FOCUS ON FIELDWORK

This issue of Expedition focuses on five very different kinds of fieldwork projects. All are connected in one way or another with The University Museum and its research staff, its archives, or its collections. In the first article, Barbara Byler tells the story of the long-term relationship between the people of a New Guinea village and anthropologist Margaret Mead, who first worked among them in 1929, and of her own continuing role in helping Pere Village remember its past and prepare for the future. In the next article, Kris Hardin presents three different commentaries on a set of ethnographic photographs taken in the course of her fieldwork in Sierra Leone. With such three different responses, she asks, whose voice "counts?" They all do, she answers, and acknowledging the validity of multiple voices can help us understand the bases inherent in any process of interpretation. Next, Eleanor King introduces us to "the wilder side of anthropological fieldwork" in the lowlands of Brazil in the early 1900s, where a young graduate student found himself expected to carry out his first archaeological and ethnographic research under unusually "colorful" circumstances. The excerpt from Uri, Vincenzo Petrollo's unpublished manuscript, is a sensitive and evocative account of his experiences among the Yawalapit.

The last two articles feature two archaeological projects in which the conservation of Maya cultural heritage is at the core. The first describes the production and transport of fiberglass replicas of two Maya tombs in The University Museum's collections to the site of Copan, Belize. La Ruta Maya Conservation Foundation, which directed the project, is dedicated to preserving the cultural and environmental resources of the lands of the ancient Maya. In the second, Luc Tardieu recounts the recent discovery of a noble—perhaps a royal—burial at the Maya site of Copán. Copan is renowned not only for dramatic discoveries such as this one, but also for field techniques that allow the conservation and recording of subsurface features while leaving surface structures intact.

Focus on Fieldwork

Pere Byler, looking toward Biomaraz Sea. See "Looking at a Village" by Bell, p. 4.

Photo by F. Bell

Introduction

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