally, the service units which establish the basic structure for implementing the programmes. This organizational structure may be divided into the following areas:

Directorate: Director, assistant directors, advisory and consultative bodies, Conservation and Promotion Board, Consultative Council.

The exhibition *Doce maestros* (Twelve Masters), which was part of the First Biennial Exhibition of the Visual Arts, 1981.

[Photo: Humberto Febres.]

Administration: Administration Division, Manpower Unit, Public Relations, Budget Unit, General Services: Supervision and Information.

Technical Section: Technical Division, Department of Planning and Display, Extension Unit, Co-ordination Unit, Display Unit; Department of Research: Pre-Hispanic Unit, Documentation Unit; Centro de Información Nacional de las Artes Plásticas (National Information Centre on the Plastic Arts); Department of Educational Services: Educational Materials Unit, Cultural Activities Unit, Children's Workshop; Department of Conservation and Restoration: Drawings and Prints, Oil Paintings, Sculpture, Archaeological Objects, Conservation Unit; Cataloguing Unit; Publications Unit: Graphic Design, Reproduction, Press and Communications.

Types of exhibition

Permanent exhibition rooms: Pre-Columbian Art, Colonial Art, Nineteenth-century Art, the Caracas School, Reverón, Contemporary Art. Historical and Documentary Exhibitions: Regional Exhibitions, Exhibitions on Specific Subjects, New Artists, Biennial of the Visual Arts.

Services provided for the community

Guided educational visits, Reference Centre and Library of the Information and Documentation Centre for the Plastic Arts, Children's Workshop, travelling exhibitions, technical co-operation and advice given to other museums, conservation and restoration workshops.

G rard Collomb and Yves Renard

On Marie-Galante (Guadeloupe): a community and its ecomuseum

The spectacular development of museums of ethnography in recent years has led to many experiments whose objectives and methods are very diverse. As it did not seem appropriate to apply imported methods and as there was an increasing need to make the museum more accessible to the general public, the experiment begun in 1976 in Marie-Galante was inspired from the start by the desire to conduct a comprehensive cultural project conceived by and for the public at large, with a view to laying the basis for the future ecomuseum.

An ethnologically rich terrain

Centred on the West Indies, 'Plantation America' stretched from north-west Brazil and the Guyanas to the south of the United States. Despite some variation in the natural environment, there are many striking common features, on account of the fact that the whole history of the area reveals a regular pattern from one end of the bow-shaped West Indian archipelago to the other.

Although many excellent foreign ethnological works of high quality are available, concerning for example Brazil or islands such as Jamaica, Puerto Rico, or Haiti, the French West Indies seem to have aroused less interest among ethnologists, particularly French ethnologists.¹ This lacuna, noted by anthropologists studying the Caribbean area, is even more pronounced in connection with Guadeloupe and the five islands or archipelagos that make up its dependencies.

The research undertaken between 1978 and 1980 on the culture of the island of Marie-Galante fills this gap to a certain extent. But the real interest of such a study seems to us to lie elsewhere: desired and to a great extent conducted by the people of Marie-Galante themselves, the *Inventory of Popular Arts and Traditions of Marie-Galante*² is an attempt to involve a population in the recognition and development of its own culture, through which it may perhaps find its future identity and help to define a type of development corresponding to its aspirations.

Inventory of Popular Arts and Traditions

For several years now, the island has had to make choices that affect its economy and social structure, without the populations concerned always being able to play a real part in the decision-making that determines their future. Faced with the need to emigrate, so as to escape unemployment, and influenced more and more by systems of values that are not those of the Negro and Creole societies, the inhabitants of Marie-Galante risk losing the greater part of their own culture and hence what they claim to be their own identity.

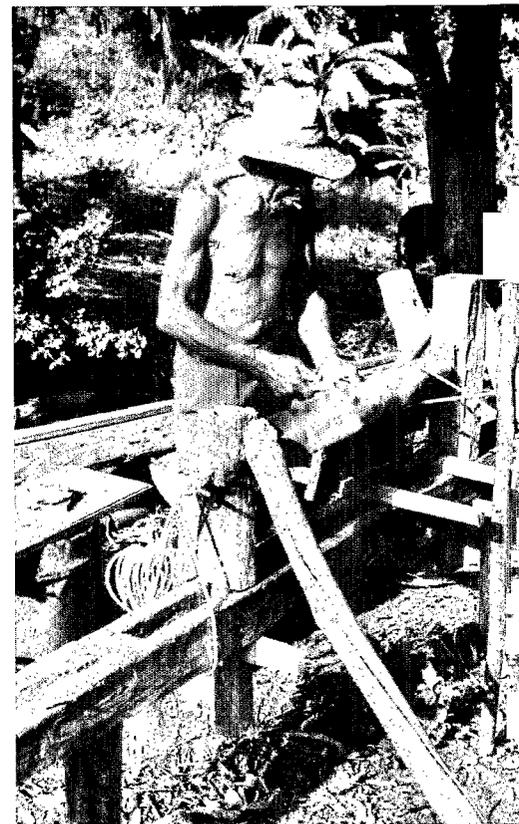
Like the rest of the Guadeloupe Archipelago—but more acutely here than elsewhere—Marie-Galante has therefore had to try and define new development models based on the specific needs of the island's inhabitants, and hence accepted by them, while also improving the preservation of the natural resources, which are all the more fragile in that the country is overpopulated and overexploited by single-crop farming.

It was mainly as an attempt to provide basic elements that could help to solve those problems that the Inventory of Popular Arts and Traditions was conceived in 1976. The inventory was to have the twofold purpose of highlighting the local cultural heritage and providing the population with information on its own past and its present, which could serve as a basis for this new development model.

The intention, however, was not to treat the island as a special case, in opposition to its neighbours. A similar operation could have been carried out, with the same chance of success no doubt, on the leeward coast of Guadeloupe or in the town of Pointe- -Pitre. On the contrary, because Marie-Galante by its very size constituted a perfect unit for carrying out such an operation, and because a specific culture has been maintained in this island, whereas it has lost some of its richness elsewhere, it seemed possible to launch there a project that would serve as an example for the whole Guadeloupe Archipelago.

Fashioning a cartwheel hub on a hand-driven lathe. Peasants, craftsmen and shopkeepers on the island were associated with the inventory operations right from the start. Most of the people solicited gave unstintingly of their time to provide precious information about their occupations, about what they knew concerning previous generations and about their own experience of social and economic changes on the island.

[Photo: G rard Collomb.]



1. A number of important works must be taken into account—those of M. Leiris and of historians and geographers such as G. Debien or J. Petitjeanroget on slave society, or G. Lasserre's thesis on Guadeloupe. The research publications of the Caribbean Research Centre, directed until 1979 by Jean Benoist, of the University of Montreal, also constitute outstanding work on the culture of the Creole-speaking West Indies.

2. The term 'inventory', which suggests a fragmentation of social and cultural facts, does not, perhaps, give a true idea of the work involved, which is aimed at covering cultural facts in their totality. But at least this term clearly indicates a desire to conduct an overall ethnological programme in which no field is left unexplored.

Gérard Collomb

Born in 1948. Doctorate in ethnology. Responsible for the regional ethnology section at the Musée Savoisien, Chambéry, France, 1970–73. Research assistant at the Musée National du Gabon, Libreville, 1973–76. Curator in charge of the Department of Techniques and Agriculture at the Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires, Paris, 1976–80. Since then, research assistant at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. Has carried out research since 1970 on Alpine rural communities, on the Banzebi of southern Gabon and on the vernacular architecture of the French-speaking Lesser Antilles.

Joint action by those responsible for the Guadeloupe Natural Park and for the Guadeloupe History Society enabled this project to get off the ground.³

Right from the start the population of Marie-Galante was associated in the definition of objectives and programmes. Many meetings were organized on the spot with teachers, groups of young people, various associations, and specialists in anthropological research in the Caribbean were also consulted.⁴ An ethnologist familiar with Marie-Galante, André Laplante, carried out a one-year study mission leading to the drafting in 1977 of a final programme.⁵

In 1978 and 1979, the National Museum of Popular Arts and Traditions (Paris) and the Centre d'Ethnologie Française provided, under the authority of Jean Cuisenier, Director of Research at

the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) and Chief Curator of the museum, information and advice to the Natural Park and the Guadeloupe History Society in the fields of ethnological research and museography, and in association with the park and the History Society arranged for additional surveys by specialized researchers, for example in

3. The advice and support of Georges Henri Rivière, who after a mission to the island in 1974 drew up an initial plan for developing the cultural heritage of the island, were essential and enabled a coherent programme of work to be established, which was approved by the Direction des Musées de France and the Fonds d'Intervention Culturelle.

4. The advice and support of Jean Benoist and Serge Larose, of the Caribbean Research Centre, have been decisive factors in the smooth running of the operation.

5. A. Laplante, *Traditions et arts populaires de Marie-Galante*, Parc Naturel de Guadeloupe, 1976.



Coffee, indigo, cotton and sugar-cane formerly ensured the island's prosperity, reinforced when the nineteenth-century sugar crisis led to single-crop farming in sugar. Today high-yield varieties of sugar-cane grown on a large scale form the bulk of the island's agricultural production, most of which is destined for the Grande Anse refinery, with only a small share remaining for the five agricultural distilleries. Food crops are still significant, however, ensuring local consumption, and fishing offers another source of food. [Photo: Gérard Collomb].



Sugar-cane supply to the Grande Anse refinery. [Photo: Gérard Collomb.]

ethno-musicology or on architecture and habitat.

Assistance from outside specialists has also been sought, in areas in which the field-work teams felt the need for scientific support. One research worker from the ecomuseum at Creusot-Montceaux-Mines was thus requested in 1978 to make a study of the industrial heritage of the island.

Recently this operation, which was envisaged at the start as a short-term project, has been taken up by the network of departmental museums established through the good offices of the General Council of Guadeloupe and by the Association of the Friends of the Ecomuseum, created by the islanders themselves. This will ensure a follow-up to the action in which the population is now involved and the establishment of the basis for what will shortly become the Marie-Galante Ecomuseum.

The ethnographical surveys are carried out on the basis of a general programme adapted to the cultural situation in West Indian societies. Several research teams were composed of inhabitants of Marie-Galante as well as a number of people residing on the island, who became involved in the study of specific aspects of the local culture and regularly carried out surveys during their leisure time. These included a high proportion of teachers, which is not surprising inasmuch as the inventory project mainly covered areas with which teachers were already concerned. Each year meetings were organized between those responsible for the inventory and the primary- and secondary-school teachers in the island, to keep them informed of current programmes and to organize their participation. The inventory also regularly received trainees and students, who were able to take advantage of the established infrastructure to carry out the research work required for their course of study.

The choice of subjects was left in any case to the people carrying out the research; those responsible tried, however, as far as possible, to guide the work towards themes that appeared to deserve priority, on account of their significance for the population or the urgency of collecting data and above all to co-ordinate it so that the different research projects might complement and support each other. At regular working meetings, the research teams were assisted by those responsible for the inventory, who helped them to draw up their programme of work, introduce them to survey tech-

niques and work with them on the analysis and classification of the data collected. A two-monthly newsletter, of which 400 copies were sent out, supplemented the circulation of information between the actual or potential collaborators of the inventory. It announced meetings, public events or exhibitions.

This decision to involve certain population groups of the island as broadly as possible in the survey was not without risk, but in our view it had great advantages. There was an astonishing richness and quality about the data collected, for example, by one team carrying out a study on children's games and toys, and by a teacher studying fishing techniques. In such cases, determination to achieve an exhaustive survey largely made up for the lack of training in ethnological techniques. But what is more, when it comes to describing the rules of games of marbles or the making of lobster-pots, if the researcher himself has played such games or fished regularly—and also if he is perfectly at home in his informant's language, because it is his own—the advantage is obvious. And so as the surveys develop, a dialogue is established between the young teacher, agricultural extension specialist or socio-cultural development worker and the fisherman, farmer or artisan who is questioned, not by some stranger but by someone known and often close in the small community of the island. In many cases the discussion of cultural property common to informant and researcher alike may strengthen the overstretched links between the various age-groups, and may even help to narrow existing social and economic gulfs.

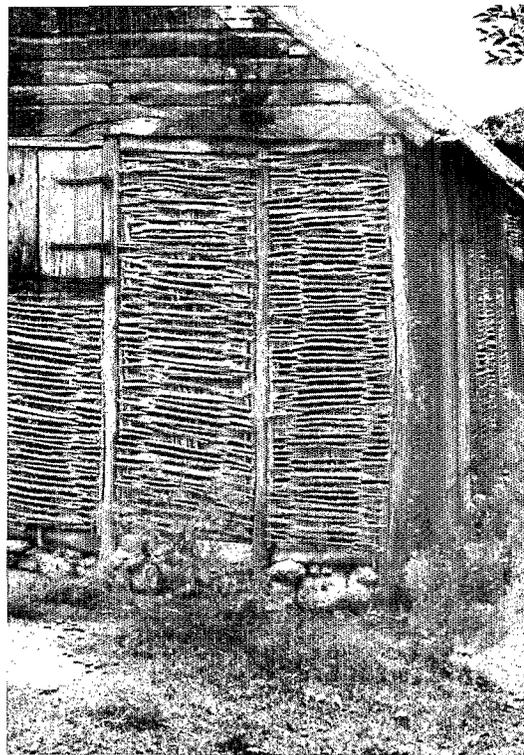
If the necessary scientific approach is to be maintained in gathering information, this process requires that those responsible for the inventory should themselves possess a sound knowledge of ethnography and be capable of co-ordinating groups of individuals whose training differs as regards type and level of specialization.

Entirely in contrast to the traditional organization pattern of an ethnological survey, the operation conducted on Marie-Galante attached great importance to the rapid distribution of research results and to the highlighting of local culture. With regard to the achievement of the museographical model thus outlined, the circulation of information has so far been ensured mainly by temporary exhibitions.

Four exhibitions have been organized since the inventory was started. The sub-

Yves Renard

Born in France in 1953. Co-ordinator of cultural and educational programmes of the Guadeloupe Natural Park, 1974–80, in which capacity he directed the Inventory of Traditions and Popular Arts of Marie-Galante. Now lives on Sainte-Lucie and is involved in several heritage safeguard projects in the Lesser Antilles, particularly the Eastern Caribbean Natural Area Management Programme and the Caribbean Conservation Association.



A now rare type of agricultural labourer's hut, with cob walls built from locally available materials.

[Photo: Gérard Collomb.]

A smallholder's house surrounded by a carefully maintained garden—symbol of a society now undergoing complete transformation.

[Photo: Gérard Collomb.]



jects—food farming and forms of collective organization of work, medicinal plants, children's games and toys, fishing and fishermen—reflect the variety of survey themes selected by the research teams. The interest shown by the local population in the inventory can be seen by the attendance figures: although the exhibition on medicinal plants, held in the spring of 1978, after a slowing of the inventory's activities for more than six months, drew only 1,800 visitors, the exhibition on children's games was attended by over 5,000 people and that on fishing by over 9,000, which is significant in relation to a total population of about 16,000 inhabitants. The catalogues and guides accompanying these exhibitions—material compiled for the educated public and a way of presenting to the population of Marie-Galante the results of the research undertaken, as well as an important motivation for the team carrying out the work—are publications including field material and reviewing the research done on the subject.

The temporary exhibitions, regarded as one of the ways in which the results of the ethnographic survey can be turned back to the population, also provided opportunity for a continuing dialogue. The permanent attendance of one member of the research team during the exhibition opening hours makes it possible to provide explanations to guide visitors but also to collect further information on the subject concerned. Often the objects and information displayed encourage a potential source of information to go further, to make an effort to think back, perhaps more than he would have done if interviewed outside the context of the exhibition.

Towards an ecomuseum

The concept of the ecomuseum,⁶ which breaks away from traditional museology, implies choices and requires conservation techniques adapted to an understanding of much more complex situations than the object traditionally displayed in our institutions. But although the problems involved are greater, the educational applications of projects of this type are well known to be much more effective. In the context of Marie-Galante, where there is a large rural population, where intense agricultural activity preserves traditionally established structures, the first essential is to take into account the cultural units scattered throughout the island, the territory of the ecomuseum.

The importance of sugar-cane cultivation in the present economy and in the history of Marie-Galante, as well as the high quality of the corresponding products, required special action to achieve recognition and preservation of the heritage linked to that activity. Out of over eighty windmills working in the sugar refineries in the mid-nineteenth century, only three or four buildings have survived, which could usefully be restored. The windmill at Murat, of which the internal mechanism has already been restored, should soon have its restoration completed and find a place in the programme of the future ecomuseum.

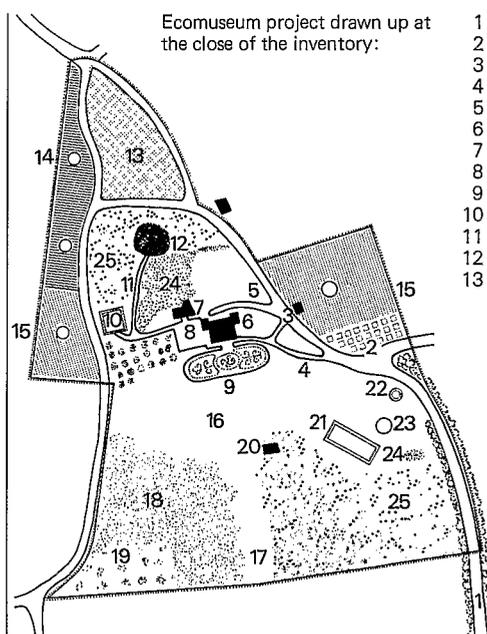
The artisanal distilleries, five of which are still functioning today, are another part of the island's living agricultural heritage, and the discovery at Grand-Bourg of the Poisson distillery is one of the highlights of a journey into the interior of the island. This small steam-run

unit is an invaluable example of the activities and techniques of the sugar industry at the end of the nineteenth century. The inventory of the installation and the photographic and film recordings of its activities have already been carried out; one of the next tasks will be to study the operation of these small production units, which formed a focal point for the rural economy of the island before the establishment of industrial sugar refineries.

The problem as always is to find ways of protecting this heritage without paralysing it and of preserving it without reducing it to atrophy. The transformation of these operating craft units into 'show-cases' in a fragmented museum would certainly be satisfactory from the conservation point of view but might cut them off from the rural population. The relationship of most of the population to these distilleries—to take only this example—is essentially a sugar-cane producer-buyer relationship or a rum-producer-consumer relationship. It is in no way a spectator-object relationship, which would inevitably be created if the distilleries became museums.

Research and organizational activities will be centred in future around the structure being established in the former Murat residence, the focal point of the ecomuseum. Although it is intended in the medium term to transfer to Murat all the activities concerning the inventory, the documentation (sound archives, photo library, library) and the administrative offices are still in the Grand-Bourg centre. This arrangement has the advan-

6. See George Henri Rivière's *Définition évolutive de l'écumusee*, Paris, ICOM, 1980. Mimeographed, French only.



- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Vehicle entrance | 14 Food crops |
| 2 Parking | 15 Sugar cane |
| 3 Guardian | 16 Meadow |
| 4 Pedestrians' entrance | 17 Main vista |
| 5 Service entrance | 18 Park |
| 6 Museum | 19 Fruit trees |
| 7 Temporary exhibitions | 20 Archives |
| 8 Esplanade | 21 Sugar refinery |
| 9 Parterre | 22 Mill |
| 10 Medicinal plants | 23 Animal-driven mill |
| 11 Road to pond | 24 Ruins |
| 12 Pond | 25 Uncultivated area, shrubs |
| 13 Creole gardens | |

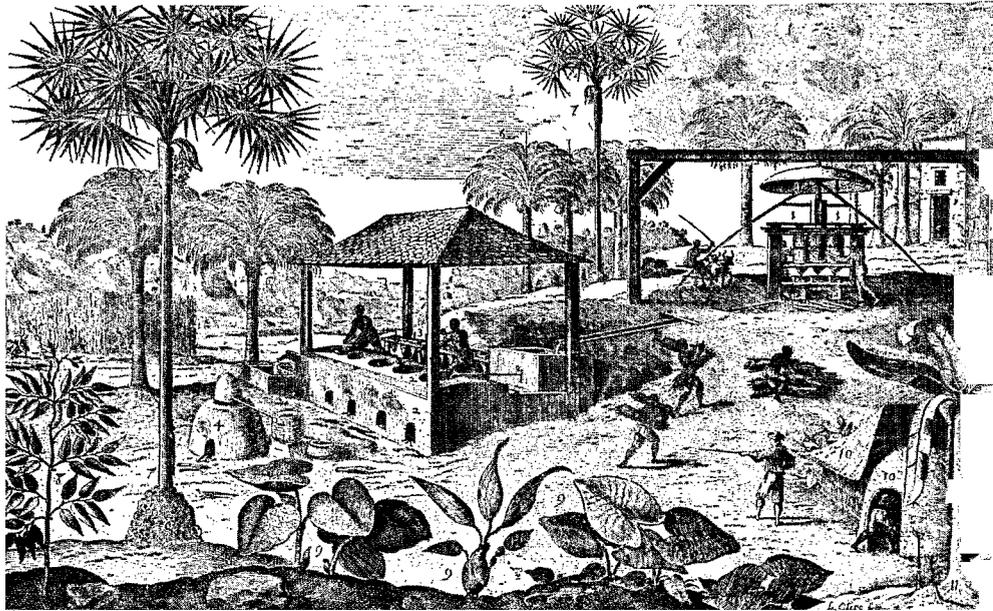
West Indian sugar refinery in the eighteenth century.

[Photo: Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires, Paris.]

tage for the moment of encouraging contacts with people from rural areas coming into town, who may bring in information; such visits will be more difficult when those responsible for the operation are installed at Murat. The intentionally limited nature of the transformations made is at present one of the essential conditions for the functioning of the inventory, while making it possible to establish the collections and ensure their preservation in the medium term, until other solutions may be found.

The ground floor of the Murat building now houses the temporary exhibitions, about two or three per year. The forthcoming conversion of an annex will make it possible in future to liberate these rooms in order to set up a permanent exhibition on the social and cultural history of Marie-Galante, with additional exhibitions based on the permanent exhibition but developing more limited themes.

In addition to the organization of permanent or temporary exhibitions, future research in the island should provide material for the establishment of a real ecomuseum in the estate of several hectares surrounding the Murat building. Set out around a central pathway, the natural environment of the island and its corresponding human activities will be presented, bringing out and showing the complexity of the agriculture systems, the



different forms of craft production and the main characteristics of rural architecture, of which it is becoming urgent to preserve specimens. This area for discovery and knowledge will also be a space for preserving ancient varieties of sugar-cane now supplanted by more productive varieties and, in general, the preservation of plants and animals (such as the frizzle fowl) which are threatened with extinction through the transformation of agricultural life.

Prospects

The recognition of the traditional Negro and Creole cultures of Marie-Galante and the preservation of examples of these rapidly changing cultures constitute one of the aims of the research undertaken in the island, and the first results reveal a rich potential in this field. Thus the research is an important contribution to the knowledge and presentation of the original culture, which has been that of the French Caribbean islands since the seventeenth century and which has survived better here perhaps than on the Guadeloupe 'mainland' or in Martinique.

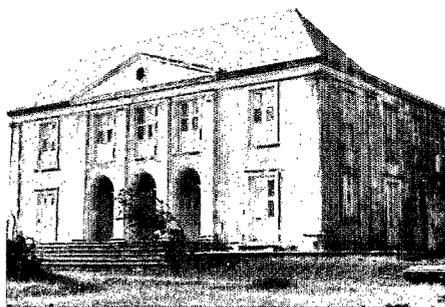
But at the same time Marie-Galante is confronted with the problems that concern all the Caribbean islands: economic uncertainty and difficulties, which are counteracted by social assistance from the 'metropole'; the population drain towards the urban, local or metropolitan centres, where people hope to find jobs (almost a third of the population of Marie-Galante has emigrated to Pointe-à-Pitre) and, as a direct consequence of this, the increasing upheaval of the social and cultural systems. This sudden cultural shock reveals

mechanisms that it would be too easy to call acculturation, for in fact what is taking place is the emergence of a new culture. In such a situation it seems important to find ways of understanding the phenomena that are at the heart of the present changes.

Placed at the junction of two worlds, of two cultures that meet and sometimes clash, the institution that has thus been established provides the administrative basis for the achievement of an overall programme. Even today, the ecomuseum of Marie-Galante is in a privileged position to bring the inhabitants of the island information and material that will enable them to decide more clearly on the choices they alone have to make. This is doubtless the main justification for this venture and for the confidence the population has shown in it from the outset.⁷

[Translated from French]

7. This article was originally written two years ago and the personnel responsible for the project have changed since then. Some orientations may have changed as well and if so *Museum* will report on them in a future issue.—Ed.



Nineteenth-century master's house in the former Murat property (or 'habitation'). The edifice and its dependencies were placed at the disposal of the inventory in order to house its collections, the scientific and technical personnel and the temporary exhibition.

[Photo: Gérard Collomb.]

View of a section of the reconstructed enclosure walls of the upper part of the Inca fortress of Chena, near San Bernardo, Santiago de Chile, 1980.

[Photo: Rubén Stehberg.]



Throughout Latin America, the archaeological heritage, urgently in need of safeguard, contributes to the definition of that special composite identity going back two millennia and more. The two articles that follow deal with but a tiny sample of the thousands of sites throughout the continent and in the islands. They describe attempts to apply the principles of modern museology with respect to site museums.

In Chile the National Museum of Natural History develops archaeological sites

Rubén Stehberg

Born in 1950 in Santiago de Chile. Degree in Archaeology and Prehistory, University of Chile, 1976. Project Engineer in Industrial Chemistry, State Technical University, 1973. Head of the Anthropological Laboratory of the National Museum of Natural History since 1974 and Professor of Archaeology in the University of Chile since 1976. His special field is the prehistory of central Chile, the restoration of ancient monuments and the reconstruction of archaeological sites. Has published four monographs and twenty-five scientific articles in specialized journals.

Introduction

In 1975 the National Museum of Natural History in Santiago began a programme to carry out research on prehistoric sites and work on their conservation and restoration. The objectives of this programme are to safeguard certain archaeological monuments that are obviously in danger of disappearing altogether as the result of increasing urban growth and to make available new information on the prehistory of the region to a metropolitan area that, on account of its excessive immersion in the present, has shown little interest in its pre-Hispanic past. In 1975 there were in the area around Santiago no pre-Columbian monuments that had been restored and could be visited by local people. The museum is carrying out this programme in stages and, in addition to using its own funds, is calling upon municipal, private and international sources of finance, including contributions from Unesco.

The restoration of these monuments helps to bring the city dweller into direct contact with his roots and enables him to rediscover his origins, contributing to the search for his own Latin American and

Andean identity.¹ At the same time it provides the metropolitan area of Santiago—which contains 4 million people—with at least one site of archaeological interest that can be viewed by the public in its original surroundings at each of the four points of the compass.

Although there is legislation covering national monuments (Law No. 17.288), it does not provide for special funds to be allocated so that such remains may be investigated, conserved and restored. The scientific experience and likely future development of national and/or regional museums make these best qualified to carry out this essential task.

Criteria applied in selecting significant sites

One of the most interesting aspects of the programme concerns the selection of significant sites.² The main criteria applied here are the following:

Representativeness. The sites chosen must be representative of the culture or the society to which they belonged. Unusual or unique archaeological remains, for example, do not give general evidence of a way of life.

Significance. The remains must corre-

1. See Grete Mostny, *Prehistoria de Chile*, Santiago, Editorial Universitaria, 1977, and 'The Role of Museums in Today's Latin America', *Museum*, Vol. XXV, No. 3, 1973.

2. Carlos Munizaga, 'Arqueología: Algunas funciones urbanas y de educación. Antecedentes para el estudio de 'sitios testigo' en Santiago de Chile', *Revista CODECI* (Santiago), Vol. 1, 1981.

spond to significant stages of cultural development. The remains as a whole should cover a considerable period of time and give evidence of continuous occupation over that period.

Variety. In order to avoid repetition and make more rational and efficient use of the resources available, sites should be selected that each show different characteristics.

Geographical situation. Sites closest to urban centres should be selected.

Ease of access. On account of their educational importance and their interest for tourists, these sites should possess easy means of access.

Preservation. As between two or more sites of the same type, preference will be given to the one that stands in greatest danger of destruction.

Monumentality. Ideally the sites chosen should be of impressive size and extent. However, this is not a feature of the cultures that existed in this area.

Location on state property. Work to develop an archaeological site as a focal point and make it suitable to be visited by tourists is made much more difficult if it is situated on private property. For this reason preference should be given to sites located on land owned by the state.

Special criteria. In most cases there are local factors that need to be taken into account: municipal problems, the supply of electricity and drinking water, support from the local authority, etc.

Work on the sites selected

On the basis of the above criteria several archaeological sites were selected and excavation work, conservation and restoration carried out there. The sites give evidence of a complete occupational sequence in the late pre-Hispanic period in the Santiago Basin. They also provide examples of different types of indigenous subsistence farming. The people who lived in them were, in effect, the first architects of the city of Santiago. It was their buildings, roads, irrigation works, etc., that led Pedro de Valdivia to decide that this would be the best place to found the capital of the kingdom.

The Inca fortress of Chena (33°36' S., 70°45' W.). This monument is situated to the west of the city of San Bernardo, at a distance of 2.5 km from the Southern Pan-American Highway and about 25 km from Santiago. It consists of the remains of an Inca *puccará* (fortress)

that are 500 years old and are one of the most southerly examples of remains of the Inca Empire. This site has been studied, partially restored and developed as a centre of cultural interest for the metropolitan area.³ Because of its position on the top of small but steep hill, a path had to be constructed; it was made to resemble a natural track, though marked with explanatory signs. Beside a small wood at the foot of the hill, a parking area and camping site were laid out and a site museum was built, containing an exhibition of models, some objects found on the site and explanatory notes on the expansion of the Incas towards central Chile and also the role played by the fortress. It was declared a National Historical Monument in 1977 and handed over to the care of the municipalities of Calera de Tango and San Bernardo at a formal inaugural ceremony held on 12 December of the same year.

Clear evidence of the impact this work made on the community was the decision by the owners of the site to donate the land on which the ruins were situated to the local municipalities and the incorporation of this monument into the coat of arms of the municipality of Calera de Tango.

Among the main problems that have arisen mention should be made of those relating to the maintenance and upkeep of the site.

The burial mounds at Huechún (33°04' S., 70°49' W.). These are situated 64 km north of Santiago between the Northern Pan-American Highway and the San Martín International Highway, which leads to Mendoza (Republic of Argentina). They consist of the remains of a community belonging to the Aconcaguan cultural group, which occupied this area around A.D. 1000. Work on the mounds began early in 1980 and is now nearing completion. Like the above site, it received financial support from Unesco.

Research carried out on the site has led to the conclusion that the area was densely populated during the period known locally as the Aconcaguan Culture (A.D. 1000–1500), which reached a high level of cultural development. Activity in the Rinconada de Huechún was centred on the exploitation of a quarry of silicified rock produced by the action of hot springs and providing material for making tools, which were exchanged with neighbouring communities.

The discovery of the remains of the village, irrigation channels, stone work-

shops, stone monuments, etc., will make it necessary to broaden the initial project. Work carried out to improve the site and make it into a centre of interest for tourists was centred on the burial mounds and is now almost completed. The burial mounds have been excavated and restored.⁴ One of them will have on display a reproduction in fibreglass of a typical burial site. Using the same material, objects shaped like rocks and bearing explanations in raised lettering on the

3. Rubén Stehberg, 'La fortaleza de Chena y su relación con la ocupación incaica de Chile Central', *Public. Ocas. Mus. Nac. Hist. Nat. Santiago*, Vol. 23, 1976, pp. 3–37, and 'Reflexiones acerca de la fortaleza inca de Chena', *Revista de educación* (Santiago), Vol. 62, 1977, pp. 46–51.

4. Rubén Stehberg, 'El complejo prehispánico Aconcagua en la Rinconada de Huechún', *Public. Ocas. Mus. Nac. Hist. Nat. Santiago*, Vol. 35, 1981, pp. 3–87.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Santiago de Chile. Fibreglass reproduction of a typical burial place in the burial mounds of Huechún, showing bone, ceramic and stone remains. The notices point out the main features observed by anthropologists with regard to burial practices. Photographed in the museum's Anthropological Laboratory, 1981. [Photo: Rubén Stehberg.]



View of some of the burial mounds of the cemetery of Huechún, Colina, 1981. In the foreground is one of the burial mounds with a square of ground excavated, in which a fibreglass replica of a typical burial place will be inserted.

[Photo: Rubén Stehberg.]



Fibreglass reproduction of rocks with notices in raised lettering concerning the cultural features of the burial mounds of Huechún, Colina, 1981. They will be placed at various points around the site when it is inaugurated.

[Photo: Rubén Stehberg.]

importance and cultural significance of the monument will be placed at various points around the site. They have the advantage of fitting in with the landscape and it is hoped that they will be more durable than metal signs (made of painted iron) which rust after four or five years (this is what has happened at Chena).

Archaeological centre of Farellones (33°21' S., 70°19' W.). This is situated in the Cordillera about 40 km to the east of Santiago, in the sporting complex of Farellones, at a height of 2,800 m above sea level. The site consists of stone remains (the House of Stone, stone monuments, stone workshops) left by groups of indigenous mountain-dwellers working as subsistence farmers. Work on this site is still at the planning stage. It will consist of the establishment of an archaeological centre in the sporting complex of Farellones, focusing on a collection of stone remains, including a stone cavern (a natural mountain refuge), stone monuments and a stone workshop. The remains indicate mountain communities that exchanged produce with farming communities in the valley. There are plans to build a museum on the site as part of the project. This proposal was put to the civic authorities of the municipality of Las Condes, who showed great in-

terest and offered to study the feasibility of providing financial support. When the project has been finalized, research and restoration work will begin with the help of the physical anthropologist Silvia Quevedo.

The programme under discussion is in keeping with the basic purposes of any museum: to carry out research and conserve and disseminate information about the nation's natural and cultural heritage and, by such means, educate and raise the level of cultural awareness of the public. The experience gained in carrying out this task will need to be evaluated and shared with others.

In this particular case, the museum is undertaking work in the field and carrying out the kind of scientific activities in which it specializes in order to help preserve the country's heritage on the original site, by transforming the area into a focal point that can be visited and which is also an open-air museum.

Although the archaeological objects excavated go to the laboratories of the National Museum, where they are studied and information is published on them, some of them are returned to the site and exhibited in the site museum. Likewise, the remains of buildings are restored and shown off to advantage in their original locations.

To carry out this archaeological and

museographical work successfully, the museum needs to involve the community in the task and communicate its scientific knowledge and outlook. It needs the support and understanding of local, national and international authorities. In this context, we should like to acknowledge that Unesco's vision and its financial assistance have been key factors in initiating and continuing the programme.

In this way the museum contributes to the work of conserving, restoring, developing and improving prehistoric sites and making them accessible to visitors, in the search for the cultural roots of the country and its identity. It thus contributes to the attempt to define Latin American culture and to the improvement of the quality of life of its inhabitants through the many and varied effects which such action has in the fields of education, science and culture.

[Translated from Spanish]

The Site Museum of the El Caño Archaeological Park

MUSEO DE SITIO DEL PARQUE ARQUEOLÓGICO DE EL CAÑO, Panama. Line of basaltic columns restored and re-erected in their original positions.

[Photo: Parque Arqueológico de El Caño.]

Reina Torres de Araúz

Background

The Site Museum of the El Caño Archaeological Park is located in the Province of Coclé, in the Republic of Panama. Its originality resides, in our opinion, in the fact that initially extremely adverse circumstances and conditions have been overcome by dint of seven years of continuous work to produce a truly representative, multifaceted cultural monument.

This site, which is also known in the scientific literature as El Espavé, was mercilessly plundered in 1926–27. At that time, the small new Republic of Panama, with a bare twenty years of independence behind it, did not have personnel qualified to supervise archaeological excavations. However, for motives that can only be ascribed to the political, economic and social circumstances of the time, the Government of Panama gave permission for the work to be undertaken under the direction of Hyatt Verrill, from the Heye Foundation in New York, today the Museum of the American Indian.

This situation, bad enough in itself, was exacerbated by the fact that, despite the provisions of the contract, Verrill did not hand over to the newly established National Museum of Panama the proportion of cultural material agreed on. Indeed, only eight monolithic sculptures from this site found their way into the collections of the old National Museum of Panama (today reorganized into three or four archaeological and anthropological museums). Moreover, a document exists, drawn up by Panamanian officials of the time, denouncing the irregularity of the transaction. The Museum of the American Indian in New York, on the other hand, received a large number of chests containing about a hundred specimens, some intact, others broken, of



monolithic sculptures from El Caño. Although we have been given three opportunities to study the collection of monolithic sculptures kept in the museum's storerooms and, by special arrangement, the ceramics collection, these investigations were limited to a partial study of the catalogue cards and a direct study during which we were able to handle, measure and photograph the objects. To date it has not been possible to determine the quantity of ceramic material held, both broken and intact, because of the inadequate storage conditions over the years, and also poor cataloguing. With regard to gold and silver objects from Coclé held in the Museum of the American Indian, we were not even allowed access to the information thereon in the archives. The only concession made to us was an offer to supply plastic reproductions of the monolithic sculptures.

It should be noted that the museum used to include just two monolithic statues from El Caño in its permanent exhibitions, but six months ago even these were withdrawn because of a change in the museography. Since then, this material, which is of such importance for Panamanian archaeology, has been stored away and is accessible only to researchers with the good fortune to obtain the necessary special permit.¹

An archaeological area reclaimed

After 1927 the El Caño area was used for agricultural purposes by Panamanian landowners who were unaware of its cultural importance. Thus the only records of the time are some sporadic notes by travellers and a few historic photographs showing tall unsculpted basaltic columns still standing on the surface. The monolithic sculptures, according to reports and sketches handed over by Verrill to the Museum of the American Indian, were discovered between three and nine metres below the surface. The same archaeologist also left a small plan showing what he considered to be the original layout of the excavated monolithic sculptures and the basaltic columns.

In 1973 the National Directorate of the Historical Heritage of Panama was established and immediately set to work to save the site of El Caño just as it was

1. It is worth noting that a small collection of similar objects was sent by Verrill to the American Museum of Natural History, New York. Consisting almost entirely of stone objects, the collection includes one of the most complete and aesthetically superb statues of the whole El Caño group. The eight monolithic sculptures given to the old National Museum of Panama were mostly broken, and although it was possible to restore them, they are far from being the most representative or perfect of the statues belonging to this culture.

Original photograph of the Hyatt Verrill excavations at El Caño (1926–27), showing some of the sculptures subsequently placed in the Museum of the American Indian, New York.

[Photo: Parque Arqueológico de El Caño.]



MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN, New York. One of the most characteristic sculptures of the El Caño style, now located in the museum.

[Photo: Parque Arqueológico de El Caño.]

View of the site museum, between two restored basaltic columns.

[Photo: Parque Arqueológico de El Caño.]



being dug up by bulldozers to convert it into a sugar-cane plantation. Indeed, it was the exposure of one of the burial mounds comprising the archaeological area that led to the rediscovery of the site, which had been practically forgotten apart from the scanty records available at the Museum of the American Indian.

The Directorate of the Historical Heritage was able to reclaim for the Panamanian state eight hectares of the archaeological area where the first excavations were made at the time when the site was plundered by Verrill in 1926–27. The area was heavily eroded, since it had been used for crop growing and cattle grazing for close on fifty years and had also been the subject of illegal archaeological digs, some of them not even recorded in the scientific literature. However, the burial mounds, which are perfectly discernible in the area, were not badly damaged. Only the upper cones of two of them had been partially cut away by the bulldozers, and to date eight such mounds have been preserved. A road or foundation made of selected stones is another feature that has been saved. Although ripped up from

their original position by bulldozers, over eighty simply sculptured basaltic columns were found; these originate from areas up to ten kilometres away, having been transported to the site by the pre-Columbian cultures that flourished there from A.D. 800 until the time of the Spanish conquest. This fact is borne out by the Venetian glass beads, Spanish enamelled ceramics and horses' bones found in one of the burial mounds.

The fact that a hill called 'Cerrezuela' carrying the original vegetation exists in the middle of this area, which had been used as farmland for centuries (1516–1973), and that the remains of roads and wall buttresses were discovered there, has led to a move to have this hill declared part of the natural and cultural heritage of the region. At present legislation is being enacted that will make this hill part of the El Caño Archaeological Park.

A site museum based on ethno-historical traditions

We are aware that the park still holds many surprises and mysteries that will re-

quire many years of work to clear up. In order to generate public interest, it was decided to set up a small site museum to display archaeological evidence as it came to light and to open up to the public one of the completely excavated burial mounds with the burial objects on display; also to display the road or platform and to create an authentic atmosphere by building a large pre-Columbian house such as is described and illustrated by one of the first Spanish conquistadores to enter the region between 1516 and 1520. This venture was successfully accomplished thanks to the ethno-cultural tradition still existing in the highlands of the region. Peasants with knowledge of pre-Columbian architecture came from there to build this large house entirely from materials like those described in the historical accounts and still found in the region today. These accounts were also carefully followed for the layout and decoration of the house, which has a radius of eight metres. To give a more vivid impression of the pre-Columbian Indian of the last few centuries before his encounter with the European, dummy

figures were placed in the house, dressed according to the fashion illustrated on the rich collection of Coclé ceramics, down to the last detail, including make-up. A few pieces of jewellery recovered in the excavations over the past few years were reproduced in less noble metals and used to adorn the figures. However, we know that most of the jewellery disappeared in the tragic plundering and is now located in the Museum of the American Indian, the American Museum of Natural History, the Peabody Museum of Harvard University and the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania.

A detailed study of the folkloric remains of the Coclé region enabled us to fill in some of the gaps that archaeology could not cover, it having been impossible for items such as wickerwork, nets, farm implements, mats, etc., to survive through the ages under Panamanian climatic conditions. The reproduction of the tapestries, beautiful garments and hair adornments described by the chroniclers was entrusted to distinguished national artists, who were guided in their work by the designs found on Coclé ceramics and jewellery.

One of the most interesting details of this site museum is the kitchen-pantry, which as a result of the taxidermist's art contains birds and mammals reared by the Coclé Indians, as well as typical foodstuffs

of the pre-Columbian cultures of this region.

This large house, which is now 'inhabited' by six models and has background music composed by national artists and interpreted on ocarinas and ancient whistles from Coclé, is surrounded by a path that allows the visitor to view the house completely from the outside, since only partial access to the five rooms is permitted, in order to protect the valuable archaeological material exhibited, especially the original ceramics from Coclé.

Finally, at the rear of the house there is an extensive pre-Columbian kitchen garden with the local and scientific names of each species duly labelled, so that the visitor can see what crops were grown by the Panamanians of that time.

Hopes for the future

Although this project is still at an early stage, we believe that it is already fulfilling a cultural and didactic function and will be further enhanced by archaeological explorations conducted every year during the dry season (five months maximum).

There are still some questions to be cleared up, such as the arrangement and purpose of the basaltic columns (of which various interpretations have been

given, such as the possibility that they were part of a complex for a West Indian form of the game of pelota called *bateyn*), and the architectural remains of Cerzuela, which rises in the distance like a watchtower demanding, as it were, to be investigated in the near future.

The first series of sixty-six basaltic columns that have been restored and now tower over the site serves to herald what is likely to be achieved in the next few years, using a simple and flexible museological approach. Today we can exhibit only 6 monolithic sculptures of the 110 known to exist. The various polite requests for their restitution made through diplomatic and personal channels, in which the possibility of exchanges or loans was mooted, or even collaboration on scientific research and modern excavations on the site, have all fallen on stony ground.

But the entire venture in the beginning seemed to be an impossible task. Through it we are now succeeding in saving a site eroded by centuries of agricultural use and subjected to archaeological plundering. The site is now being surveyed with a view to restoring the original vegetation, and ultimately we hope to present the archaeological remains of settlements and fortifications in a truly authentic environmental setting.

[Translated from Spanish]



Burial mound on permanent display showing bones and funerary offerings.

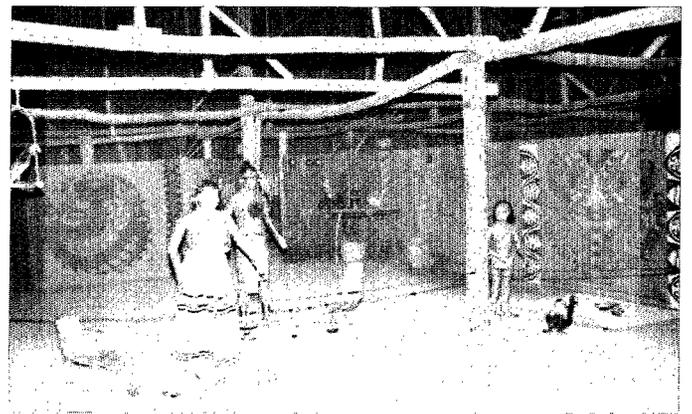
[Photo: Parque Arqueológico de El Caño.]

External view of the pre-Columbian dwelling, or House of the Caciqua, built according to descriptions left by chroniclers and conquistadores with the aid of skills retained by Indian peasants of the region.

[Photo: Parque Arqueológico de El Caño.]

Inside of house, with three models dressed in pre-Columbian costumes. The designs on the tapestries, clothes and jewellery were copied from archaeological finds.

[Photo: Parque Arqueológico de El Caño.]





The late Reina Torres de Araúz receiving a pre-Columbian vase from Panama that was returned to the country by a representative of the Government of Costa Rica in 1976. [Photo: INAC.]

REINA TORRES DE ARAÚZ

It is with very deep sadness that we announce the death on 26 February 1972 of Mrs Reina Torres de Araúz. Despite her long and debilitating illness Mrs Torres de Araúz was dynamic and infatigable to the end in her efforts to preserve and present the cultural heritage. So much so that she contributed two major articles to this issue, the one on page 117 and another on illicit traffic in cultural property (p. 134).

Reina Torres de Araúz would not be deterred from keeping her promise to *Museum* for this special issue. She was as dedicated to regional and international co-operation as to museum development in her own country.

Born in Panama on 30 October 1932, Reina Torres de Araúz studied history and anthropology at the University of Buenos Aires, earning her doctorate in anthropology in 1954. She became Professor of Anthropology at the University of Panama in 1955 and in 1961 Honorary Director of the university's Centre for Anthropological Research. In 1962 she was Honorary Director of the National Commission for Archaeology and Historic Monuments. From 1967 to 1969 she was chief planner in an interdisciplinary study commission on the development of national consciousness attached to the office of the President. In 1969/70 she was Director of the National Heritage in the National Institute of Culture (INAC), of which she was also appointed Vice-Director. In 1972 she was named Vice-President of the commission to reform the country's constitution.

This distinguished public career was matched by an impressive amount of research, training and information exchange activity in many cultural heritage fields and in social medicine as

well. Director of the reviews *Hombre y cultura* and *Patrimonio histórico*, her original articles and publications were numerous.

Reina Torres de Araúz represented Panama on the World Heritage Committee, of which she was a former Vice-President. But her energetic contributions to international co-operation and particularly to strengthening infrastructures in the Central American region were even more fruitful behind the scenes. She was ever ready to tackle new problems and advise colleagues from all countries.

Her dedication to the museums of Panama was boundless and their present strength is the result of her patient years of work. Under her guidance collections were built up, conservation laboratories established, new museums programmed or old ones renovated, various training programmes launched. Bold and imaginative links were also established with museums elsewhere that hold significant Panamanian objects whose return or restitution is sought. A constructive pioneer in this field, she prepared a very thorough document on the subject for Unesco's Intergovernmental Committee on return and restitution, which was warmly commended by the committee.

In her last letter to *Museum* dated 28 December 1981 she sent us a copy of the country's comprehensive new 'Ley de Control Arqueológico', explaining that it had been approved a few days earlier, 'the best Christmas present we could have wished for after nine years of struggle'.

The international museum community will deeply grieve her passing.

A locally created restoration centre in Guatemala

Alejandro Rojas Garcia

Born in 1938 in Champusco, Mexico. Studied painting and sculpture and painting, sculpture and textile restoration. Assistant restorer for the murals by Diego Rivera in the Palacio de Cortés in Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico, 1962. Restorer of paintings on the Tepetzotlán project and in the Museo Nacional del Virreinato, 1964–70. Head of the Restoration Workshop of the Museo Nacional del Virreinato (1970–72) and then Assistant Technical Director of the museum, 1972–77. Co-ordinator of the Museums of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1977–78. Co-ordinator of training in museology at the Escuela Nacional de Conservación, Restauración y Museografía, 1978–. Adviser on conservation for the Franz Mayer Collection of the Banco de México, since 1979. Numerous publications on restoration of works of art.

In 1975 the Mexican restorer Alejandro Rojas Garcia was asked by the Consejo Nacional para la Protección de la Antigua Guatemala (National Council for the Protection of Antigua Guatemala) to co-ordinate the establishment of a restoration centre. The council's resources were extremely limited, but through a combination of indigenous talent, voluntary work, support in kind from both public and private sources, this apparently risky venture soon proved a success. Above all, it has been able to train a significant number of restorers for the country and the Central American region.

When I visited Antigua Guatemala in 1975, in order to examine the possibility of setting up a restoration workshop for the benefit of small museums, I could hardly imagine the proportions the project would take on over the years, especially judging from the limited financial resources available.

Among the first problems to be tackled was the lack of qualified personnel. Next it was necessary to find a means of long-distance supervision, since Guatemala had no qualified restorer. To engage a foreigner would mean granting a fixed-term contract—an expensive solution, beyond our means. The permanent challenge, of course, was to find the resources for the venture and carry it out as economically as possible.

Such a situation might have caused anybody to lose heart, but in view of Antigua's position as a 'museum-city' in its own right there was obviously a moral

necessity to help solve the problem. We considered three possible approaches: a small workshop for restoring paintings, which could expand over a period and cover other fields; a workshop that would deal at least with paintings and sculpture; or finally a large, multipurpose workshop.

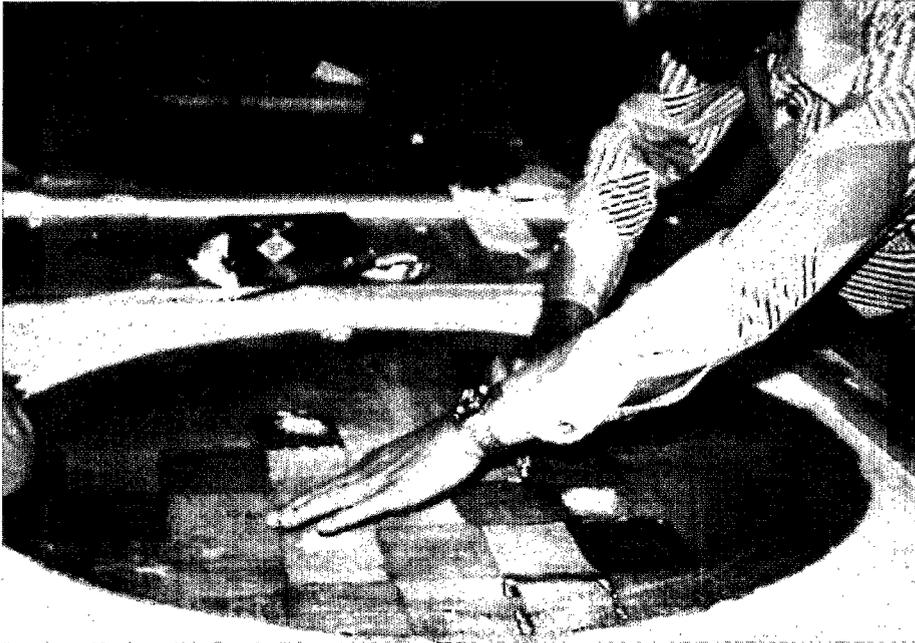
The shortage of funds forced the council to accept the first proposal and to seek ways of covering the costs of at least the basic materials needed, such as equipment and tools. Trainees and students would be asked to pay a minimal sum in order to help with the cost of some materials; craftsmen would be granted fellowships

Training in cleaning the surface of a painting. Antigua Guatemala, November 1976.

[Photo: Alejandro Rojas Garcia.]



Training in cleaning the back of a painting.
Antigua Guatemala, March 1976.
Photo: Alejandro Rojas Garcia.]



equivalent in value to the money that had been received.¹

The council also sought the help of businessmen, industrialists and hoteliers; such assistance ranged from discounts on accommodation and food to money or plane tickets. The training workshop began its operations in March 1976 in spite of the problems caused by the February 1976 earthquake, or perhaps precisely because of the psychological need to recover from the disaster. The simple problem of buying materials seemed insoluble, since because of the post-earthquake situation the dealers wished to sell only boards, hammers, wood and nails and, not unreasonably, refused to enter their half-destroyed shops where threat of total collapse was ever present.

Progress in stages

The first week of work, rather than providing everyone with the opportunity to gain an insight into the job and the problems ahead, produced the first drop-outs. Out of a group of fifteen students we were left with only ten (an example of natural selection!). In the following week, however, work began in earnest, and by the end of that first period six paintings had been remounted. In our ab-

sence the students were given the task of beginning to compile a catalogue of the works in public buildings, together with an inventory of damaged works, as this was a task that could be carried out without direct supervision.

The next step was to choose a suitable person to co-ordinate the work of the workshop. The person chosen was Margarita Estrada, who had spent a month in the Restoration Workshop of the National Museum of the Vice-Royalty in Mexico City, for training in the administration of a workshop and, in addition, to further her knowledge of restoration techniques.

The following period with the group was devoted to co-ordinating the work of two restorers: Rosa Elvira Romero Langle, with only brief professional experience, and Rosa Diez, who already had considerable experience and was responsible for directing the more difficult work. Miss Romero arrived in Antigua in the first half of May and Rosa Diez arrived in the second half to meet the group and to solve any problems that might have arisen through Miss Romero's lack of experience.

The third stage was carried out under the supervision of two trainees in the diploma course in the Restoration of Movable Property, Rebeca Duarte and Alejandro Reyes, who were present during the months of July and August, though Rebeca Duarte stayed on until November. In that same month we returned to take over the final stage of the training programme and to choose the staff that would be continuing work on a permanent basis. A second stage of practical training was planned on the basis of visits arranged with the restorer Rosa Diez, who agreed to work for a month with the group for the sake of greater continuity.

By March 1978, when the workshop had been in operation for two years, it had proved to be a huge success.

1. In addition, the free and spontaneous assistance offered by Mexico through two subsidiary bodies of the INAH (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia). These were the Escuela Nacional de Conservación, Restauración y Museografía (National School of Conservation, Restoration and Museography) and the Taller de Restauración del Museo Nacional del Virreinato (Restoration Workshop of the National Museum of the Vice-Royalty). The National School agreed to let trainees studying for the diploma in the restoration of movable property help during their holidays (and who in this way were able to do their compulsory social service) and the museum sent members of its workshop (beginning with the author), who agreed to spend their holidays working without pay in Antigua Guatemala.

Although the staff never exceeded five restorers, forty paintings of various sizes, including some which were very large, had been restored. International organizations, such as Unesco and the Organization of American States (OAS), took an interest in the restoration workshop and made sizeable contributions that made it possible, for example, to restore the cloister, known as El Lazereto, of the ruined monastery.

Guatemala's substantial and urgent needs in this field made a deep impression on the political and civil authorities, and as a result other restoration workshops were set up in Guatemala City, one of which at first formed part of the recovery unit set up as a result of the earthquake but which was afterwards transferred to the Instituto de Antropología de Guatemala (Institute of Anthropology), while the other came under the Instituto de Arte Colonial de Guatemala (Institute of Colonial Art). The first, following the example of Antigua, sought to engage craftsmen living in Guatemala City and took advantage of the periods of training that coincided with our visits in order to train their own personnel; the other started its operations with the people

who had begun in 1976 on the first course.

The workshop of the CNPAG in Antigua is now a restoration centre that not only meets the needs of the area of Antigua Guatemala but also often advises on restoration in other areas. Since 1979, with Unesco's backing, it has provided support services for the whole of Central America, at first by means of a preparatory training programme consisting of a month's course covering the theoretical side together with practical work in restoring paintings, then in 1980 a three-month course devoted to the restoration of paintings.

As a result Guatemalan restorers have been trained in the restoration of paintings, sculpture, polychrome wood and murals, and it has been possible to help in the training of restorers in other countries, such as Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Panama and the Dominican Republic. With the three workshops, two in the capital and the other in Antigua, we can say, not without pride, that Guatemala is now able to confront (and even solve) its problems in the conservation of its cultural heritage without the need to rely on foreign ex-

perts, whose help is naturally welcome and who are still needed to provide training. But even without such help, Guatemala is no longer in danger of losing its cultural heritage through lack of trained personnel.

[Translated from Spanish]

Practice in detaching a mural: the preparatory stage. Antigua Guatemala.
[Photo: Alejandro Rojas García.]

Restoration of polychrome wood sculptures: the removal of extra layers of paint so as to bring to light the original polychrome.
[Photo: Alejandro Rojas García.]



Recent advances in Colombian museology

Gloria Zea de Uribe

Degree in philosophy and literature from the Universidad de Los Andes, Bogotá. Professor in the Department of the Humanities at this university. Director of the Museum of Modern Art, Bogotá, since 1969. Director of the Colombian Institute of Culture since 1974. Director of the Foundation Universidad de Los Andes-Nueva York. Chairman of the Programming Board of the National Radio and Television Institute. Former member of the Directory Board of the Universidad de Los Andes and of the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Author of *Hacia una nueva cultura colombiana*, Bogotá, Instituto Colombiano de Cultura, 1978.

Until the early 1970s, the concept of museology in Colombia was merely a romantic idea. Even though there were already many museums, few of them actually deserved that name, because of their limited collections and the passivity of the role they played in the dissemination of culture. This deplorable situation was due mainly to the absence of a clear policy on the part of the responsible government agencies and a severe lack of qualified personnel at all levels of institutional organization and management.

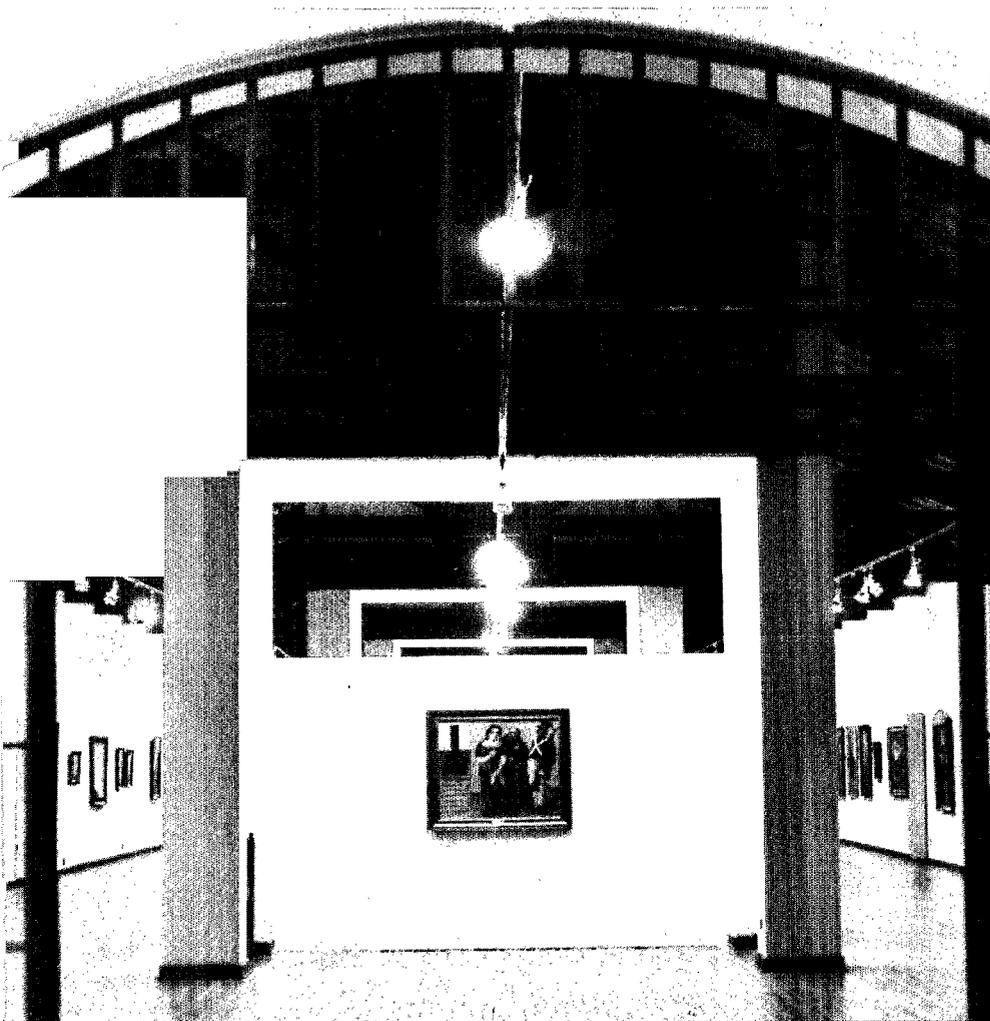
Furthermore, even though the first

museums in Colombia date back to the Botanic Expedition in 1783 and many alert minds promoted the creation of cultural centres during the nineteenth century, most of these institutions were founded after 1950. More than 70 per cent of the museums operating in the country, at least those that now have ties with the Colombian Institute of Culture (Colcultura) were established in the second half of this century.¹

It was clearly necessary to organize these museums adequately. The rich cultural heritage collected in previous decades, representing the pre-Hispanic past and the colonial and republican periods, was gradually being scattered and lost. There was a pressing need for a professionalization that would make it possible to bring together and disseminate this legacy according to the most appropriate museological standards. The country's narrow definition of the museum concept had to be broadened to include historical parks and monuments. Likewise, the strong interest in the work of contemporary Colombian artists, as well as their outstanding position in Latin American and international art, made it even more urgent that those in charge of the museums holding contemporary art be given proper professional training. Policy decisions were also necessary so that the Colombian people might see and enjoy the achievements of the graphic arts today. Within this diverse field of action and given the country's economic circumstances, the Colombian Institute of Culture decided to study the situation of the museums at that time, in order to proceed on the basis of firm data and establish working priorities. Consequently, the concept of the museum was extended to include those institutions that did not yet enjoy the corresponding benefits. A broad programme was thus developed to restore and present archaeological sites, colonial churches and civil structures, etc. An inventory and catalogue were prepared of the cultural heritage in the different regions of the country.

Points of departure

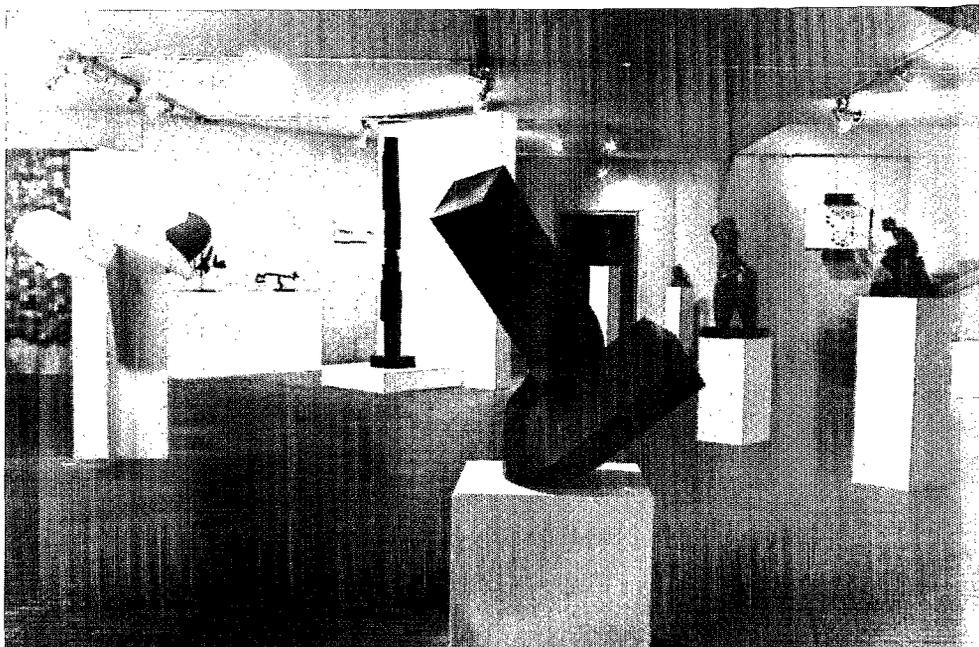
A conference was also held on the theme 'Museology and Cultural Heritage', with



Nineteenth-century painting,
Museo Nacional, Bogotá.
[Photo: Museo Nacional, Bogotá.]

1. Jorge Betancur and Sebastián Romero, *Los museos en Colombia, diagnóstico de la situación actual*, Bogotá, Colcultura, 1979.

MUSEO DE ARTE MODERNO, Bogotá.
Inaugural exhibition, 1979.
[Photo: © Oscar Monsalve.]



the co-operation of the Instituto Italo-Latinoamericano and within the framework of the UNDP/Unesco Regional Project for the Cultural Heritage. During this meeting it was recommended that the museum be considered 'a place closely tied to the socio-environmental context, where it is possible to acknowledge the work of man and his relationship to his environment'.² This recommendation was to become the point of departure for Colcultura's programmes. The first initiative was to found a Regional School of Museology at Bogotá in 1978, whose workshops and courses have been described in preceding articles by F. Lacouture and S. Mutal. In the country itself the school soon obtained significant results. For example, the training of several groups of museum personnel has improved standards quite noticeably, as evidenced by the fact that public participation has grown constantly in recent years. Given the condition of our museums before 1970, museology in Colombia has taken large strides. As a result, national-level importance is now far more readily accorded to the protection of our cultural values and to the free dissemination and circulation of visual expression. Colombian museums are now working actively in shaping our own cultural profile. The regional emphasis of their programmes is no doubt largely responsible for this rate of progress.

Specific mention deserves to be made here of the restructuring of the National Museum, the activities carried out by the Bogotá Modern Art Museum, in all its departments, and the creation of the Union of Latin American and Caribbean Museums (UMLAC).

Restructuring the National Museum

On 28 July 1823 the Colombian Congress issued a decree creating the National Museum, but only in August 1946 was this institution installed in the Panóptico—a spacious building dating from the middle of the nineteenth century—where it is now located. The museum's collection is made up mainly of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Colombian art. It also holds memorabilia

from our independence struggle (portraits, uniforms, weapons, insignia, and paintings of the main battles) and valuable iconography linked to Simon Bolívar, the Liberator.

The restructuring of the museum's building and collection began in 1976, with the collaboration and guidance of historical, artistic and architectural commissions. The building was extensively remodelled in order to highlight its original structure and adapt the large rooms for display purposes. The collection was reorganized so as to exploit fully its great didactic potential. It was divided up chronologically, making it possible to visualize Colombia's historical development up to the early years of this century.

Since its reinauguration in 1978, the National Museum has also sponsored a series of exhibitions that bring out the value of certain artistic trends or specific moments in Colombia's history. An Education Department has been created so as to reach out to children and students, aiming to disseminate the valuable material in its collection and present it in an attractive and convincing way that becomes meaningful for the community.

Bogotá Modern Art Museum

The Bogotá Modern Art Museum is entirely different. It is a private organization closely tied to Colcultura, and it is now one of the most prominent institutions of its kind in Latin America. Founded in 1954, the museum moved several times before the first part of its own building was inaugurated in 1979. The second part is now under construction.

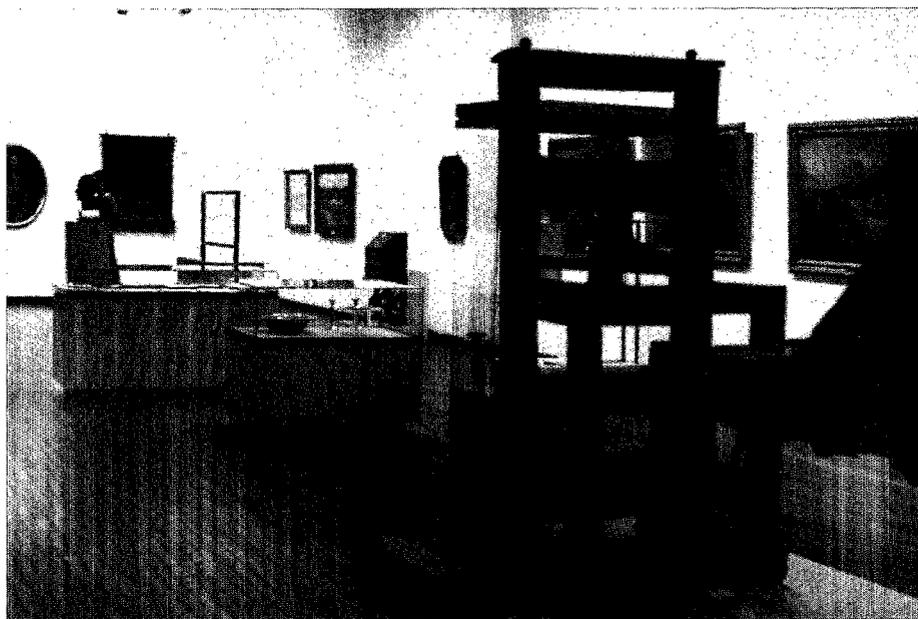
Following the policy outlined in the Unesco meeting mentioned above, the Bogotá Modern Art Museum has concentrated mainly on acquiring contemporary Colombian art works, although it frequently extends its radius of action to encompass the work of Latin American artists and, to a lesser extent, art from other regions of the world. The museum's collection is divided into four departments: painting and sculpture, drawing and prints, design and architecture, and photography, films and video. Each division organizes exhibitions to illustrate some trend or characteristic of contemporary art. At the same time, the museum supplements its dissemination efforts by presenting to the Colombian public exhibitions of the great twentieth century masters.

Furthermore, since 1975 the Bogotá Modern Art Museum has been concerned with holding 'anthological' exhibitions that emphasize the different traditions in Colombian art, thus encouraging the study of our history and the recognition of those coincidences that shape the artistic tradition of a country. Shows such as *Landscapes 1900–1975*, *Art and Politics*, and *History of Photography in Colombia* have been the excellent results of this type of research, and they confirm the continuity of interest in visual expression that runs through our history. In addition to this type of exhibition, which demonstrates the importance the museum attaches to the study and analysis of Colombian society, the institute has

2. *Museología y patrimonio cultural: críticas y perspectivas*, Lima, Unesco, 1981.

The Nariño, Bolívar and Santander Room
in the Museo Nacional.

[Photo: Museo Nacional, Bogotá.]



MUSEO NACIONAL, Bogotá. Façade.

[Photo: Museo Nacional, Bogotá.]



an Education Department whose didactic projects support area programmes, which have been well received by both school-age children and college students.

The success of the Bogotá Modern Art Museum is the result of efforts made in common by different segments of the Colombian community (government, private enterprise, artists, students, etc.).³ The country had no earlier tradition with respect to the creation of institutions of this type and in this particular way, so the success of this venture is truly an achievement from the museological standpoint.⁴

UMLAC: regional co-operation

The high costs involved in travelling exhibitions isolate not only Colombia but all Latin American countries from the great developments of international art. They also make it difficult to promote the dissemination of cultural values beyond the borders of country or continent. The idea of creating an organization that would enable the museums in the area to work together emerged from an awareness of these problems. But the main force that led to the execution of this ambitious project was undeniably the common desire of the different Latin American countries to strengthen their ties and learn more about their cultural heritage by means of exhibitions originating in Latin America, with Latin American materials, and conceived and organized with the public of the continent in mind. In November 1978, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Venezuela, Uruguay and Colombia signed an agreement to 'carry out actions of co-operation and exchange which per-

mit the adequate implementation of the functions that are inherent in dissemination, conservation, research and education in the field of the visual arts in the Latin American and Caribbean region, by means of the establishment of a circuit for travelling exhibitions.⁵ Bogotá was chosen as first headquarters of the Union de Museos Latinoamericanos y del Caribe (UMLAC).

During the three years of its existence, UMLAC has not only cemented relationships among institutions in the area but has also made it possible to establish an artistic information centre for Latin America, which operates from Venezuela's National Gallery. It is now organizing the first travelling exhibition, structured by common agreement and with the co-operation of all member museums: *Landscapes in Nineteenth-century Latin American Painting*. This will begin its tour of the participating Union museums in 1983, and it will include the most prominent paintings of this type and period from fifteen countries. For the first time it will be possible to appreciate as a whole a type of artistic expression that was common to many Latin American countries.

[Translated from Spanish]

3. Eduardo Serrano, *Recuento de un esfuerzo conjunto*, Bogotá, Museo de Arte Moderno, 1979.

4. La Tertulia Museum, Cali, and the recently inaugurated Medellín Modern Art Museum also operate in this way.

5. *Union de museos latinoamericanos y del Caribe, Estatutos, Personería Jurídica*, p. 3, Bogotá, Colcultura, 1979.

Frances Kay Brinkley

Born in the United States of America and has lived for twenty-four years in the West Indies. Studied French, Spanish, ancient and medieval history, history of art and creative writing. Curator of Carriacou Museum. Now working at the Barbados Museum as special assistant. Several publications on Grenada and Carriacou.

The eastern Caribbean: a museum on every island

Few people, even in the Latin American region, know much about the islands of the Lesser Antilles in the eastern Caribbean, let alone of the museums that have sprung up there in recent years. But as shown by this brief overview by Frances Kay Brinkley, people's interest in preserving and displaying their heritage is as alive here as anywhere—and in as much need of attention and support.

Between 1974 and 1979 there was an explosion of small museums in the Lesser Antilles, among them—St Eustatius, Grenada, Montserrat, Carriacou, Tobago, St Vincent, Marie-Galante. Their diversity is enormous, their premises range from sugar mills to coffin shops, their collections from Amerindian artefacts to children's games.

St Eustatius: area 30.6 km², population 1,600.

First on the scene was the St Eustatius Museum, on 16 November 1974. This was a very quick operation, as a Historical Foundation was formed only in March of that year. The building is a good example of Dutch Windward Islands architecture, particularly in its simple detail work. It is a one-storey house, constructed mainly in wood on the foundations of an eighteenth-century building, making for a very attractive museum.

But the whole town of Oranjestad, the only one on the island, could be called a museum. The foundation distributes a walking-tour map of the upper and lower town. In the lower town are the former customs office, now the power plant, and eighteenth-century warehouses, some

ruins and a luxury hotel. In the upper town, reached by a precipitous road, are Fort Oranje (now housing the post office, the tax office, and the administration office), the walls and tower of the Dutch Reformed Church, consecrated in 1755, the skeleton of the mid-eighteenth-century synagogue Honen Dalin, and a half dozen or so beautiful eighteenth-century houses, some still inhabited.

The Netherlands Government has been good to the foundation in furnishing the building for the museum, in financing Hartog's *History of St Eustatius*, and in protecting its monuments. The foundation is also fortunate in being able to keep the museum open seven days a week, mornings and afternoons, by a volunteer staff of 'Statians' and retired expatriates.

Last November they took pride in a visit from the Queen of the Netherlands, whom they drove around the cobblestone streets of Oranjestad in an antique carriage. Many projects are now being prepared: documentation of the museum's collections, tape recordings of old people's memories, a minimal restoration of the Dutch Reformed Church so it can be used for foundation meetings.

Possibly because it is the least populated island, with little going on, history as a fascination and an integral part of people's lives has gained a firm foothold. This is a great advantage to the museum.

Grenada: area 311 km², population 100,000

The Grenada National Museum opened its doors on 9 April 1976, in a building part of which had last been a warehouse,

part of which a hotel. Very much earlier a part of it had been the local gaol. This fascinating building was threatened with being torn down to make way for a parking lot when some people interested in history stepped in and asked the government to make it a museum. They formed a Museum Committee, with a government representative sitting on it. Later on the Grenada Historical Society was formed, one of its responsibilities being the operation of the museum.

Because it is a national museum its collections vary a great deal. At the beginning Amerindian artefacts, old documents and maps, sugar machinery, African weapons, nutmegs and cocoa, and English stoneware stood cheek by jowl. The time came when it became obvious the museum had to be rearranged, with regard to the limits of space and the number of exhibits for display. The committee, who were mostly foreign residents and amateurs, realized the problem, but could see no solution.

Fortuitously, the answer dropped out of the blue. Last year one of the students at the American Medical School in Grenada had a wife who was a product of the Smithsonian Institute. The museum hired her to help them out of their dilemma. Owing to her background, she was superbly competent. After a period of study and consultation, with a minimum of expenditure, she rearranged the exhibits to give a logical progression and the maximum space for visitors to move about in.

This work was not complete when she had to return to the United States. However, it is now possible, since the committee has learned the method, for



Artist's view of the Grenada National Museum.

[Drawing: Robert P. Cunningham.]



them to continue the work. This will be difficult, as some of the foreign residents who worked so hard for the museum have left, and also because the museum has depended a great deal financially on entrance fees paid by visitors from abroad, who are now fewer. However, the committee remains determined to cherish Grenada's mementos of the past and preserve them.

Montserrat: area 100 km², population 13,000

Less than a month after Grenada, on 4 May 1976, the Museum of the Montserrat National Trust opened. With great imagination they converted an eighteenth-century windmill on an old sugar estate into two rooms of exhibits, plus a reading room. Everything displayed was found or used in Montserrat.¹

A Committee of the National Trust, which includes a member of the Montserrat Government, operates the museum. Early on they were blessed by learning through the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA) of an assistance programme available to West Indian museums through West Indian Museum Associates, located in the Virgin Islands of the United States. So, before opening, they benefited from a visit by the late Dr Marcus Buchanan, president of the above organization.

On his advice a Museum Acquisitions Committee was formed to receive and document items given or loaned to the museum, an index file covering all items

on display and in store was established, and the names of useful journals and off-island sources of Montserrat history provided.

The National Trust is a non-governmental organization, depending mainly on membership dues and private contributions, but the CCA gave assistance in establishing the museum, the various government departments co-operate when their help is requested, and the Tourist Board has allotted development funds.

In the winter of 1980 a display most enchanting to children (and the child in every adult) was completed. This is a working-scale model of a sugar mill. It includes a boiling house and little figures of the workers carrying cane to the mill, manning the rollers in the mill, and ladling sugar in the boiling house. With marvellous ingenuity the sails and rollers of the windmill are powered by a motor from an electric rotisserie, and some of the gears are hand-carved from ice-hockey pucks. As a member of their council put it: 'Who needs ice-hockey pucks in the Caribbean?'

As this illustration shows, the growth and development of the Montserrat Museum are in good hands.

Carriacou: area 34 km², population 5,000

The Carriacou Historical Society opened its first museum in August 1976, in the storage room of a rum shop. It soon moved to larger premises—a building last used as a coffin shop.²

The museum, although small, is said to have the most representative Amerindian collection in the West Indies. The European section contains china and glass shards, some partly reconstructed, from the ruins of the old French and English great houses. The African section possesses two of the 'big drums' used in the famous Carriacou 'Nation Dances', a unique heritage of almost unchanged African tribal dances.

The museum is supported by membership dues both from local and from foreign members. A lone tourist ship, which used to call for a morning fortnightly during the winter, was a welcome extra source of income, but this no longer comes. The dwindling of visitors and the departure of many of the officers and members of the Executive Committee are hurting the museum in both its morale and its pocket. (See also description on pages 80-81.)

Tobago: area 300 km², population 40,000

The Museum of Tobago History opened on 11 February 1977. It is housed in a small building especially designed for the purpose and leased at a nominal rent.³ The Mount Irvine Museum Trust, a non-commercial charitable organization, worked four years to prepare the museum. Its main purpose is to assist in the education of the younger generation.

Thus the exhibits range from a geological section, through relics of the island's history, with the various Spanish, French, Dutch and English occupations, to examples of shells and marine life.

The trust is carrying out an ambitious publications programme—a series of mimeographed pamphlets on various events in Tobago's history. These fulfil a double purpose—education and an addition to the museum's income. They cover such topics as a 1647 land lease, the naval battles of Rockly Bay, the earliest reports about the island, the first colonization by the Dutch. These are of high standard, and a welcome addition to a regional history.

St Vincent: area 298 km², population 100,000

The St Vincent Museum came into being on 9 August 1979. The opening ceremony was attended by, besides the local and foreign luminaries, a group of schoolchildren of Carib descent. This was the culmination of the seven years of work begun by the National Trust once the building, a cottage in the Botanical Gardens, was acquired.⁴

The original idea may have been to have a national museum, but when the Amerindian collections of the Archaeological and Historical Society members were handed over to the trust it was found that they alone would more than fill the building. So the St Vincent Museum became specifically a museum of Amerindian archaeology. To publicize this the government put out an issue of stamps, 'Carib Artefacts'.

An intriguing addition to the museum

1. Most objects were donated or loaned, so purchases amounted to less than US\$37.

2. In its seven months at the first location the museum spent \$133 in all; in its first year at its second home only \$633.

3. The rent is 40 cents per year. But the purchase of the artefact collection and fitting out the museum were 'expensive': \$15,437 and \$4,276 respectively!

4. The total cost involved in opening this museum was \$10,000.

is an 'Indian garden' outside, where are grown most of the plants used by the Amerindians.

Marie-Galante: area 246 km², population 20,000

The Ecomuseum of Marie-Galante, which opened in 1979, has been described by Gérard Collomb and Yves Renard (see p. 109). The ideas tried out here as well as the innovations introduced should contribute much to the cultural life of the Caribbean.

Survival based on minimal requirements

These varied operations prove that it is not necessary to have a large, well-educated population or a tremendous amount of funds to open a museum. Each of them, in its own way, has added to the cultural wealth of the people of its island, and is preventing further loss of traditions and historical objects. All, in one way or another, are seeking to attract young people, to give them a knowledge of their past that will help them to be self-assured in whatever country they may find themselves.

For continued progress, whether they are funded privately, publicly, or by a mixture of both, they all need more money. Also, they all suffer from a lack of space and qualified personnel. The space problem could be solved by more funds. The personnel problem is not necessarily complicated. A qualified museologist with an understanding of the amateurs

who created and run these museums, and an empathy for the effort they put into them, could spend two or three months at each museum—the Caribbean Conservation Association would be an ideal base for such a person—teaching the techniques of cataloguing, documentation, and display. This would be a giant step towards assuring their continuation.

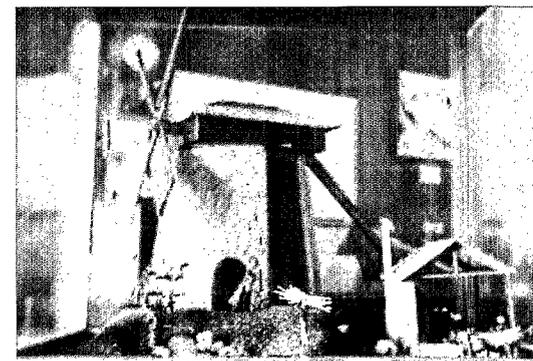
A paper entitled 'Towards a Planning Strategy for the Management of Historical/Cultural Resources Critical to Development in the Lesser Antilles', prepared in 1979 by Edward L. Towle, President of the Island Resources Foundation, and George F. Tyson, Director of the Foundation's History and Culture Programmes, assesses these museum activities as follows:

While it does appear... that the level of activity is considerable, and that nearly all of the islands have at least one cultural resource utilization project under way, it should be pointed out that most of these projects are small in size and scope and not well planned, well staffed or well funded. Moreover, it is noteworthy that few of them are government activities, and those that are, most notably the archives, continue to remain seriously neglected in most of the islands. Generally speaking, the site-specific cultural resource utilization efforts currently operational in the eastern Caribbean can be said to suffer from several notable deficiencies, which must be remedied if these small islands are to gain maximum benefits from these resources for local people. These deficiencies include: lack of comprehensive, integrative planning; lack of linkages with tourism, education and community development programmes; weakness of local infrastructures; information gaps; poor

institutional networking; insufficient funding; insufficient public education and outreach; inadequate legislation; shortages of essential human resources and skills; insufficient technical information; lack of professional contact with regional counterparts; lack of national policy guidelines and machinery; lack of active government involvement; lack of established priorities; lack of orientation to local peoples and needs.

MONSERRAT NATIONAL TRUST MUSEUM.
The converted windmill.

[Photo: Monserrat National Trust Museum.]



The working model of a sugar-mill in the Monserrat National Trust Museum.
[Photo: Monserrat National Trust Museum.]

GRENADA NATIONAL MUSEUM.
Amerindian exhibits.
[Photo: Jim Rudin, Grenada National Museum.]

The Museum of Havana:

Eusebio Leal Spengler

The Plaza de Armas, Havana. A particularly important item in the legacy of the eighteenth century is the Governor's Residence, silhouetted in the background; the luminous circle is the face of the clock that has counted the finest hours of the country's history. In the centre, the statue of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes y del Castillo, Founding Father and First President of the Armed Republic.

Degree in history. Author of numerous essays, articles and studies in history and museology; visiting professor in various European and Latin American universities. Has given lectures and talks on topics in his special field in museums and to foreign scientific associations. Since 1967, he has been Director of the Museum of Havana and City Historian. At present he holds the post of Executive Secretary to the National Working Group for Old Havana. He is a member of the Governing Board of the Latin American Co-operation Centre in Spain. He has received numerous decorations and honours.

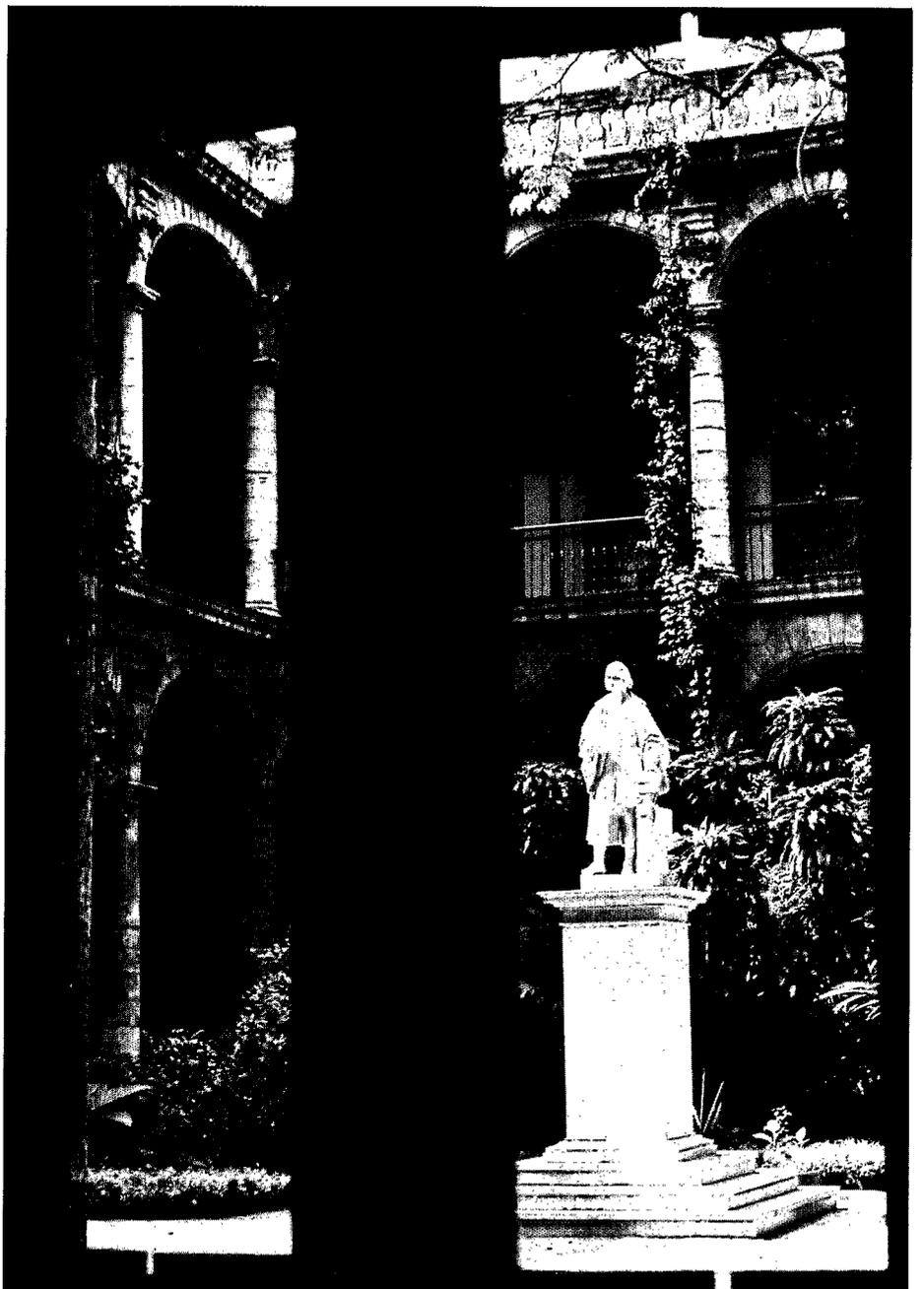


Gallery on the first floor: patterns of light and shadow in one of the most attractive inner galleries in Cuba.

[Photo: Museum of Havana.]

MUSEO DE HABANA. Cloistered courtyard of the Palacio de los Capitanos Generales (1776-91), present site of the office of the City Historian and the Museum of Havana. In the centre, the statue of Christopher Columbus.

[Photo: Fernando Lezcano, Granma.]



mirror of a city

Two hundred and six years have elapsed since, in 1776, the military engineer Francisco Fernández de Trevejos y Zaldívar laid the foundations of the Government Headquarters, Meeting House and Gaol of Havana. Over time the edifice came to be known only as the Palacio de los Capitanes Generales. Within the precincts of this 6,500-square-metre building in the Plaza de Armas the most important events in the history of Cuba took place. It witnessed the rise and fall of Spanish colonial rule (1791–1898); foreign rule by the United States of America from 1899 to 1902 and again in 1906–1908, and the Republic, 1902–1920. It was then the Town Hall of Havana without a break until the victory of the Cuban Revolution on 1 January 1959.

The building and its restoration

This building, especially the cloister set off by a garden of delicately scented flowers, epitomized the national identity that was beginning to change the face of the economy, social and political attitudes, creativity and Creole culture at the end of the Age of Enlightenment. It bears the stamp of the architecture of southern Spain, strongly influenced by Moorish architecture.

We have had to work hard over the past sixteen years on the restoration of this building. Both time and mankind had wrought sometimes irreparable damage to its structure and decorative features. We inherited only a public office, full of air-conditioning equipment, cubicles and files.

The search for the plans took us into the oldest and most distinguished Spanish archives. Archaeological excavations methodically uncovered the foundations of Spanish buildings dating from before the eighteenth century, the main parish church of the town (1555–1574), the tombs of countless people buried in that church and traces of the indigenous community in the throes of cultural transition, together with Spanish and American enamelled pottery. These enabled us to determine with precision a number of details of trade and daily life in the capital of Cuba, even before it was founded near the port of the same name in 1519.

This wealth of experience, acquired through research into documents, archaeology and building techniques, enabled us to carry out a successful experiment, on the basis of which we can claim categorically: 'We did not create the museum; it created us.'

To recover the history of our capital and to attempt to express its essence in the museum's displays were not easy tasks. They involved finding suitable forms of museological expression, given the requirements and conditions imposed by an old building, which also has its own history. Solving the practical problems took more than fifteen years of work.

Educational work

The museum has developed an energetic educational approach, remaining selective in the choice of exhibits so as to fulfil its central function of showing the role of the city and its inhabitants, over the centuries, in the history of the nation.

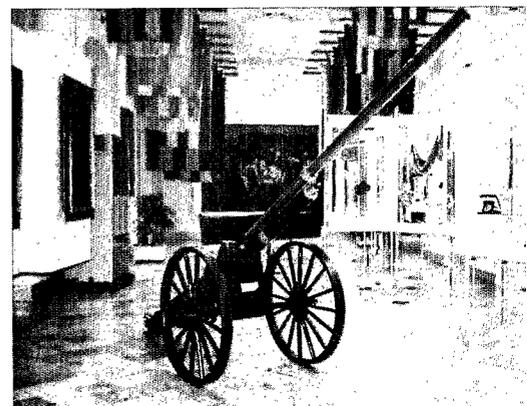
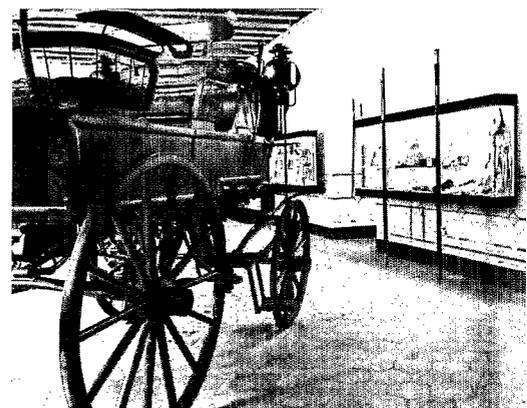
At the same time, the museum has become a research and cultural centre, a forum for the concerns and interests of our people, which strives to attract young and old alike, and especially children. Every year we organize drama festivals, puppet shows, concerts and literary circles, and on Saturdays we have a major public function that has become famous: craftsmen of all kinds gather in the square near the museum and in the old quarters of Havana. These are some of the ways in which the museum stays alive and abreast of the contemporary scene.

Today we are witnessing another phenomenon whose significance extends beyond its immediate context. Restoration work has begun on the historic centre of Havana. Streets and houses are beginning to recover their original appearance, both movable and immovable objects rescued from the danger of destruction or export. In a sense it is a process of 'demuseumizing': the museum no longer belongs to the city, but the city begins to belong to the museum.

The city—alive, inhabited, hard-working and beautiful—should find in the museum its mirror image.

[Translated from Spanish]

When restoration began in 1969 and subsequently transformed them, the large rooms in the palace looked like this. Moreover, virtually no works of art from its original collections had survived.
[Photo: Museum of Havana.]



In the old stables, coaches and carriages are now on display, together with a host of objects that evoke the atmosphere of the city at various times in the past.
[Photo: Museum of Havana.]

The rich potential and the destiny of the Cuban nation are clearly apparent in the history rooms, the most important of which is the flag room, a veritable Pantheon, where, protected and carefully preserved, are the battle standards of the Liberation Army.
[Photo: Museum of Havana.]

RETURN AND RESTITUTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY

Rodrigo Pallares Zaldumbide

Cases for restitution

A priority concern of our cultural institutions today must be to prevent objects belonging to the national heritage from leaving the country, and to ensure that objects so removed are returned. In the attempt to achieve these aims, battles are won, some more easily than others, or lost overwhelmingly. Alternatively, there may be bitter legal wrangles lasting for years, during which one never loses one's fighting spirit and one's faith in a successful outcome. Three examples clearly illustrate cases such as these.

An example of total success

In November 1978 the Head Office of Ecuador's Instituto de Patrimonio Cultural received a tip off by telephone from a person known to be reliable, who said that he lived opposite a senior official in a European embassy. This official was about to return to his country and had forwarded to the customs a tip off by telephone from a person known to be reliable, who said that he lived which, according to the informant, contained a large number of Ecuadorian works of art whose export was forbidden.

In compliance with the law on diplomatic immunity and with the co-operation of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of the government, we requested the ambassador, who was the superior of the diplomat sus-

pected of illegal trafficking in cultural property, to be present when the luggage was inspected. The crates were very large, and out of the first came furniture, crockery, craftware, books and other objects which it was by no means illegal to export. The inspection took so long that the second crate had to be left until the next day. When on the second day there was still no incriminating evidence, the ambassador grew more and more indignant, the representative of the Chancery Protocol Department more and more uneasy and the Institute official more and more dismayed. Only on the third day, at the bottom of the third crate, did they discover eighty large boxes containing 910 objects: archaeological artefacts, paintings and sculptures from the colonial period.

The whole collection was confiscated, and detailed information was given in the press, but no names were mentioned, out of consideration for the country concerned and its ambassador.

Failures

On several occasions when it was found that Ecuadorian archaeological objects were being sold in art galleries in Europe and the United States of America, efforts were made with the help of our embassies there to have them returned. Unfortunately we came up against a

legal problem, which was that before any legal action could be taken it had to be proved that the objects had left Ecuador since the law prohibiting their export had been passed. This was impossible in most cases, since it was not usually known when or how they had left the country.

A battle we must win

At the end of 1974 I received a letter from the Director of the Museum of the Central Bank, enclosing a cutting from the Italian magazine *Epoca*, No. 1244, the September issue of that year. It was a copiously illustrated article about a collection made up of some twelve thousand Ecuadorian archaeological objects belonging to one Giuseppe Salomone. The photographs showed beautiful ceramic vessels and figurines and also a number of sophisticated models displaying, as in a mannequin parade, masks, earrings, bracelets, pectorals and other gold jewellery used for ceremonial purposes in ancient civilizations that had once existed on what is now Ecuadorian territory.

Explaining how he had come to acquire such a fabulous collection, Salomone, who was not a rich man but a sometime salesman and sailor, said that he had spent many years travelling and prospecting in the Republic of Ecuador, buying archaeological objects either



The Minister of Finance of Ecuador, accompanied by the author, inspecting some of the 910 items of cultural property confiscated in 1978 in from the unaccompanied luggage of a European diplomat.

[Photo: Instituto Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural, Quito.]

from local dealers (*buaqueros*) or from middlemen. He even spoke of personal archaeological excavations. And, so imbued was he with his own celebrity, he began describing his own life with the words: 'I was born in 1942, in Piedmont, in a family of farmers.'

On seeing that date, I thought that at last we would be able to prove that a priceless archaeological collection had left Ecuador illegally when there were already laws prohibiting it. However precocious was this Salomone, born in Piedmont in 1942, he could never have started his predatory traffic before 1945, which was when the law on the artistic heritage was passed, since he was not even three years old at the time.

This was the background against which a court action was begun in Italy for the purpose of recovering the collection. The Prefect and Attorney-General of the Milan Magistrature were informed of the affair, and since the objects were stored in a small town not far from Turin they handed the case over to an examining magistrate there. The latter ordered the placing under court custody, with Salomone held responsible as 'guardian', of the almost ten thousand pieces that were actually found at his home and at the Manzoni Gallery in Milan, where an exhibition was being prepared.

As a result of these measures, Salomone found himself in prison, paradoxically enough, not for illegal traffic in cultural property, but for being in possession of firearms which were discovered in his home when the police carried out their search!

Since then, the Ecuadorian Government has waged a long and expensive legal battle. The case has been delayed by technicalities and the repeated non-appearance of Salomone, whose real name turned out to be Giuseppe Danusso and who had adopted his mother's name after having been declared bankrupt. At one formal interrogation he even admitted: 'I know that the export of archaeological objects from Ecuador is prohibited... I do not intend to give the names of the persons from whom I bought the archaeological objects so that they could be brought to justice in their country... I am keeping the gold mask in a safe in a New York bank which I do not intend to name.' Despite these admissions of guilt, however, the case has dragged on for years, and during the last two the main culprit has disappeared, leaving even his lawyers in the dark as to his whereabouts.

An interesting point to note is that Danusso, alias Salomone, published a sumptuous book on Ecuadorian archaeology, illustrated with photographs of the offending collection. The Instituto Italo-Latinoamericano (ILLA) found that the text had been plagiarized from a well-known book by Hernán Crespo-Toral, Director of the Museum of Ecuador's Central Bank. This text has also been used in the catalogue of an archaeological exhibition organized at the ILLA's Headquarters by the Museum of the Central Bank. The ILLA therefore took Danusso to court

and won the case after a trial which was promptly and rapidly dispatched, a very different matter from the sluggish proceedings of the suit filed by the Ecuadorian Government. The fact is that in nearly all countries, even when they have ratified the 1970 Unesco convention on the means of prohibiting and preventing the illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property, the law treats the illicit import of cultural property in the same way as the illicit import of any other product. Very often judges will be more lenient towards people trading illicitly in cultural property than towards those smuggling spirits or cigarettes.

When, as representative of the Government of Ecuador, I attended the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation, I presented the case, beginning my account as follows:

The unconditional return of cultural property to its countries of origin will be one of the most delicate and difficult issues to resolve in the course of this committee's deliberations. However, there are cases in which unconditional restitution is the only acceptable, genuine and fair solution, as for instance when the claimant country proves that its cultural property was exported in defiance of customs regulations, when laws prohibiting its export were already in force.

On behalf of the Government of Ecuador, I wish to inform the committee of a case of this kind. Some of the facts of the case will provide an important frame of reference that will certainly help the committee to adopt more constructive resolutions, and other governments to find solutions to similar problems.

Having examined the case made by our government and recognizing that it was obviously difficult for the Italian Government to intervene in a case that was *sub judice*, the committee welcomed the positive stance on the matter taken by the Italian representative. Late in 1980 in fact the proceedings, which had been at a standstill, were speeded up. The judges decided to give our consul in Turin 'legal custody' of the ten thousand archaeological objects. This we regard as a major victory for the Ecuadorian cause, as it was an art dealer and associate of Danusso's who had previously had custody. The consul organized the inventory of the entire collection by Hernán Crespo-Toral and Dr Rosa Petrucci of the Pignorini Museum in Rome, a task which took fifteen days to complete.

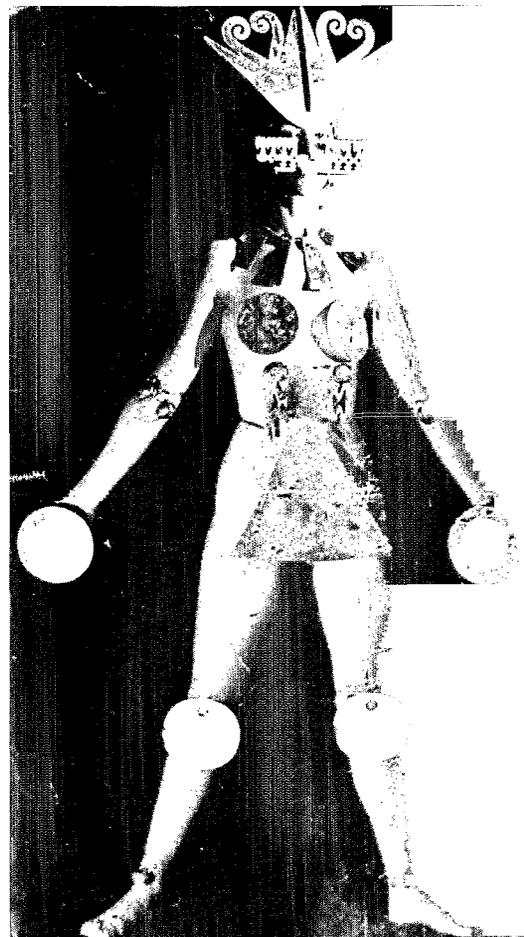
At its second session, the Intergovernmental Committee heard once again about the case from Ecuador's Ambassador and Permanent Delegate to Unesco, who was also one of its Vice-Presidents, and from the Permanent Delegate of Italy to Unesco, who reported on the steps taken by the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs to speed up the judicial process. The committee was also informed of a special resolution passed by the First New World Conference on Rescue Archaeology held at Quito in May 1981.¹ It subsequently adopted the following recommendation:

Rodrigo Pallares Zaldumbide

Born in 1925 in Quito. Degree in engineering from the Universidad Central, 1947. Architectural studies on a French Government scholarship at the École Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, 1948-49. Director, Dirección Nacional de Patrimonio Artístico, 1973-78. Director of the Instituto Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural since 1978. Has participated in numerous international meetings. Organized the First New World Conference on Rescue Archaeology in Quito in May 1981.

Reproduction of a photograph from the magazine *Epoca*, No. 1244, September 1974, showing a mannequin decked out in ceremonial archaeological ornaments belonging to the collection smuggled out of Ecuador.

[Photo: Instituto Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural, Quito.]



The committee takes note of the report by the representative of Ecuador concerning the case of 12,000 archaeological objects illicitly exported to Italy, which is now before the Italian courts; it requests the Chairman to bring its support of the demand of the Government of Ecuador to the attention of the Minister of Justice of the Italian Republic. The committee likewise takes note of the statement of the Italian Government on this matter.

The final hearing in Turin was held on 19 February 1982.²

In Ecuador, various official bodies have been deeply committed to the case: the Procuraduría General del Estado (Attorney-General's Office), the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana (House of Ecuadorian Culture) the Instituto Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural (which has taken over from what was previously the Dirección de Patrimonio Artístico), and the Central Bank of Ecuador, which has in fact met the legal expenses of the trial in Italy.

Given the many tokens of solidarity from the Italian authorities at the highest level, and

from Unesco's Intergovernmental Committee, we are convinced that justice will be done, if collectedly, and that this priceless archaeological collection will be returned to its country of origin.

[Translated from Spanish]

1. First New World Conference on Rescue Archaeology, Special Resolution No. 1:

Considering: That an invaluable part of the cultural property of Ecuador, comprising some 12,000 archaeological items, has been illegally exported to Italy by means of an international dealer, despite the clear directives of Ecuadorian law concerning cultural property; that the Ecuadorian state and people are pledged to the recovery of this property, which is part of their CULTURAL MEMORY, and for which purpose competent authorities undertook legal proceedings in the Italian courts which have already continued for several years without being resolved; that Ecuador has brought this matter to the attention of the relevant international organizations and has been supported in its claims;

Resolves: To support and endorse the just request of the Ecuadorian state and people; and to send a copy of this resolution to the Italian

Minister of Justice, to the Italian court which is examining the case and to the Unesco Intergovernmental Committee for the Promotion of the Return of Cultural Property to its Country of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation.

2. The editor actually attended the final hearing as an observer, together with the Ecuadorian ambassador in Rome and the consuls in Turin and Milan. The consul in Turin, an Italian industrialist and newspaper editor, has been extremely energetic in pursuing the case and now has the heavy responsibility of the collection, held in safe deposit, which he was kind enough to show us. The hearing was conducted by the President of the Turin Magistrature, Professor Conti, in person, and the statement of the case by the Examining Magistrate was extremely clear and comprehensive, showing complete legislation and of her claim. Delivered a few weeks later, the final judgement declared the objects to be 'the full and exclusive property of the Republic of Ecuador'. The court ordered that the collection be restituted to its country of origin through the Ecuadorian consul in Turin.—Ed.

Museums and the containment of illicit traffic

Reína Torres de Araúz

Anyone who has occasion to travel in Latin America—although some of these countries are politically disturbed—is struck by their interest in safeguarding their cultural heritage.

However, in the face of the increasingly keen desire to set up new, specialized museums, to improve existing ones, to give them adequate staff and specialized laboratories—aspects of museum life in Latin America that have been dealt with already—we find a common enemy: illicit traffic in cultural property.

Curiously, this evil has increased as the media have made more widely known the importance and the value of our cultural property. The market has actually expanded. Until recently the demand came mainly from North America and Europe. Today, however, other affluent countries also figure on the list. At the same time, although countries with archaeological sites are making it more difficult to obtain permits for research and excavation work, or to take art works out of the country, the audacity of the *huaqueros*, the tomb robbers, the gravestone lifters or other intermediaries, who exist in every one of our countries and who have means such as helicopters for reaching archaeological sites and sophisticated equipment such as high-speed drills and saws, seems to know no bounds. These looters sometimes arrive at the sites before the archaeologists and on occasion even contest the right of the latter to dig, or dispute their claim to the cultural material. There are even private laboratories for restoration work, which adapt to the taste of their clientele the beautiful polychrome ceramics

wantonly shattered by the tomb robbers. Steles broken by a drill into various fragments are invariably pieced together but with the meaning of the glyphs and the beauty of the designs for ever effaced.

It is not only in connection with archaeological finds that illicit traffic is rife. In recent years colonial art has come into fashion. In Central America over the centuries it has taken the form of beautiful altars and retables with fine polychrome and gilt or ingenuous representations of religious scenes; precious objects in everyday use, such as caskets, chests, cabinets, lacquered and painted with designs peculiar to the region, not to mention the traditional Andalusian or Extremaduran silverware produced in colonial times by remarkably skilled craftsmen. Painting and sculpture, the so-called fine arts, are also affected by this traffic, less subject to control, harder to detect, than the other categories of cultural property mentioned above.

The museums that have been set up in our region over the years as a result of persevering efforts are not in a position to show their contemporaries the art works produced by their historic forebears. Thus, in Central America, El Salvador cannot exhibit the sculptures of the god Xipeotec, which have been removed—with the help of diplomatic exemptions and protections. The collections of sculpture remaining in Nicaragua today are a pale reflection of the beautiful pre-Columbian sculpture plundered right from the beginning of the century by Nicaraguans and foreigners. Guatemala and Honduras are still negotiating

to obtain irreplaceable elements from the famous ceremonial sites of the great Mayan civilization. Panama and Costa Rica, which had an abundance of pre-Columbian gold- and silverware constantly in demand on the illicit market, exhibit in their museums pieces selected from among the best and most representative of this technique. But these alas do not bear comparison with the magnificent pieces dug up by tomb-robbers paid by the intermediaries of dealers in pre-Columbian art and taken out of the country with the greatest of ease and frequency.

What can be done?

Legislation to protect the cultural heritage is becoming more general throughout the region. The precept to the effect that the historical heritage belongs to the state has come into force and is more or less widely recognized. However, it is not always possible to apply the corresponding legal provisions, owing to the limited budgets of the bodies responsible for exercising control over this heritage. Today we also have to cope with forms of plundering and destruction inconceivable a few years ago. What happened in Tikal, Guatemala, recently is an example. A commando of guerrillas, opposed to the independence of Belize, concluded its political demonstrations with the theft of nine pieces of jade from the valuable collection of the local museum and spraying with paint the valuable carvings and reliefs of the temples and steles. A term will have to be coined for this type of vandalism,

which establishes a precedent and, it is to be hoped, will not spread to the rest of the world.¹ Poverty makes it extremely difficult at present to control the traffic and to apply the existing laws. The cases of detection followed by legal action and recovery of the material do not represent even 10 per cent of the dramatic quantity of works that find their way into private collections or even museums.

However, there is a type of situation we think ought to be transformed. I have in mind the permits granted and the sales effected during the first half of this century when our countries did not have the protective legislation they have today—or the staff and institutions for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage. Permits for excavation and distribution of the finds were granted to a scientific institution, which could then contact at leisure the owners of the land where the excavations were carried out, outside the general arrangements made with the governmental authorities. All this had two consequences: the implementation of a government permit for scientific research, on the one hand, and a contract or verbal agreement with the owner of the land concerning the usufruct or distribution of any finds, on the other. Such was the case with the famous archaeological site known as Sitio Conte in Panama. Two eminent United States universities participated in the excavations; an extraordinary wealth of gold, emeralds and cultural treasures found on the site went almost entirely into the collections of their museums and the coffers of the families who owned the land.

It seems to us that the time has come not only to implement legal measures to check illicit traffic in cultural property, but also to revise those permits or agreements that were granted to or concluded with museums or universities in the past when our countries had neither the human nor the technical resources required for evaluating the material excavated.

Some tasks for museums

We know that it is not by coercion or repressive measures that our countries—or any others whose cultural heritage continues to be plundered—are going to be able to check illicit traffic. Few of these countries, if any, have the means of exercising effective control or taking legal action in more than a rare number of cases. The only answer is education: both formal and non-formal as dispensed by the mass media, which are so powerful today.

The museums themselves undoubtedly have an important part to play in this educational programme: through the instructive side of their exhibitions, inculcating the idea of the inviolability of a cultural heritage and the universality of culture as a heritage to be safeguarded by every country that has produced some manifestation of it; by reaching the community through various cultural activities so as to make citizens aware of their

A stolen ear pendant in gold repoussé. On this fine piece from the Lambayeque period fishing scenes surround a central motif showing a bird, a fish and a pond. Edge decorated with small welded gold beads. Length of stem: 10.8 cm; diameter of disc: 10.6 cm; weight: 58 g. Reg. no. M-2896. [Photo: Instituto Nacional de Cultura, Peru.] ▷



Stolen Chimú period vase in silver with gold applications. Decorated with neck and tail of a bird. Maximum height: 13 cm; diameter of opening: 9.9 cm; weight: 237 g. Reg. no. M-4384. [Photo: Instituto Nacional de Cultura, Peru.]



rights and obligations in regard to that heritage; by conducting research in the different fields covered by the national heritage and making known the results.²

Of course this will take at least a generation, if not two. Nevertheless, we have already begun to see the results of such action—albeit limited—on the part of the museums, and we no longer have any doubt that with the backing of the educational institutions and the mass communication media the ultimate aim will be reached in the near future.

While this public awareness campaign is under way, the appropriate state institutions can, and should, undertake programmes or missions, at the highest diplomatic level if need be, to recover that cultural property of a unique character that should rightly be on view for the people whose forebears, at some point in history, produced it. Such claims can be based on the international conventions adopted by Unesco and the OAS or the various actions launched or recommended by them. In some cases there has already been a response, for example the return by Guatemala to Panama of a pre-Columbian gold collection originating from the Sitio Conte, sent to the University of Pennsylvania in exchange for the Piedras Negras stele.

It does not seem to us impossible that a great museum of the North will one day agree that in the interests of justice and human rights the sculptures which for more than

sixty years have been lying in its reserve collection might, if not as a whole at least in part, be exhibited and made known to the public in its country of origin.

In the meantime, we shall conclude with the reply received from the curator of a United States museum whose authorities refused to enter into negotiations with a view to handing over a part of the considerable cultural heritage from our small country kept there: 'Your country will doubtless be proud to know that its pre-Columbian artistic wealth is exhibited in a large museum in a large North American city.' To this we retorted: 'It would be a great honour and only right for us to be able to exhibit in our small museums this artistic wealth made by our forebears in which the Panamanians of today can justifiably take pride.'

[Translated from Spanish]

1. The senseless destruction of cultural property as a result of armed conflict, including terrorism, has become a serious problem in many parts of the world. Vandalism and pillage—without illicit traffic as a necessary objective—have been added to the dangers that threaten museum collections. Unesco is now examining ways in which it might intervene in such cases.—Ed.

2. But here too museums are hamstrung by limited resources. 'I have the poorest *huaqueros* and even senior military officers offering me wonderful pieces but I can't usually pay what they ask,' observed one museum director in Ecuador (quoted in an article 'Latin America Goes Treasure Hunting', by Sarita Kendall, *Financial Times*, London, 2 December 1980).—Ed.

Pillage

In an article entitled 'Mayan History' that appeared in the *Washington Post* on 17 July 1981 David Remnick reported on examples of illegal excavation in Central America denounced by Dr George Stuart, staff archaeologist of the *National Geographic* magazine, and other colleagues:

Recently a band of looters came across an eight-foot stele, or column, in Peten, the northern panhandle of Guatemala and the most fertile ground for Mayan artifacts. A mine of information disappeared when looters cut the stele vertically, like a piece of cheese, destroying glyphs along its side. One half is in the Cleveland Museum of Art, the other in the Kimball Art Museum in Fort Worth.

Last April on a site of Mayan tombs known as Rio Azul, dating from A.D. 417, Guatemalan inspectors surprised ten looters. A shoot-out ensued. 'Luckily they were not good shooters; they were better diggers,' said Dr Francis Polo Sifontes, general director of Guatemala's Institute of Anthropology and History. The looters escaped unhurt with pieces of jade, pottery and an entire tomb. The job, said Polo, was the work of experts...

According to Polo, looters for the past fifteen years have been stripping clean ancient Maya Indian relics from nearly 1,000 different sites in Guatemala and shipping the prized objects. He said the smugglers often cover the relics with gum resin, as though they were exporting the resin itself. Once they arrive at their destination, the objects are re-assembled for sale....

Not since the sixteenth-century conquistadors ravaged these countries in their search for gold have

the Maya been so plundered, said Dr Clemency Coggins, research associate at Howard's Peabody Museum. Guatemala has become the most seriously endangered archaeological area in the Western Hemisphere.

Although trade agreements between the United States and Mexico have slowed the trafficking of the large steles, there are still no US laws barring the import of smaller objects. Coggins said the best way to prevent further looting is a bill now before the Senate Finance Committee based on Unesco legislation barring commerce in stolen cultural property.

Guatemalan law prohibits the export of archaeological artifacts, but Polo said his country cannot prevent thefts on its own. 'We'd need the entire Guatemalan army to stop the looters,' he said.

The July/August 1981 issue of *Archaeology*, Vol. 34, No. 4, contained an article by David M. Prendergast and Elizabeth Graham entitled 'Fighting a Looting Battle: Xunantunich, Belize'. Reporting on the ransacking of the Maya centre of Xunantunich by looters in search of art objects, the authors point out that despite its extremely limited resources Belize

has had antiquities legislation of considerable strength since 1924, with antecedents stretching back into the late nineteenth century. Given additional teeth in 1971, the antiquities laws now rank among the strongest in the world. It is clear that every possible effort has been made at the legislative level to ensure protection of archaeological sites and materials. Such efforts would, however, go for

nought were they not backed up by education and enforcement, and on both levels the Department of Archaeology has an exemplary record. Public displays, lectures and articles in local newspapers and magazines all help to make the average Belizean aware of the country's heritage and the need for its protection. Looters and dealers are brought to court whenever they are caught and convictions are publicized. While much of the department's energy is expended in following up exports of looting and seeing court cases through to conclusion, the government also provides special protection for some sites through the establishment of archaeological reserves which are accessible to visitors and overseen by guards.

Most recently, reports have come from Peru of thousands of precious archaeological pieces—Chancay culture ceramics and ancient fishing nets—having been taken out on small aeroplanes, then dropped into the sea in plastic bags and picked up by waiting boats. (*El Moudjahid*, 9 December 1981.)

Of course, museums themselves are robbed as well. ICOM's first Stolen Museum Objects notice, recently prepared in co-operation with INTERPOL and sent to all ICOM members, gives details of thirty-four gold and silver objects stolen from the Instituto Nacional de Cultura, Museo Nacional de Antropología y Arqueología, Lima, Peru, on 25 November 1981 (see photos, p. 135).

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The changing face of contemporary art museums in the West.

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