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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

repatriation (1984–86), Mexican and North American conservators worked on the murals in public view, while noted Teotihuacan scholars Esther Pasztory, Clara Millon, and Arthur Miller, among others, assisted associate curator Kathleen Berrin in assembling fragments into their original schemes.

Feathered Serpents and Flowering Trees is a further benefit from the Wagner bequest, adding significantly to the slim bibliography on this great site and its unique mural tradition. Since all three preceding English-language books on this subject are actually published dissertations (Arthur Miller, *The Mural Painting of Teotihuacan,* 1973; Esther Pasztory, *The Murals of Tepantitla, Teotihuacan,* 1976; James C. Langley, *Symbolic Notation of Teotihuacan,* 1986), this volume greatly increases the accessibility of Teotihuacan mural painting to the general public. The texts are clear and informative, the plates and drawings superb, and the subject of enormous historic and artistic value. This book is a revelation for anyone with even a casual interest in Native American culture; for the professional it represents the most complete and current synthesis of archeological information and interpretation.

Five essays precede the detailed catalogue entries. Those by Seligman on the acquisition and repatriation of the collection; by Berrin on Teotihuacan, Harald Wagner, and the conservation of the murals; and by Rene Millon on his excavations in the compounds from which they were illegally removed provide descriptive background. Millon's decision to investigate the source of the looted murals was due to the fact that an acclaimed contribution to the study of Teotihuacan murals, made by his wife, Clara Millon, in 1973, had focused on a procession of figures with tasseled headdresses, several examples of which later turned up in the Wagner collection. Rene Millon also includes full exposition of a frescoed wall not discovered by looters, decorated with a procession of "Storm God" impersonators in an architectural context that he terms the "Antechamber of the Gods." His concluding analysis is actually a compilation of interpretations presented in later sections by Clara Millon.

The remaining essays are written by Esther Pasztory and Clara Millon, and all of the catalogue entries are divided between these two scholars. Pasztory limits her catalogue entries to detailed discussions of the murals, restricting theoretical and comparative analyses to the essay portion of the book. In contrast, Clara Millon's main essay is essentially a reprise of her earlier publication,

while her catalogue entries contain the new interpretations, including a detailed and peripheral analysis of mural paintings from the Atetelco compound. The confusion engendered by this approach is compounded by Rene Millon's report on his wife's conclusions prior to her own discussions of the evidence.

The strength of Clara Millon's contributions may be found in her attention to detail, and in her convincing demonstration that the dualities of sacrifice and fertility inherent in some of these mural programs signify a progression from death to rebirth. However, she often views Teotihuacan art through a filter of European and Mayan concepts. To cite one example, she determines that the three painted porticos of the White Patio at Atetelco were intended to be read sequentially as a ritual progression (pp. 212–15), a practice common in the narrative art of the Usumacinta Maya region but not otherwise known in Teotihuacan.

Both Millons impose other assumptions upon the Teotihuacan mural tradition rather than drawing theories from the corpus of known paintings. Rene Millon suggests that the main room reached through the "Antechamber of the Gods" would feature icons of the hierarchically more important "Great Goddess," despite the contrary Teotihuacan practice of representing a major deity image in the outer portico, with isolated elements selected for the dark interior chamber. More importantly, the Millons assert that all of the paintings in the two neighboring compounds belong to a single, meaningfully integrated program, despite their enormous disparity in style and content. Actually, these murals are no different from those in legally excavated residences such as Atetelco, Tepantitla, Tetitla, or Zacuala, all of which contain discrete mural programs executed at different times and in different styles. In these, coherent programs may involve more than one room or portico, but they are located around a single courtyard and are consistent in style. Thus, although the Millons's assertion may be correct, there is little to support their suggestion that Techinantitla was a "longtime residence of kinsmen with an enduring military tradition who had produced commanding generals over the years" (pp. 107–108).

Pasztory's essay, "A Reinterpretation of Teotihuacan and Its Mural Painting Tradition," involves a broader spectrum of material and non-material culture, and she views these elements in an integrated system evolving through time. Furthermore, Pasztory treats Teotihuacan on its own, unique terms, neither as the Aztec's ancestor nor as a contrast to the classic Maya. She dem-

onstrates that from about 300–600 A.D., Teotihuacan material culture was dominated by new and regularized elements such as the apartment compound, the composite incense burner, the greenstone mask, and the mural painting, all of which differ in detail and hierarchic status while adhering to a basic format. Stylistically, this Teotihuacan approach entails rejection of the naturalistic styles of other Meso-American cultures—with their political themes represented by images of rulers and captives and by the use of hieroglyphic writing—in favor of an abstract and impersonal style that keeps cult images removed from their human viewers through layers of framing devices. Such a conscious determination to systematize a unique identity finds its parallel in Japan of the early seventeenth century, following the expulsion of Europeans. In Teotihuacan, according to Pasztory, this corporate ideal could have served to amalgamate a heterogeneous population into an efficiently functioning polity.

The Wagner murals appear to have been painted during a later period, around 600–750 A.D., when this corporate ideal began to decay. Enthroned rulers in elaborate costume now appear in figurines, while mural paintings become individualized, inventive, even virtuoso. Because this emphasis on individual achievement characterizes Teotihuacan's phase of greatest population and wealth, it accounts for more than half of the known mural paintings. Unfortunately, without a reliable seriation of these works, interpretations of the underlying processes remain speculative. Pasztory wisely notes that several explanations are possible, but leans toward the suggestion that the central authority had weakened, allowing competition among residential groups whose success would be demonstrated by these rich mural programs.

Although treating Teotihuacan on its own terms allows a much clearer view of its internal processes, the history of this culture is not fully understandable in isolation. Teotihuacan participates in many widespread Meso-American trends and borrows external ideas. Pasztory's decision to eliminate external comparisons may arise from the narrow scope of the publication, but it does affect her conclusions on the context of the Wagner collection. The growing emphasis on linear series of image signs evident in these murals, like the growing emphasis on individual achievement in the form of royal figurines, is paralleled in several contemporaneous Meso-American art styles, and must be part of a widespread process.

The editorial decision to invite both Clara Millon and Esther

Pasztory to comment upon the Wagner collection murals probably was intended to recognize the most significant contributors of both the older and younger generations. Indeed, Pasztory's analysis involves issues of social history and context that have recently come to dominate the field of art history. However, Millon's analysis cannot be said to represent an old methodology. Her attempt to fill out an iconographic reconstruction through both literal interpretation and imaginative hypothesis is equally current, as demonstrated by the acclaimed publication on Mayan art produced by young scholars Linda Schele and Mary Ellen Miller (*The Blood of Kings,* 1986). One difference lies in Pasztory's attempts to formulate a theoretical construct in which unprovable assumptions are kept to a minimum. Since both approaches generate valuable hypotheses, it is regrettable that both scholars were not asked to comment on all the murals: The inference that only one interpretation exists for any work of art seems out-of-date. However, the outstanding value of this publication is that the reader is given sufficient background information and examples of interpretive strategies to make his or her own informed judgment.

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In Honor of Mary Haas: From the Haas Festival Conference on Native Linguistics. Edited by William Shipley. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1988. 826 pages. DM 288 Cloth.

Native American studies are well served when dedicated researchers inspire their students to carry on good and fruitful work. Two individuals I have known certainly fit that description: Mary Haas and Alfred Whiting. Both worked in the same era, did highly competent research with several Native American groups, and taught their students to do the same. Yet both were humble and self-effacing, leaving it to others to point out the high quality of their work. Al Whiting died of cancer in 1978 before he could publish most of the enormous amount of valuable fieldwork data he had amassed. The parallels and analogies between Whiting and Haas are hinted at in Donald Hughes's review of Whiting's "Havasupai Habitat" in this journal (January 1988).