Threads from the past

JILL MEFFORD  Director, Peruvian Textile Project

Through an odd circumstance of geography and climate, textiles of ancient Peru have survived to serve the archaeologist in ways generally reserved for indestructible materials such as stone and ceramics. The coast of Peru is one of the driest deserts on earth, where materials as ephemeral as sheer fabrics are preserved intact in burials dating back to 3,000 B.C. These provide the archaeologist with an extraordinary range of evidence for use in reconstructing the prehistory of Peruvian society.

The great importance of this utilitarian side of Peruvian textile studies has distracted attention from equally important consideration of the textiles in their

A Shell Game: new exhibition

During the prehistoric times (A.D. 1000-1500) in the Southeastern United States there was a widespread rise in ceremonial activities. Excavated material in shell, stone, copper, and clay from east Texas to coastal Georgia, and from the Illinois Valley to southern Florida reveal the variety of design styles and motifs encompassed in what has been termed the Pan-Southern Iconographic System. The major sites of Spiro (Oklahoma), Cahokia (Illinois), Moundville (Alabama), and Etowah (Georgia) have produced evidence of long-range interaction between these centers in artistic creations and in other more utilitarian objects.

For more than 500 years, from A.D. 700-1350, a remarkable Indian culture flourished in what is now Eastern Oklahoma. The Spiro people belonged to a complex society with ranked social status. Privileged members of the society were honored at death by burial with large numbers of prestigious objects, such as engraved shell cups. Craig Mound, the principal burial mound, found near Spiro, Oklahoma, contained

Featured in this issue:

New light on the very ancient Near East

ERIK TRINKAUS

Maize God: the Symbol of Symbols

TATIANA PROSKOURIAKOFF

Shell engraved with five eagle heads courtesy of Stovall Museum, University of Oklahoma.
New light on the very ancient Near East
ERIK TRINKAUS

Erik Trinkaus, Associate Professor of Biological Anthropology at Harvard, is one of the world’s foremost experts on the Neanderthal. He has published widely on the structure, form, and evolution of these archaic humans.

Figure 1. Side view of the Skhul 5 skull, from Mugharet es-Skhul in Israel. This individual is one of the earliest known representatives of modern appearing humans in the Near East. This is shown by its rounded braincase, small browridge, and relatively short face, as well as by many details of its limb skeleton. Original in the Peabody Museum.

The first major Paleolithic exploration of the Near East began with the opening up of the Near East to Europeans, after the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment in 1920 of French and British mandates in Lebanon and Syria and in Israel and Jordan. Various workers had previously collected prehistoric flint tools eroding out of river beds and caves in the area, and a few fragmentary human remains had been discovered in 1895 in the Aurignacian levels of the Cave of Antélias, Lebanon, by Gottfried Zumoffen. But it was four individuals, Francis Turville-Petre and Dorothy A. E. Garrod from Oxford University and the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, Rene Neuville of the Institute of Human Paleontology in Paris, and Moshé Stekelis of Hebrew University, who helped inaugurate Paleolithic archaeology in the Near East and discovered the first of many human fossil skeletons which bear on the question of the origins of anatomically modern humans.

In 1925 and 1926 Turville-Petre excavated the site of Mugharet el-Zuttiyeh in the Wadi Amud near Lake Tiberias and discovered the upper facial skeleton of a Neanderthal. Shortly afterward Garrod excavated Shukbah Cave, near Jerusalem, and discovered a few fragments of humans associated with a Mousterian industry. This work was followed by major excavations from 1929 to 1934 by Garrod, working under the joint auspices of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem and the American School of Prehistoric Research, in three caves in the Wadi el-Mughara in the Mount Carmel range: Mugharet es-Skhul, Mugharet et-Tabûn, and Mugharet el-Wad. The first two of these sites yielded some of the more important human skeletal remains known so far from the Near East. One third of these human remains, including the
largely complete Skhul 5 skeleton (fig. 1), are part of the collections of the American School of Prehistoric Research housed in the Peabody Museum.

Additional discoveries of human fossils were made by Turville-Petrie, then also affiliated with both the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem and the American School of Prehistoric Research, in 1931 at Mugharet el-Kebarah, not far from the Wadi el-Mughara, and by Neuville and Stékelsis at the site of Jebel Qafzeh, near Nazareth, in 1933 to 1935. These fossils have been added to recently by discoveries of Neanderthals at the Amud Cave, also in the Wadi Amud, by a Tokyo University Expedition led by Hisashi Suzuki (fig. 2) and by additional finds at Jebel Qafzeh by Bernard Vandermeersch of the University of Paris.

Relatively little was known of Near Eastern Paleolithic human remains outside of the western Levant until Carleton S. Coon, then affiliated with the University of Pennsylvania, discovered fragmented human remains in Bisitun Cave, western Iran, in 1949. Shortly thereafter, in 1951, Ralph S. Solecki of Columbia University began excavations in Shanidar Cave, in the Zagros Mountains of Iraqi Kurdistan. Between 1953 and 1960 Solecki unearthed the partial skeletons of nine Neanderthals, providing what is probably the largest known sample of Neanderthal skeletons from one site (fig. 3).

The fossil human remains from these sites continue to be added to as exploration and excavation progress. But most of our information concerning the evolution of Homo sapiens and the origin of modern appearing humans in the Near East comes from five sites: Amud Cave, Jebel Qafzeh, Mugharet es-Skhul and Mugharet et-Tabûn in Israel, and Shanidar Cave in Iraq. All of these fossils were found associated with Middle Paleolithic, or Mousterian, stone tool industries and date to the first half of the last glacial period, probably between 75,000 and 35,000 years ago.

In Europe all of the reasonably complete fossil humans associated with Mousterian industries can be included, on anatomical grounds, within the Neanderthals. They are characterized by a pronounced forward projection of the nose and jaws, large browridges, long and low but very large braincases, an elongation of the front of the pelvis, and a general massiveness of the limb skeleton. In the Near East, only those Mousterian associated skeletons from Amud Cave, Shanidar Cave, Mugharet et-Tabûn, and Mugharet el-Zuttiyeh definitely conform to this anatomical pattern. In fact, except for slightly higher braincases in a few of the individuals, all of the specimens from these sites follow entirely the pattern defined by Neanderthal remains from western and central Europe.

The fossils from Jebel Qafzeh and Mugharet es-Skhul, although associated with Mousterian industries, are quite different. When the Skhul fossils were first described in 1939 by Theodore D. McCown and Arthur Keith, they were combined with the fossils from Mugharet et-Tabûn to form a "Mount Carmel" sample. The specimens from both sites were then considered as Near Eastern variants of the European Neanderthals. McCown and Keith were immediately struck by a number of differences between their fossils and those from Europe and by the variability within the "Mount Carmel" sample. This is not surprising, since they mixed two different groups of humans to represent one. This was the product primarily of their use of the Mousterian, a cultural and technological category, to define the Neanderthals, a biological category. We now know that there is no such thing, in biological terms, as the "Mount Carmel" sample; it is merely two separate samples, one from Mugharet es-Skhul and the other from Mugharet et-Tabûn, which were at least 10,000 years apart in age and just happened to occupy, and bury their dead in, two adjacent caves.

The Skhul and Qafzeh human remains are best grouped with modern appearing humans rather than with the Neanderthals. So aligned, they are the earliest known representatives of anatomically modern humans in the Near East. They were still quite heavily built, as were many of the individuals from the early Upper Paleolithic of Europe, but the overriding anatomical pattern is that of modern humans.

In the Near East there were thus two groups of Mousterian humans. There were the Neanderthals from Amud, Shanidar, Tabûn, and Zuttiyeh, all of which predate 40,000 years ago. And there were early anatomically modern humans at Qafzeh and Skhul, which probably date between 35,000 and 40,000 years ago. What are the differences between these groups, and what do they tell us about the origins of modern appearing humans in the Near East?

The answers to these questions have been emerging slowly during the past two decades as a number of researchers have studied new discoveries, but have also reexamined previously known specimens in the light of new knowledge. These individuals include William W. Howells of Harvard University, T. Dale Stewart of the Smithsonian Institution, Christopher B. Stringer of the British Museum (Natural History), Hisashi Suzuki and his co-workers from Tokyo University, Bernard Vandermeersch of the University of Paris, Milford H. Wolpoff of the University of Michigan, and myself. Although considerable progress has been made recently toward understanding this important phase of human evolution, new data and ideas are constantly arising, so that many of the thoughts expressed here will undoubtedly be altered or refined in the near future. Continued on page 11

Figure 2 (left). Side view of the Amud 1 skull, from the Amud Cave in Israel. This specimen is typical of Near Eastern Neanderthals in having a forward projection of its nose and jaws, a large browridge, and a relatively long, although rounded, braincase. Original in the Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem. Figure 3 (right). Front view of the Shanidar 1 skull, from Shanidar Cave in Iraq. Shanidar 1 suffered an injury to his left eye socket, which flattened its outside border (compare with the normal right eye socket) and probably left him blind in that eye. The front teeth show the extensive wear and rounding which is typical of elderly Neanderthals and probably indicates frequent use of the teeth as a vise. Original in the Iraq Museum, Baghdad.
Scholars, symposia, and seminars

A number of visiting and resident scholars took part in the Department of Anthropology Seminar Series during the spring term. Dr. Jan Wind of the Free University, Amsterdam, began the series with a discussion of "Origins of Human Linguistic Ability." Swedish scholar Prof. Tore Hakanson presented a series of controversial films on female initiation rites. Dr. Rayas Raj Sharma of Tribhuvan University, Nepal, addressed his audience on "Caste, Codified Law, and Social Mobility in Nepal." Dr. Ian Brown, Resident Associate of the Peabody Museum Staff of the Lower Mississippi Survey, lectured on "The Role of Salt in Eastern North America: An Archaeological Perspective" as the conclusion of a two-day inauguration of the new Survey Headquarters on the fifth floor of the Peabody Museum.

Prof. Earnestine Friedl, a Visiting Professor through the generosity of the George Seferis Chair of Modern Greek at Harvard, who was recently appointed Dean of Arts and Sciences and Dean of Trinity College at Duke University, spoke on "Women in Academia." Dr. Wanda Minge-Klevan, lecturer on Anthropology, spoke on "Changes in Family Production and Reproduction during Industrialization."

Dr. Timothy Weiskel, a Mellon Faculty Fellow and Instructor in the Harvard Summer School, presented a slide lecture on "The Economic Change and the Problem of Matriline Among the Boule Peoples." Dr. Jane Guyer, Visiting Assistant Professor and Research Associate at the African Studies Center at Boston University, presented a seminar on "Household Budgets and Women's Income" drawing from her African field experiences.

Dr. Marjorie Elias, Lecturer on Biological Anthropology, spoke on "Ontogeny and Phylogeny: Brownian Motion in Hums and Aps." Dr. Fred Smith of the University of Tennessee enlightened his audience on "Upper Pleistocene Hominids from Vindija Cave and The Fate of the Neanderthals." Dr. Jay O'Brien, Lecturer on Anthropology at the University of Connecticut, presented "The Use of Case Study in Ethnographic Research: An Example from the Sudan." Ilene Nicholas, from the University of Pennsylvania, spoke about "Early Urbanism at Proto-Elamite Malyan, Iran: Implications of Intra-Site Patterning."

Prof. Roberto Da Matta from Museu Nacional — Rio de Janeiro lectured on "The Umbanda Ethics and the Spirit of Patronage" followed by Prof. Anthony Seeger, also from the Museu Nacional, who lectured on "National Development and the Future of the Brazilian Indian." Dr. Philip Ritter, Stanford University, spoke on "Social Organization, Incest, and Demographic Change on Kosrae Island." Dr. Gordon Appleby, California Institute of Technology, presented an enthusiastic lecture on "Evolution and Involvement in Domestic Marketing Systems: A Case Study of Puno, Peru." "A Reassessment of the Pygmy Chimpanzee Model of Human Origins: A Leg to Stand On?" was made by Dr. Adrian Zihlman of the University of California at Santa Cruz. Amy Burch of Stanford University spoke from her experiences and research on "Garaina: The Structuring of A Plantation Community in Papua, New Guinea." Dr. Kathleen Gibson of the Department of Anatomy at the University of Texas Health Center explained the "Evolution of Tong-Using and Sensorimotor Intelligence."

Dr. Hsiao-tung Fei, Deputy Director, Research Institute of Nationalities of the Chinese Academy of Social Science and President of the Chinese Sociological Association in Peking, China returned to Harvard to give an informal seminar on archaeology in China. Dr. Philip Grant of the University of Texas at Austin lectured on "Chromosome Evolution in Cercopithecines." A series of luncheon lectures was given by three colleagues from the Department of Prehistory and Archaeology at the University of Sheffield in England: the first by Dr. John Collins on "Oppida: Late Iron Age Economic Centers of Europe," Dr. Graeme Barker on "Early Agriculture in Europe," and Dr. Richard Kodesh on "Thin Section Pottery Analysis and the Study of Trade." Dr. Frederique Margini, Post Doctoral Fellow in the department, spoke on "The Courtesans of Laksni and Aphrodite." Dr. Eric Meikle's, University of California, Berkeley, topic was "Fossil and Molecular Data Bearing on Old World Monkey Evolution: A Synthesis."

Peter Fowler, Ph.D., F.S.A., Secretary of the Royal Commission of Historical Monuments in Great Britain, told of "Experiments in Field Archaeology."

Prof. Glynn Isaac of the University of California, Berkeley, who will be a Visiting Professor in the Department next spring spoke on "Archaeological Test of Hypotheses about the Development of Human Behavior: The Last Three Years of Work at Koobi Fora, Kenya."

Dr. R. E. Taylor, Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of California at Riverside, gave a seminar on "Dating the Last 100,000 Years of Hominid Evolution: Radiocarbon Dating by Particle Accelerators." To round out this wealth of seminars we welcomed Prof. Loki Natan, Director of the Indian Council for Social Science Research from New Delhi, India, who addressed "Current Issues in Indian Anthropology."

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On the road

K.C. Chang, Professor of Anthropology and Curator of East Asia, Asian Archaeology, has accepted an invitation from the Chinese Academy of Sciences to travel to Peking this summer to discuss the possibility of joint research programs between Harvard and the Academy's Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Palaeoanthropology.

The IVPP is China's national research institute in palaeoanthropology and palaeolithic archaeology. Dr. Wuu Jungkang, eminent palaeoanthropologist and a deputy director of the Institute, visited Harvard in August 1979. Dr. Chang's visit will be supported by a National Science Foundation grant.

Jonathan Ericson, Associate Professor of Anthropology, who will be associated with the project as scientific archaeologist, will accompany K.C. Chang to Peking.

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Settlement pattern conference

Approximately twenty scholars will convene at Burg Wartenstein, (a castle in Austria used for anthropology meetings and owned by the Wenner-Gren Foundation) for a symposium in honor of Prof. Gordon R. Willey.

Organized by Prof. Evon Z. Vogt, Jr., the meetings will take place in August. The papers presented for discussion and debate will deal with settlement patterns, a field pioneered by Prof. Willey in his classic archaeological study of the Viru Valley in Peru. Those invited to participate include colleagues and former students of Prof. Willey. In addition to the guest of honor, others attending from Harvard will be Professors Vogt, K.C. Chang, and C.C. Lamberg-Karlovsky.

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Peruvian textile reception

Museum Director, Prof. C.C. Lamberg-Karlovsky, Associate Prof. Geoffrey Conrad, and Jill Mefford, Director of the Peruvian Textile Project, were hosts at a special event in April which included a lecture, exhibition, and reception for a group of people, both amateur and professional, who are particularly interested in Peruvian textiles.

Andean scholar, Prof. Junius Bird, Curator of South American Archaeology at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, gave a slide lecture, which was followed by a reception and tour of the textile conservation laboratories.

Some of the Peabody's prehistoric Peruvian textiles were on display in a special temporary exhibition mounted for the occasion.

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Watch for announcement of the Peabody Museum 1980-81 Ethnographic Film Series.
Ethnic Celebration

The date was June 7 and for the second time in as many years the usually quiet, staid, and studious Peabody Museum was bursting at the seams with enthusiastic visitors and ringing with the sound and rhythms of drums, dance, and song. The occasion was the annual Ethnic Celebration — held to celebrate the non-Western cultures represented in the Peabody’s world-famous collections.

More than 150 performers took part, many of them well-known artists, including: Indian classical dancer Sukanya, African dancer DeAma Battle (performing with her company, the Art of Black Dance and Music), Fernadina Chan, whose Dance Theatre performs classical Chinese fan and scarf dancing, and the incomparable Trinidadian Silver Stars Steel Orchestra.

Performing ethnomusicological scholars were well represented by concert sitarist Peter Row from the New England Conservatory, Prof. David Locke and his Tufts University Agbekor Drum and Dance Group, and Prof. David McAlister from Wesleyan University.

Sabia, Pachu Mama, and the Ballet Folklorico de Atzlan presented the music and dance of the Maya and Andean worlds.

A variety of ethnic craftspeople, ranging from a Chinese brush painter to a Cree Indian woodcarver to an Andean weaver, were also featured as part of the daylong event.

Streaming from museum to stage to outdoor canopy (to sample international foods while watching Egyptian belly dancing or African drumming), more than 2,500 people enjoyed the sounds, sights, and tastes of the Ethnic Celebration. Drawing by Addis Osborne

Retrodiciting a revolution

Associate Professor Michael M. J. Fischer is the author of the recently published volume, Iran, From Religious Dispute to Revolution, the first book to appear since the revolution in that country which makes a serious attempt to decode Shi’ite culture and belief in a way that reveals its explosive political implications. Unlike much of the instant analysis appearing at the time of the crisis, Prof. Fischer’s book is based on extensive fieldwork in Iran: in Yazd from 1969-71, where the author studied the four major religions of the country — Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Bahaiism, and Islam; and in 1975 in the holy city of Qum, the pedagogical center of Iranian Shi’ism. Fischer writes, “Qum has a particular mystique. It is a repository of Shi’ite tradition, a center of conservatism rejected by many Iranians and lauded by others; and it served as a focus of opposition to the shah on moral grounds.” “Shi’ism has powerful psychological ambivalences — the dialectic between reliance on both reason and faith, between adoration and hatred of the West, between assertion of dignity and fear of inferiority . . .”

“In the 1980s,” he states, “Iran will be a major test case of conditions of rapid social change and demographic explosion (half the population is under 17), where people feel themselves oppressed by an alien culture or world economy and use their traditional religious and cultural heritage as a vehicle of protest.” Iran was published by the Harvard University Press (1980) and is part of the series entitled Harvard Studies in Cultural Anthropology.

A native of Washington, D.C., Prof. Fischer holds the B.A. degree from Johns Hopkins University (1967), where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and named a Woodrow Wilson Scholar. He took his junior undergraduate year at the London School of Economics. Fischer earned the M.A. (1969) and Ph.D. (1973) degrees at the University of Chicago.

In addition to his fieldwork in Iran, Prof. Fischer has done research in Afghanistan and India, as well as Jamaica, Guyana, Surinam, and Trinidad. He came to Harvard in 1973 as an Assistant Professor of Social Anthropology and Middle Eastern Studies, and in 1977 became Associate Professor of Anthropology and Associate Curator of Middle Eastern Ethnography at the Peabody Museum.

Joins emeritus ranks

John Campbell Pelzel has added another word to his distinguished title and is now Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at Harvard University and Curator Emeritus of Far Eastern Ethnology at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. A dinner in honor of Prof. Pelzel’s retirement, held at the Harvard Club this spring, was attended by many of his colleagues, students, and friends.

Professors Evon Vogt, Jr., and David Maybury-Lewis shared the honors in presenting Prof. Pelzel with a parchment scroll bearing the names of his friends and associates, and a silver tray engraved with words of gratitude for his years of meritorious service to Harvard.

Prof. Pelzel was born in Harper, Kansas. He holds the A.B. degree from the University of Chicago (1935), the M.A. (1941) and Ph.D. (1950) degrees from Harvard. He was awarded an honorary Ph.D. from Korea University in 1963. A specialist in the societies of Eastern Asia, Prof. Pelzel joined the Harvard faculty in 1949 and was named Professor of Anthropology in 1959.

Prof. Pelzel has been closely associated with the Harvard-Yenching Institute for many years, serving as Director of the Visiting Scholar program from 1955-64 and Director of the Institute from 1964-1976. The Institute brings scholars from certain Asian universities to study and do research in the United States.

Prof. Pelzel is a Fellow of the American Anthropological Association, and a member of the Association of Asian Studies at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.


Symbols • Summer 1980 • 5
own terms. Rarely are Peruvian textiles discussed in visual and aesthetic terms; rarely are they considered as art.

To reiterate briefly the traditional concerns of Peruvian textile studies: For Peruvian archaeology the standard method for tracing cultural developments involves the identification of distinct styles, the analysis of these styles in terms of iconography and organization, and the plotting of stylistic changes over time. Textiles participated in these stylistic changes; indeed as possibly the principal Peruvian art form, textiles were often the medium in which innovation occurred. In a country with such extremes of altitude as Peru, the portability and exportability of textiles were readily appreciated. As a result they were traded over tremendous distances. With this wide distribution, textiles often offer the most extensive basis for cross-dating of cultural develop-
quasi monotheistic status. This "new" religion was to have enormous impact on the Andes. A mission was established at Huari in the Southern Highlands of Peru, and from this center the new beliefs spread to all parts of Peru between c. A.D. 600-800. New ideas supplanted or merged with older local beliefs and on the coast this process of import and assimilation produces some startling versions of the Staff God. He acquires new companions (see photograph, page 1) and an exuberance altogether foreign to the orthodox Highland version (fig. 3).

With the Staff God we see the transformations of a motif over 2,500 years, but the Staff God poses no real problem — he remains recognizable throughout his long career. Other motifs undergo abstraction to the point of unrecognizability, for example, figure 4. It is in these cases that we rely on continuity in iconography to decipher the content of textile designs.

Figure 5, drawn from an incised mortar in the Chavin style, depicts a jaguar with crossed fangs protruding from an upturned mouth. The religion of Chavin and the art style which embodied it spread to all regions of Peru, and despite the fact that jaguars are not found on the South Coast of Peru, they continue to be depicted in subsequent styles of the South Coast. The feline is the major figure on the magnificent textiles of the Paracas culture (c. 600-300 B.C.) (fig. 6). Now embroidered in highly decorative style based on parallel lines of primary colors, the feline is shown with body in profile, face front, often with little cats in its belly or filling empty spaces. Fangs disappear from the representation and the jaguar faces appear quite congenial, but we can look back to the Chavin version and be reminded that the upturned mouth was originally snarling and full of fangs.

Fifteen hundred years after the Chavin image, the jaguar mouth — with fangs — appears as a central motif on textiles of the Huarai culture (c. A.D. 600-1000). The motif occurs in designs on tapestry-woven tunics — the highly abstract depiction in figure 4. The "N" represents the crossed fangs, the split key is the eye with "tear marking." In opposing blocks a stepped, curled tail completes the representation of the feline. We do not know yet if continuous tradition accounts for the longevity of motifs in Peruvian art; there are still too many gaps in the archaeological record. But the naturalistic portrayal in one style, or the early phases of a style, provide essential clues to deciphering later, abstract renderings of the same motif.

This process of abstraction, of subordination of iconography to design considerations, gives us a crucial insight into the concerns of the Peruvian artists. The content of the art is largely religious, and for some periods the overriding intent was depiction of the deity — textile hangings conveyed the doctrine in correct detail much as a stained glass window would. But for most of Peruvian textile art the concern was visual. The Peruvians exulted in color, in the juxtaposition of colors for maximum effect, for visual variety. Naturalistic use of color was rarely an aim. Likewise, naturalistic form had little appeal; more often form was abstracted to suit the requirements of graphic design on the two-dimensional surface. The Peruvians had a love of the purely decorative: of repeated pattern, of geometric design, of the visual confusion of interlocking positive and negative forms. Figure 4 depicts a jaguar, woven in tapestry finer than anything ever woven in Europe, but both the esoteric significance and technical virtuosity are finally subordinated to the sheer visual beauty of the fabric.

Dr. Samuel Kirkland Lothrop (1892-1965), authority on Central and South American archaeology, was associated with the Peabody Museum for many years. One of his special interests was the textiles of ancient Peru. During the 1940s he accumulated a collection of some 900 examples of prehistoric Peruvian weavings for the Peabody. The Lothrop Collection forms the nucleus of the total Peabody assemblage which now contains nearly 3,000 pieces. The entire collection documents 4,000 years of Peruvian textile technology and is considered the finest collection in the world, outside of Peru.

The Peruvian Textile Project funded in part by the National Science Foundation includes the identification and conservation of the textiles as well as the design and construction of specialized storage facilities.

The Andean Adventure

The Peabody Museum Association will present a Fall Lecture and Luncheon Series entitled Exploring the Andean Heritage. Guest lecturers will be Professors John Bird and Craig Morris from the American Museum of Natural History in New York, Professor Michael Moseley, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, and Professor Geoffrey Conrad of the Department of Anthropology, Harvard. The Andean adventure will conclude with a fourteen-day-journey (in January) to Peru with guest lecturer Peruvian archaeologist Dr. Garth Bawden of Harvard.

The itinerary for the trip was prepared especially for the Peabody Museum by Travel Dynamics, Inc. of New York. In addition to Lima, participants will visit the most important archaeological sites of Peru: among them, Chan-Chan, the imperial city of the Chimú Empire; the pyramids at Moche; the capital of the great Incain civilization at Cuzco where every street reveals the remains of ancient walls; and the incredible mountain-top city of Machu Picchu, perhaps the best-known archaeological site in all of South America.

The cost of this newsletter has been partially underwritten by a donation from Travel Dynamics Inc., New York.

Peabody Museum Association

You are invited to join the Peabody Museum Association. As a member of the PMA, you will be part of both a famous teaching and research institution dedicated to the study of man and culture and a Museum whose unique collections include works of primitive art and archaeology from all over the world. PMA members are friends of the Museum and support it with their annual membership. Members are invited to exhibition openings, receptions, special events, lectures, films, and so forth. They enjoy special privileges at the Tozer Library and a discount on Museum publications and at the Peabody Museum Shop. Membership includes a subscription to Symbols. Categories of membership are: Student ($15), Individual ($20), Family ($30), Contributing ($50), Sustaining ($100 or more), Fellow ($500 or more).

All gifts to the Peabody Museum are tax deductible within legal limits. Please make checks payable to the Peabody Museum Association.
Maize-God: the symbol of Symbols

TATIANA PROSKOURIAKOFF

Tatiana Proskouriakoff is the curator of Maya Art at the Peabody Museum. A pioneer in the decipherment of Maya monumental inscriptions, Miss Proskouriakoff’s long and distinguished career has resulted in numerous publications on the ancient Maya, many of which she illustrated herself. Her books include: Album of Maya Architecture, A Study of Classic Maya Sculpture, and Jades from the Cenote of Sacrifice. She was the recipient, in 1962, of the coveted Kidder Award for achievement in American archaeology and is a fellow of the American Anthropological Association and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Maya sculptured stone head, ca. A.D. 700-800, Structure 22, Copan, Honduras. Length: 48 cm; width: 33 cm. (Peabody Museum 95-42-20/C727). Photo: Hillel Burger

The small drawing of a human head that one sees on this newsletter, as well as on the stationery of the Peabody Museum, was a particularly happy choice for the museum’s logo. Not only is the original sculpture a cherished possession of the Peabody, now displayed in the “Masterpieces Exhibit” in the central hall, but its history is intimately connected with the pioneering work of the museum on the ancient civilization of the Maya.

For more than three centuries after the conquest of Mexico in 1521, the dense vegetation of the Peten hid the ruins of Maya cities from the eyes of European and American scholars. The ruins of northern Yucatan were certainly known by local officials and by a few casual travelers, but it was only after the publication (1842-43) of a four-volume work by John Lloyd Stephens and Frederick Catherwood, describing their journeys in Yucatan and Central America that the scholarly world both here and Europe became aware of the extent and grandeur of the forgotten cities. Stephens had been sent to Guatemala on a diplomatic mission by the government of the United States, but finding the country in revolutionary chaos, and no responsible government with which he could negotiate, he and his British companion Catherwood, an artist of considerable skill, undertook a journey of exploration. Their illustrated account of the ruined cities and monuments they saw aroused great interest here and abroad. Libraries were searched for sixteenth- and seventeenth-century sources, but it was soon clear that the buried cities of the interior had long been forgotten by the time the first European settlers appeared on the shores. In the years between 1840 and 1890, a number of travelers from Europe visited the known Maya sites, but the first serious archaeological work in the area is usually credited to Sir Alfred P. Maudslay, whose work, published in the volumes on Archaeology of the Biologia Centrali Americana in 1888-1902 remains today the classic source for photographs and drawings of Maya sculptures and inscriptions for four major Maya sites. He first visited the site of Copan in Western Honduras in 1881, returning in 1885 with equipment to make molds of the monuments and inscriptions. He also made minor excavations, and while clearing the debris that blocked the doorway of Structure 22, he noted several stone heads carved in the round, and apparently fallen from the upper facade of the building. Their delicate features, the slightly open mouth, and the elaborate arrangement of their hair, prompted him to name these sculptures “The Singing Girls of Copan.”

The Peabody Museum was the first American institution to be involved actively in Maya studies. The first expeditions, begun in 1888, were directed to Yucatan, but in 1891 a new program of archaeological research was undertaken in the southern sector at Copan under the direction of Marshall H. Saville, assisted by John G. Owens. Owens led the second expedition in 1892, with George B. Gordon as surveyor, and two other assistants. This second expedition was marred by the death of Owens, who contracted a fever, probably malaria, after a visit to Quirigua. He was buried at Copan, and his gravestone can still be seen in front of one of the most beautiful monuments, Stela D. Gordon continued the work on the excavation of the base of the Hieroglyphic Stairway, which had been covered by a slide of its upper portion. Maudslay continued the work the following year, and in the final season of 1894-95, Gordon was again in charge.

The Peabody Museum was working under contract with the government of Honduras and was permitted to export some of the fallen pieces of sculpture recovered from the debris of the ruined structures. One of the figures originally seated on the axis of the Hieroglyphic Stairway has been reconstructed and is on display on the third floor of the museum.

The piece that was chosen as a memento of this pioneering work in Maya archaeology, and which has become the logo of the museum is one of Maudslay’s “Singing Girls,” later renamed “The young Maize-God.” The particular body that belongs with this head has never been identified, but other torsos found in the debris of Structure 22 are bare to the waist and are undoubtedly masculine. The bodies are shown in a seated position and were probably placed in niches on the upper
Entrance sculpture of Structure 22 at Copan.

Facade of the building. The heads were apparently carved separately, and have a projecting tenon on the back that bound them to the masonry. The head in our collection is slightly larger than life, as it was intended to be seen from a distance. The reason it was identified with maize is undoubtedly because of the leaflike ornament on its head, unfortunately incomplete, which projects upward and forward. The identification of the figure as a god however is doubtful because all the figures on the building are virtually identical. They can only be understood in the context of the entire design of the structure. Moreover, in recent years our fundamental concept of the nature of ancient Maya religion has been undergoing a radical change.

Past attempts to reconstruct a pantheon of gods for the Maya on the model of European antiquity have ended in failure. The Maya word “Ku,” translated by the Spanish friars as “god,” was also applied to the ancient pyramids, to other sacred places, and even to living persons. Stephens tried to elicit from the Indians at Copan their native word for “God,” but in repeated trials their answer was always the Spanish “Dios.” The prayers of Indians recorded in modern times give us a hint to the nature of their religious beliefs. In one such prayer, for example, the supplicant addresses the “White Corn and the Yellow Corn,” as well as an animal and a bird of the region, the twenty days and the thirteen numbers of their calendar, in addition to the Spanish “Dios Mundo.” Prayers of the Indians vary, but one item is never absent, the invocation of “Our Grandmothers and Grandfathers.” From this alone we can infer that ancestor worship was the central theme of their religion.

Although the Maya had a written script, literacy was probably limited, and ideas, both religious and secular, were disseminated in the form of costumed and masked dances, historical dramas, and comedies, still occasionally performed today. Much of their symbolism, both in writing and in the arts, appears to be derived from such ancient performances, in which the forces of nature and other abstract entities were personified and identified orally in caddenced recitations. This custom of personification endows with animation all elements of the cosmos, and the preoccupation of the Maya with astronomy and with the passage of time, gives their cosmos a definite structure. Later, under the influence of peoples from Mexico, Maya religion was modified and they acquired idols. This is clearly expressed in a book written in the Quiche dialect of the highland Maya called the Popol Vuh, translated by Munro Edmonson (1971). It is a compilation of the native creation legend, various myths, the history of the Quiche nation, and their social organization. In the historical section we read of the journey of the “first men” of the tribe to the Mexican town of Tollan to obtain permission to conquer a certain territory in highland Guatemala. There the “gods descended,” the men were given idols and instructed in their use. They carried the idols on their backs to their new home. Idolatry, however, was not their native religion. Before their arrival at Tollan, they were camped on a mountain awaiting the sunrise of a new era, and it is said of them (I quote from Edmonson):

They did not yet call on wood
And stone
To remind them of the words of Former
And Shaper
“The Heart of Heaven
The Heart of Earth,” as they said.

And further:

They were worshippers,
They were pious people
Who bowed their faces to Heaven
When they prayed . . . . . . . .

The text is poetic and somewhat obscure, but the reference to Heaven and Earth is also constant in the native literature of Yucatan. The dead are buried in the earth and in highland regions even today are believed to live on in all sacred mountains to which caves give access. The heroes and the nobility of the past, however, were buried in sacred precincts and under pyramids, and after sojourn in their tombs for a time, they rose with the sun to the regions beyond the sky.

It is this dominant theme of Heaven and Earth that I perceive in the design of Structure 22 at Copan where the head of the so-called “Young Maize God” was recovered. This design has not been reported from the central Maya region of the Peten, but it is common in the Chenes region to the north, and the best known example is the “Adivino” at Uxmal, sometimes spoken of as “The House of the Magician.” It is characterized by tiers of large masks at the corners of the buildings, and by a central doorway in the form of great open jaws of a monster, with the lower jaw projecting forward on the building platform with large tusks in front. There were probably similar tusks and teeth on the lintel, and a mask above. Apparently this is a metaphor for a cave leading in the “Heart of the Earth.” As one passes through the jaws of this earth-monster, one is confronted by another sculptured doorway leading to a back room on a slightly higher level. The step up is carved with hieroglyphs interrupted by skulls. On both sides of the

Symbols • Summer 1980 • 9
The Peabody at Schloss Lamberg

The Peabody Museum has lent an important group of grave objects from the Early Iron Age site of Magdalenska gora in Slovenia, part of the Mecklenburg Collection, to a special exhibition of Early Iron Age materials organized by the government of Upper Austria. The title of the exhibition is "Hallstatt Culture: Early Shape of European Unity." It is open from April 21 to October 26, 1980 and is located in the Schloss Lamberg in Steyr, Austria.

Peter S. Wells, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Assistant Curator of European Archaeology, was invited to deliver a paper on "Settlement Patterns in the Early Iron Age" at a special symposium organized by the government of Upper Austria in conjunction with the exhibition during the first week of June.

This exhibition is an extraordinary one, and anyone traveling in central Europe who has an interest in European archaeology is strongly advised to see it.

Rubbing and drawing of shell engraved with animal headed figure with necklace.

The Craig Mound was discovered by historian Joseph P. Thoburn in the winter of 1913-1914. The owners of the property held the mound in superstitious reverence and strictly forbade anyone to tamper with it. Consequently, the site remained undisturbed until 1933. Then ownership changed and the mound was brutally excavated by commercial diggers, using methods that caused fragmentation of many of the artifacts. For more than two years the site was a flea market, resulting in random distribution of the specimens to dealers and collectors over most of the United States. By 1935 the "Mining Company," as the group was known, had managed to wreak appalling ruin on the mound. As a final gesture, the diggers attempted to dynamite to the central area of the Craig Mound.

The charge, however, produced only a sizable crack in the cone. What was left was then available to scientific observation. The University of Oklahoma began systematic, professional investigation of the site in 1936 and spent two years salvaging the mound.

In 1965 Philip Phillips, archaeologist with the Peabody Museum, Harvard University, began a study of the Spiro shell engravings. Because many of the engravings were broken and the pieces scattered in numerous museum and private collections new techniques were needed to study them. Photographs or drawings could not adequately reproduce the designs; therefore, a rubbing technique was devised. Peabody Museum artists visited institutions and private collections throughout the Southeast in order to study and make rubbings of the shells. These rubbings accurately recorded the designs and were effective for matching scattered fragments. Back at the Peabody, the "shell-game" of carefully matching puzzle-piece rubbings produced valuable pictorial restorations of many of the cups.

The imaginative mythological animals, costumed figures, symbolic implements, and abstract graphic inventions of the Spiro shell engravings reveal more about Southeastern Indian symbolic representation than all other prehistoric sources combined.

Twenty-four panels of rubbings and drawings of engraved shells and five shell artifacts are currently on display in the Hall of the American Indian. The exhibit of artwork from a recent Peabody Museum publication: Pre-Columbian Shell Engravings from the Craig Mound at Spiro, Oklahoma by Philip Phillips of Harvard and James A. Brown of Northwestern was designed and mounted by Eliza McFadden and Barbara Page, illustrators for the volume.
The contrasts in facial shape between these two groups of humans are the anatomical differences which most readily catch the eye. Although the Skhul and Qafzeh skeletons have faces which might appear large and heavily built by modern standards, they are nonetheless within the larger plastation of living people. The Neanderthals, however, had an exceptional projection of the mid-facial region. Their noses and dentitions, along with the supporting jaws, were placed well forward of the eye sockets and cheekbones to form a prow. The eye sockets themselves were also placed forward on the skull, which led to the formation of large, but not particularly massive, browridges. For many years it was felt that this midfacial projection was most extreme among the western European Neanderthals, but one of the Shanidar specimens, Shanidar 5, has the largest and longest of the known Neanderthal faces.

This enlargement of the face is due, in part, to the size of their front teeth, the incisors and canines. Among the Neanderthals these teeth are larger than those of virtually all living humans, and large teeth would need large jaws to hold them. Why the Neanderthals had large front teeth is still a matter of controversy, but it appears that they were using their incisors and canines for more than just chewing food. A number of the Neanderthals, including four of the Shanidar specimens, show extensive wear on their front teeth (fig. 3). The crowns of their teeth were being worn off completely, so that the stubs of the roots were functioning as the chewing surface, by the age of 35 to 40 years. And rather than having the chewing surface worn in the normal way, parallel to the plane of chewing, they were rounding off the front, or outer, margins of their teeth. Microscopic inspection of the chewing surfaces of these teeth show crushing along the edges and small scratches running from within out, as though they were biting down on hard objects and then pulling them outward. They were probably using their teeth as a vise for holding a variety of objects, including such things as skins, wood and flint tools, while working on them.

The limb skeleton of the Neanderthals has received less attention than their skulls, since it has been generally assumed that once early humans attained full upright posture and a striding gait similar to ours, all of the significant evolutionary change took place in the head. Nevertheless, investigations of Neanderthal limb bones, for which the Amud, Tabûn, and particularly Shanidar remains provide important evidence, have brought to focus several distinctive aspects of these individuals.

Most of the Neanderthals, including five out of six Near Eastern individuals, exhibit a peculiar configuration of the outer border of their shoulder blades. This detail reflects a powerful development of one of the small muscles of the shoulder, which is responsible for stabilizing the shoulder joint during over-arm and downward thrusting movements of the arm. This is associated with pronounced attachment areas for the muscles of the scapula and arm on the long bones of the arms. The power they could generate in their arms must have been truly impressive.

The Neanderthal hands were no less exceptional. Every major attachment area for the muscles which produce a firm grip is remarkably strong. This applies particularly to those muscles which operate the thumb and bring it across against the other fingers when grasping objects large or small. Neanderthals appear to have had the same range of manipulative movements as ourselves, so that what we see here is merely an accentuation of our own pattern of strengths and movements. The same massiveness is seen in the bones of the legs and feet. An analysis recently undertaken by C. Owen Lovejoy of Kent State University and myself of Neanderthal shin bones, including those from Amud 1 and Shanidar 6, shows that they are about twice as strong as those of living humans. This bony strength is a reflection of their muscular strength. The skeleton, as the support system for the body, must be able to withstand the stresses placed upon it by muscle contractions during normal activity patterns.

Why were these Neanderthals so massive? This strength is seen in both men and women, and it can be discerned in children less than five years old. And it is not seen in the Skhul and Qafzeh skeletons, even though those individuals would appear quite strong by modern human standards. The answer to the question probably lies in their level of cultural, or technological, development. The archaeological record associated with these Neanderthals suggests that their technology, although by no means crude or simple, was not nearly as labor saving as that of the Upper Paleolithic. Their massiveness was therefore probably a biological compensation for cultural inadequacies. It enabled them to get by despite aspects of their culture, which we, from our perspective, would see as relatively inefficient.

Although the Neanderthals appear to have had a somewhat harder time of it than we do, as is reflected in both their biology and culture, they were by no means brutish. They meticulously buried their dead and placed simple offerings with them. This is one of the reasons we know so much about their anatomy; a buried skeleton is more likely to be preserved reasonably intact than one which is left to the elements on the surface. In addition, the Neanderthals took care of their kin long after they had become economically unproductive. Two individuals from Shanidar Cave, Shanidar 1 and 3, were severely debilitated by injuries and arthritis for at least five years before they died. Shanidar 1, in fact, had one arm amputated at the elbow, was crippled in one leg, and was probably blind in one eye (fig. 3). Yet he was supported for many years in this condition. This all demonstrates a humanity which is too often denied the Neanderthals.

To bring us back to the original question, what does this tell us about the evolutionary origins of modern appearing humans in the Near East? They appeared, with the populations represented by the Skhul and Qafzeh groups, about 40,000 years ago and replaced the preceding Neanderthal populations. The transition probably took less than 5,000 years, or less than 250 generations. Are these enough generations for a local evolution from one group to the other? That is a difficult question to answer, since we do not know how much genetic change is necessary for the observed differences in anatomy. Our best estimates suggest that they were probably not sufficient.

The most feasible reconstruction, given our current knowledge, is one in which peoples of essentially modern appearance slowly, and imperceptibly to the individuals involved, interbred with local Neanderthal populations to produce through evolution and admixture the subsequent early anatomically modern populations. Those individuals who more closely resembled living humans must have had a selective advantage over the more Neanderthal-like individuals, since they became the dominant physical form by about 40,000 years ago. The homeland of these immigrants seems to have been Sub-Saharan Africa, since people of essentially modern form were living there by at least 50,000 years ago.

This research into the origins of modern appearing humans in the Near East has done much to expand our understanding of human evolution in that region. As both archaeological and paleontological work continues, our knowledge of this important phase of human prehistory can only improve.

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"Neither a borrower, nor a lender be"

The bard's admonition notwithstanding, the Peabody Museum launches the first nationwide loan-share project.

FRANCES SILVERMAN
Director, Collection-Sharing Program

Many of the Peabody Museum's ethnographic and archaeological specimens, collected fifty years ago and more, have become relics, not only of their own civilizations but of the formative years of American anthropology. As a research-oriented institution, the Museum has maintained only modest exhibition facilities and public education programs, which do not permit use of as much of our material as we might wish. At a time when more and more museums are finding it difficult to approve loans, the Peabody will make its vast collections available to institutions that do not have substantial ethnographic or archaeological holdings.

Since the 1930s, professional anthropology has changed direction. Ethnology as it was practiced in the early twentieth century has moved into the shadows, intellectually upstaged by modern social and biological anthropology. Unused collections have been shoved into attics, basements, and crawl spaces to make room for researchers' offices, studies, and laboratories. Where once artifacts lived in harmony with their collectors, they now compete with younger generations of scholars for limited space.

Faced with severe budgetary restrictions, today's scholars must decide between the creation of new ideas through modern modes of research and the preservation of old specimens whose intellectual wealth has been mined or remains in doubt. Neglected, these early collections have been deteriorating.

We still have an opportunity to preserve our priceless ethnographic and archaeological treasures for public and scholarly consumption. This can be accomplished only through use, not disuse. The storage, conservation, and cataloguing required to save our vast collections are financially justifiable and politically possible only if they are shared by the public and academe. In this sense daylight is the most powerful preservative. If we do not act now, many important artifacts will simply disintegrate where they sit, victims of our inability to strike a balance between cultural supply and demand.

The Peabody has decided to do something about this situation by making available to nine art, history, science, and general museums around the country, substantial portions of its collections for public exhibits during the next three years. These museums were chosen from among more than eighty American Association of Museums accredited institutions around the country that applied for membership in this cultural consortium. The cooperating institutions have been encouraged, but not required, to share loans among themselves. Loans will consist primarily of three-dimensional items, but paintings, prints, photos, and documents will also be used. The following is a brief description of what is to be loaned and to whom:

- **Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore**
  - 200 items of sculpture, pottery, basketry, jewelry, weapons, musical instruments, and masks from sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Memorial Art Gallery, University of Rochester, New York**
  - 120 masks from North, Central, and South America as well as some from Africa, Asia, and Oceania.
- **Museum of Science, Boston**
  - 279 artifacts from the Maya site of Copan, Honduras, including casts, original sculpture, earthenware pots, sherds, and implements, as well as topographic and architectural altar models. Photographs and drawings will accompany them.
- **Children's Museum, Boston**
  - 15 objects and 55 archival photographs representing the Northeast Indian culture area of North America.
- **Art Institute of Chicago**
  - 150 pieces of sculpture, decorative design, and personal adornment surveying the principal art forms of the Oceanic cultural area of Polynesia.
- **The Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul**
  - 50 artifacts, plus maps, graphics, and archival documents to illustrate major aspects of the "Mississippian Lifeway in Eastern North America."
- **Oregon Historical Society, Portland**
  - 60 Northwest Coast Indian artifacts for "Penetrating Exploration of the Pacific Rim: Triumphs and Tragedies of Trade."
- **Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth**
  - 115 paintings, prints, and watercolors from the Bushnell Collection for an exhibit of nineteenth- and twentieth-century explorers in the American West.
- **The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston**
  - 90 ceramics and textiles showing the rich cultural tradition of the pre-Columbian peoples of the Central Andean region of South America.

The entire project has been funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. In the fall of 1978 NEH provided the Peabody with a $10,000 planning grant and this spring with $150,000 to implement the first fifteen months of collection-sharing. To date, another $100,000 has been awarded to the associate institutions. This is the largest multi-institutional loan program ever supported by NEH, which sees it as a potential model for such collaboration on a wider front in the future. The first exhibit is due to open at Boston's Museum of Science in the winter of 1980-81.