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what we ourselves have seen reflected
in the black mirror of his forehead.

This is a highly personal rendering of Quiché fieldwork and autobiography, unique in contemporary American poetry. The Black Mountain poet Charles Olson also lived among the Mayans (1950-1951) and studied the language, but his reflections occur in his letters to Robert Creeley, not in his poetry, which remained centered in his hometown of Gloucester, Massachusetts. The conceptual artist Robert Smithson also integrated Mayan geography and ideas into his project, "Incidents of Mirror Travel in the Yucatan" (1968). But again, Smithson used Mayan concepts to illuminate his own concerns of time, metaphor, and specificity. Other ethnographers, translators, and anthropologists have also written poetry, including Stanley Diamond (*Totems*), Paul Friedrich, and Jerome Rothenberg (*The Seneca Journal*). But Tedlock's sustained, book-length poem is unique.

Perhaps there will be political objections to Quiché culture's being used out of context. Tedlock does not, however, present this book as anything more than it is: a personal response to his life work, including years of translation of Quiché. Its subject matter of dreams and divinations may not find universal appeal, but the book's execution is flawless; the poet's work with language has made him a virtuoso of style. His studied use of Quiché terms may prompt his readers to further inquiry into a remarkable civilization.

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Late Woodland Sites in the American Bottom Uplands. By Charles Bentz, Dale L. McElrath, Fred A. Finney, and Richard B. Lacampagne. American Bottom Archaeology FAI-270 Site Reports, Volume 18. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988. 331 pages. \$17.50 Paper.

This book covers archaeological sites that were to be impacted by construction in the American bottom lands east and northeast of St. Louis, Missouri on the Illinois side of the Mississippi River. The site locations excavated were designated to be destroyed when dirt was removed for use in highway construction. This is

a common occurrence in highway construction throughout the United States. The areas under study frequently are within highway right-of-way or on public or private land that has been contracted by the state to supply the dirt fill necessary for highway construction. The fact that archaeological research has been undertaken, however, does not necessarily mean that a total survey of an area has been done, nor does it mean that each site has been completely excavated.

This particular series of site reports is about archaeological sites affected by the construction of interstate highway 270 (later designated 255) on the floodplain of the Mississippi River. The FAI in the series title stands for Federal Aid Interstate. Charles J. Bareis and James W. Porter, series editors, consider the multivolume series to be about one of the "most significant archaeological regions in North America" (see the inside front cover of the book). I will not comment on that aspect of the sites reported in this particular volume. I do want to comment on the contributions of the work to the understanding of prehistoric utilization of natural resources during the period approximately 300 A.D. to 800 A.D.

During the summer of 1956, I was a member of the University of Illinois (Urbana) Archaeological Field School class at Hull, Illinois. The location was not far from the Mississippi River, upriver from the highway 270 sites. Although the area of the 1956 Field School had similarities to the sites discussed in this book, changes have taken place in archaeological methodology during the past thirty-four years.

The most evident changes are in the methods of analyzing the ceramic, floral, and faunal materials from these sites across the Mississippi from St. Louis, Missouri. In 1956, pollen analysis was not widely used, nor were the techniques of flotation, which enable the recovery of data that would have been lost forever under the old excavation methodologies. Ceramics were beginning to be analyzed in 1956, using research methods that were, to many, still in varying stages of development. Today, ceramics are subjected to many tests which can determine the source of the clay and the material used as temper, and permit better analysis of the original manufacture and design. In the case of the Midwest, ceramic tests provide an understanding of the manufacture of the cordage that was wrapped around the paddles used for shaping or smoothing some vessels. All of these scientific techniques are

important for a better understanding of the natural resources available to prehistoric people and of the technology these people employed to utilize the resources.

Unfortunately, many archaeologists still neglect the historic accounts of early explorers, trappers, and missionaries who visited various native settlements, saw implements in use, and recorded what they saw in their journals. Some archaeological reports treat as nonentities the people who made or used site remains, while other reports integrate the material on present people with that of the past. This process has been undergoing change in various parts of the United States but often is an area where tribal representatives can legitimately find fault with a report.

Late Woodland Sites does not include historic information on the peoples who, at contact, inhabited the area along the Mississippi River opposite present-day St. Louis. In this respect, these site reports are no different from those written at the end of the 1956 field school. Books that deal with more than just listings of artifacts are still rare, but for California I would cite Ballena Press Anthropological Papers such as no. 8, "Flowers of the Wind: Papers on Ritual, Myth and Symbolism in California and the Southwest," edited by Thomas C. Blackburn, or no. 2, "YANTAP California Indian Political and Economic Organization," edited by Lowell John Bean and Thomas F. King.

Because of the scientific advances I mentioned above, good data are available today to explain the various woods used in prehistoric roasting pits and earth ovens, the plants that were cultivated or gathered, and the animals that were used for food or tool-making. Without modern flotation methods, much of this data would not have been recovered. Knowing the plants and animals that were utilized by people living at a particular site also aided in determining whether the site was occupied year-round or seasonally.

For most American Indian scholars, *Late Woodland Sites* will have a limited use. While the type of data included in the book furnishes some insights about those who lived along this floodplain 1,100 years ago (i.e., the fact that maize was not grown there at that time but some starchy seed plants and squash were, or that one of the main dietary staples was the abundant nut crop), it does not give clues for interpreting how the social or political organization of these people might have been affected by the cultivation, hunting, or gathering of the resources they recov-

ered. For scholars who normally do read the early historical material, the data in these site reports about the use of natural resources may help to fill in gaps in the historical records.

The reader should beware of individual volumes in a series such as this, for there is a tendency for them to read like statistical data sheets. The most important book in the series probably will be the summary volume. A book that interprets the meaning of the material recovered and that suggests how the sites were occupied from day to day, year-round or seasonally, would be of greater value for many scholars. Statistical site reports generally are for a limited few.

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Feathered Serpents and Flowering Trees: Reconstructing the Murals at Teotihuacan. Edited by Kathleen Berrin. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989. 248 pages. \$39.95 Cloth.

From shortly before the time of Christ to about 750 A.D., the city the Aztecs called Teotihuacan dominated the central Mexican plateau. The large population was housed in an estimated 2,000 residential compounds, the most spacious of which featured mural paintings, primarily in the porticos surrounding ceremonial courtyards. When archeological investigation focused on Teotihuacan in the early 1960s, the Mexican government undertook construction of a highway linking Teotihuacan to Mexico City, and of a circular route around the center of the ancient city. Unfortunately, construction of this *Periferico* facilitated extensive looting of mural paintings from the compounds now called Tlacuilapaxco and Techinantitla.

A significant portion of these looted murals were acquired by San Franciscan artist and art patron Harald Wagner (1903–1976), who bequeathed them to the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, one of the fine arts museums of San Francisco. Although the murals were in the United States before the treaty with Mexico for return of cultural properties took effect in 1971, museum curator Thomas K. Seligman decided to return 70 percent of them to Mexico as an ethical statement. In the two years preceding