

**"Mesoamerica and the Southwest:
A New History for an Ancient Land"
June 19- August 3, 2004**

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your interest in "Mesoamerica and the Southwest: A New History for an Ancient Land," an NEH Summer Institute for college and university teachers sponsored by the Community College Humanities Association. This letter from the project directors will set out the general scope and aims of our project; appended to the letter you will find an application packet, consisting of NEH's general "Application Information and Instructions" and an Application Cover Sheet.

This project will be held on site for six weeks, from June 19 through August 3, 2004, based in Mexico City and in Santa Fe, New Mexico and other locations in the Southwest. Institute sessions will be conducted successively by thirteen internationally distinguished scholars, both in seminar and field study format, and are designed to enable faculty participants to explore the exciting and rapidly accumulating new collaborative scholarship on the intersections of Mesoamerican and Southwestern studies. At the heart of this new interdisciplinary scholarship is a fundamental restructuring of this major area of American Studies, bringing together for study under one roof the cultural histories of Mesoamerica and of the Southwest, in pre-Columbian, colonial, and modern contexts. Key scholars, many of whom are serving as our Institute faculty, are breaking new ground in cross-border studies of the ancient and on-going connections between the peoples of Mesoamerica and the peoples of the Southwest in terms of religious belief and ceremony, social, political and economic organization, and major artistic traditions.

The Institute should afford an unparalleled opportunity for academics to travel and learn together, visiting many of the most important sites for the study of Mesoamerican and Southwestern culture, and studying under the guidance of a group of distinguished visiting scholars and writers.

Applicants should be aware that this project will involve a good deal of travel and field study. Institute scholars will conduct a series of on-site presentations in many of the most important cultural and archaeological sites in Mesoamerica and the U.S. Southwest. In Mexico these will include major museums in Mexico City, the Basilica of Guadalupe, the pre-Columbian sites of Teotihuacan, Tula, Malinalco and Tetzcotzingo, the pilgrimage church at Chalma, and the colonial religious art collection at Tepotzotlan. We then fly to northern Mexico for an overnight trip to Casas Grandes, a pre-Columbian trading center newly understood to be a crucial nexus between the Mesoamerican and Puebloan worlds. In New Mexico, scholars will lead study visits to the ancient ruins of Pecos, Abo and Quarai, to the current pueblos of the Northern Rio Grande, and to major museums in Santa Fe and Taos. The Institute will conclude with a six-day field trip through the Four Corners region, including study visits to Chaco Canyon, Diné College, Canyon de Chelly, Zuni, El Morro, and Acoma.

The two of us who are directing the project -- George Scheper and Laraine Fletcher -- and our project manager, David Berry, Executive Director of the Community College Humanities Association, have worked together directing similar travel/study NEH Institutes, and we have also worked with most of our visiting scholars in these previous projects. This is the seventh NEH Institute George Scheper has directed or co-directed for the Community College Humanities Association on topics related to New World cultural encounters. George directs an interdisciplinary program in humanities for adult learners at the Community College of Baltimore County-Essex, and regularly teaches interdisciplinary courses for The Johns Hopkins University School of Professional Studies; his research and publications focus on studies in comparative religion. For more than twenty years Laraine Fletcher (Anthropology, Adelphi University) has been involved in archaeological field work, including analyzes of the settlement patterns of the preColumbian sites of Cobá and Calakmul in conjunction with the Centro de Investigaciones Históricas y Sociales of the Universidad Autónoma de Campeche. Recently she began a photo-ethnographic project to document with photographs and oral histories changes in the lives of Maya women living in the villages near Valladolid, Yucatán.

We've had great working relationships with our visiting scholars, and with the excellent travel agent who will be handling our logistics. We trust that the experience we've gained as a team, along with the resources of CCHA, will translate into a fruitful, collegial and stimulating experience for our participants. We do realize that the commitment to a six-week on-site project makes this a particularly demanding travel/study experience, and that participants must be willing to be very flexible and to go with the flow as group arrangements demand. A generous spirit of collegiality and good will do go a long way toward making a complex project such as this work successfully!

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS, EXPENSES and STIPEND

Because "Mesoamerica and the Southwest" is being held on-site in Mexico and the Southwest, with a series of field-study visits, the grant monies usually allocated as stipends have been pooled to cover participant travel and lodging expenses within the Institute, all of which will be covered directly by CCHA (these costs per participant are equal in value to the current \$3700 stipend for a six-week Institute). Participants will receive all lodging, internal travel and site-visit costs for scheduled activities during the Institute, and some pre-arranged meals, as will be specified in the detailed Daily Schedule. Participants are responsible for meal expenses other than when pre-arranged, for personal expenses and for their own travel arrangements to Mexico City by June 19 and for return from Albuquerque after August 2 (NEH funds cannot cover individual travel to and from the Institute). Participants may wish to make these travel arrangements individually, but our travel agent will be pleased to assist participants with those arrangements.

Based on our past experience, participants should anticipate budgeting between \$30 to \$40 per day for meals and other personal expenses for the duration of the project.

STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

The Institute will run for six weeks, from June 19 through August 3, 2004. We will be based in Mexico City from June 19 through July 7, and then in El Paso, Texas and Casas Grandes, Mexico from July 8 through July 11. We transfer to Santa Fe, New Mexico for two weeks, from July 12 through July 27, and conclude with a six-day, five overnight study trip through the Four Corners region July 29 through August 2. Sessions with Institute scholars will generally alternate between seminars and field trips to archaeological and cultural sites. Because of the intense schedule of the "Mesoamerica and the Southwest" Institute, as much of the required reading as possible should be done prior to departure. There is a core reading list of about ten books which accepted participants will need to acquire as soon as possible, and in addition we will supply a set of Readers consisting of duplicated additional selections assigned by the Institute scholars for their respective sessions; these Readers will be sent ahead to each selected participant upon our receipt of her or his agreement to participate. To help ensure a high level of informed discussion, this project will require of participants quite a substantial amount of reading in a variety of disciplines. So, once again, we'd like to stress how greatly it will contribute to the success of the project if accepted participants undertake as much of the required reading as can realistically be done in advance.

A typical non-travel working day of the Institute will consist of a seminar in the morning conducted by one of the visiting scholars, followed by lunch and informal discussion with the scholar. Once a week the project directors will conduct a brief roundtable to review the proceedings and to discuss individual ideas and needs. Days of field study either at archaeological sites or contemporary cultural sites will typically devote the full day to that activity. The visiting scholars will be available, during their respective scheduled days with the Institute, for consultation with participants about their individual research and curricular interests.

INSTITUTE LOCATION AND FACILITIES

In Mexico, we will be based at the Hotel Majestic, located in the historic center of Mexico City, adjoining the Templo Mayor, the Cathedral and other colonial buildings, and with seminar facilities at the hotel. Downtown Mexico City, especially since the 1978 excavations of the Aztec Templo Mayor located next to the Cathedral, is a spectacular laboratory for studying the "double exposure" of indigenous and European cultures. Now the Aztec and colonial Catholic worldviews can be comprehended in a single purview, and the descriptions of the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán as given in such 16th century Spanish sources as Cortés, Bernal Díaz, and the Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagún can be analyzed in relation to the actual visible layout of the Templo Mayor and the artifacts in the adjoining museum, along with relevant items in the Aztec collection in the main Anthropology Museum. Scheduled field trips enable comparisons with such other important earlier Mesoamerican urban centers as Teotihuacan, Tula and Tetzcotzingo. For the more extended field study of the pre-Columbian site of Paquimé at Casas Grandes, in Chihuahua, Mexico, we will be based in El Paso, with an overnight at Casas Grandes. The second half of the project then moves to New Mexico.

New Mexico displays incomparable multicultural layering, with the propinquity of Anasazi ruins, living Pueblo communities and over two centuries of colonial Spanish architecture and artifacts. In New Mexico, the Institute will be housed (except for the final six-day study trip) at conference facilities of the College of Santa Fe, which also will provide our seminar space and take care of all equipment

needs for the Institute. Participants will be granted library privileges at the college, and access to computer facilities on campus. Santa Fe will be our base for exploring the research facilities and study collections of the Laboratory of Anthropology/ Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, and the Indian Art Research Center of the School of American Research, and the archival collections of the Palace of the Governors, as well as for field trips to Pecos and the Rio Grande pueblos. Our project concludes with a six-day field study through the Four Corners region, a treasury of ancient and contemporary Native American and Hispanic/Mexican cultural history and heritage.

INSTITUTE FACULTY

In the course of the Institute seminars and field study will be conducted by an array of distinguished visiting scholars representing many different humanities disciplines. In Mexico we will begin with a collaborative team of David Carrasco, an authority on Mesoamerican religion, and Anthony Aveni, founder of the field of Mesoamerican archaeoastronomy. In addition to their individual seminars, Carrasco and Aveni will co-conduct study trips to Teotihuacan and Tula. Our next scholar, Karl Taube, is an anthropologist who has specialized in Mesoamerican writing systems and the intersections of Mesoamerican and Southwestern iconography; Taube will also escort visits to the Museum of Anthropology and to the seldom visited Texcocan site of Tetzcotzingo. Louise Burkhart will move the study of Nahua culture into the contact era, with seminars on Nahua Christian drama and the cult of Guadalupe, and she will escort study visits to the Basilica of Guadalupe and to the pilgrimage church of Chalma. Our final scholar in Mexico City is Timothy Knab, an authority on dream-vision and sorcery in traditional Nahua communities, and author of *A War of Witches: A Journey into the Underworld of the Contemporary Aztecs*.

Our Institute then flies to Juarez for a transfer to El Paso, Texas, where F. Kent Reilly will offer a “keynote” lecture on the intersections of Mesoamerican and southwestern cosmologies. No one has been more active in bringing together the scholarship on the Mesoamerican and the Southwestern (and Mississippian) cultures than Professor Reilly. We will also be joined in El Paso by the husband and wife team of Curtis and Polly Schaafsma. Polly, the recognized authority on Southwestern rock art, will conduct a field study of the petroglyphs at Hueco Tanks, Texas. Then Curtis and Polly will accompany us back across the border on an overnight field study at Casas Grandes in Chihuahua, Mexico. Curtis is co-editor with Carroll Riley of *The Casas Grandes World*, a groundbreaking work central to the theme of our Institute.

After our return to El Paso, we travel overland to Santa Fe, where our first scholar will be J. J. Brody, who will conduct two seminars on ancient pottery and mural painting of the Southwest, and who will also conduct presentations of the study collections of pottery and other indigenous and Spanish colonial artifacts in Santa Fe. Professor Brody will also escort our six-day trip through the Four Corners region at the conclusion of the Institute. In Santa Fe we will also be joined by Fran Levine, Director of the Palace of the Governors and authority on Pecos Pueblo, who will conduct a day of study in at Pecos and the Palace of the Governors.

Our next scholar in Santa Fe, Ramón Gutiérrez, will conduct two days of seminar on early Puebloan culture on the eve of the Spanish incursion and the dynamics of the Pueblo/Spanish cultural interaction. Gutiérrez is author of the seminal monograph *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away/ Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* and co-editor of *Feasts and*

Celebrations in American Ethnic Communities. We will then move into literary study of two important encounter-era texts with Rolena Adorno, who will lead discussion on the narrative of Cabeza de Vaca and on Villagra's Historia de Nueva Mexico (1610). Adorno is co-author of the monumental three-volume work Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca: His Account, His Life, and the Expedition of Panfilo de Narváez. Rina Swentzell, a member of Santa Clara Pueblo, will offer a seminar on Puebloan cosmovision as reflected in the architectural design of traditional Pueblo communities, and will also escort a day trip to the upper Rio Grande Pueblos, including Taos and Santa Clara. Our final seminars will be offered by Amalia Mesa-Bains, Director of the Institute for Visual and Public Art at the California State University Monterrey Bay, on the topic of the Chicano movement and on Chicano/a art reflecting the symbolism of Aztlán. Mesa-Bains is an independent artist and cultural critic whose creative work has focused on interpretations of traditional Chicano altars.

The Institute concludes with the six-day study trip through the four corners region escorted by J. J. Brody, including visits to archaeological sites and contemporary Native American communities. During this trip, we will have meals and hosted presentations by community leaders at Zia, Acoma and Zuni Pueblos, including a presentation of the murals of Zuni Church by the artist Alex Seotewa. Harry Walters will give a lecture on Diné (Navajo) cosmovision at the Diné College.

APPLICATION

The Institute is intended to function as a stimulus to individual study and research and as a seed-bed for course and curriculum development. In your application essay you should identify an area of personal research interest and/or of curriculum development that you intend to pursue during the course of the Institute. The semester following the Institute, participants will be asked to submit report on the impact of the Institute on their research and teaching for the project directors' Final Report to NEH.

For the reasons indicated above, you should note that perhaps the most important part of your application is the essay that must be submitted as part of the complete application. This essay should include any personal and academic information that is relevant; reasons for applying to this particular Institute; your interest, both intellectual and personal, in the topic; qualifications to do the work of the project and to make a contribution to it; what you hope to accomplish by participation, including any individual research and writing projects; and the relation of the study to your teaching.

Please follow the guidelines in the enclosed general "Application Information and Instructions" from NEH, and remember that your completed application, **in hard copy** only please, should be postmarked no later than March 1, 2004, and should be addressed to our project manager as follows:

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We wish you all the best and look forward to hearing from you. If you have additional questions about the structure or content of our Institute, please contact David Berry, above, or one of the project directors at either of our addresses below.

Sincerely,

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