

THE CRISIS IN AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY:
AN INTRODUCTION

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In recent times, it has come to the public attention that a situation of crisis exists with respect to the wholesale ripping off and destruction of archaeological sites and illegal sale of lovely artifacts in foreign lands. Nearly all major newspapers, news magazines, and popular art or literary journals have carried feature stories on the problem. Numerous articles have also appeared in scholarly journals (cf. Coggins 1970a; 1970b; 1972; Williams 1972a; 1972b; Bruhns 1972; Adams 1970; Beals 1971), and major societies have passed strong resolutions on the problem (see Archaeology 1971; American Antiquity 1971). Because of the more sensational and spectacular nature of the international situation, similar problems within the United States are either unknown to, or neglected by the general public and a large portion of the anthropological profession.

Yet the fact remains that archaeological sites are being destroyed, and artifacts stolen, at such an increasing rate within the United States that field work may be halted within ten years due to a lack of remaining sites (cf. Davis 1971; 1972; Clewlow, Hallinan and Ambro 1971; Ford, Rolingson and Medford 1972). Additionally, American archaeology, which has traditionally remained apolitical and aloof from contact with

the general public and Native Americans, is now having to pay its back dues in the context of deteriorated relationships with both groups (for example, Johnson 1971; Moratto 1970). It is a **standing** disgrace to the profession as well as an index to the gravity of the problem that archaeology has failed to recruit one Native American or Black American as a practitioner. These issues, in addition to large job shortages and funding cut-backs, have indeed created a profound crisis in American archaeology.

In the Spring of 1972, the editors organized two symposia to better inform ourselves of various aspects of the crisis. One of these, "Politics and Archaeology" was held at the SWAA and SCA meetings at Long Beach in April. The other, "Perspectives on the Crisis in North American Archaeology", was held at the KAS meeting in Berkeley in May. Both symposia met with considerable response and enthusiastic follow-up. Thus we decided that it would serve a genuine purpose to publish as many of the original papers as we could. We also solicited several papers to make this published volume more complete. A total of 11 papers in all were decided upon. These included one on the legal aspects of archaeological site destruction (Hallinan), the scope and magnitude of site destruction in America (Clewlow), the problems archaeology has caused with and for Native Americans (Pastron), a statewide "response" to the crisis (King), and a local "response" to the crisis

(Moratto). The views of one Federal archaeologist (Miller) and one state archaeologist (Riddell) are also presented. In order to broaden our perspective, we solicited papers on aspects of the problem in South America (Bruhns), in Mexico (Contreras) and Great Britain (Rodden). We feel that these papers constitute the most comprehensive single volume yet compiled on the crisis in American archaeology.

We have also included here an annotated bibliography (Pastron) of North American Indian autobiographies. While it does not deal directly with the crisis, we feel that its publication will be a service to Native Americans and anthropologists, and that it is relevant to the archaeological dilemma in that it covers a period of time which is indeed a bridge between history and prehistory.

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