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IN MEMORIAM

GEORGE ERNEST HASEMANN

1944–1998

George Hasemann, Head of the Archaeology Section of the Instituto Hondureno de Antropología e Historia (IHAH), passed away in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on October 8, 1998, at the age of 54, after a five-year struggle with cancer. He is survived by his wife and colleague Gloria Lara Pinto de Hasemann and children Ana Eugenia, Jose Enrique, Diana, and Dawn.

Born in New York City on January 16, 1944, Hasemann studied English literature and participated in rugby at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. After earning his B.A. there in 1968, he taught English and French literature at the Asheville School in North Carolina. After taking his students on a trip through Mexico in 1972, his interest in the cultures of Mesoamerica was kindled. At the end of five years, he was offered a scholarship to pursue graduate studies in anthropology at Florida State University, after moving with his first wife and daughter to Tallahassee in 1973. Hasemann attended the archaeological field school that year at the Contact Period indigenous site of Ulmore Cove in northwest Florida, with Hale Smith and Donald Crusoe. Following the field school, he was a laboratory assistant analyzing ceramics for Crusoe and was a teaching assistant in anthropology for one semester. Building on that experience, he then became a part-time Conservation Assistant at the Southeast Archaeological Center of the National Park Service under the supervision of Thomas Padgett and Hale Smith.

Hasemann's first exposure to Mesoamerican archaeology came in 1974, when he was involved in an archaeological survey of Utila in the Bay Islands of Honduras under the direction of Robert Goodwin and with the authorization of IHAH, which set the course for the next 25 years of his career. The following year, having fallen in love with the people and culture of the islands, he returned to Roatan and Utila to conduct further surveys with Jeremiah Epstein. After participating in Spanish colonial excavations at St. Augustine, Florida, with Kathleen Deegan in 1976, Hasemann decided to return to live on Utila. Over the next two years he attempted to stay employed on the small island, working as a scuba diver, as a captain of a shrimp boat in the Gulf of Mexico, and on small archaeological projects with IHAH (1977, Reconocimiento Arqueológico de Utila, *Yaxkin* II[I]). Hasemann was awarded an M.A. in anthropology at Florida State University in 1977, with a minor in Latin American history.

After receiving his masters degree, Hasemann moved with his second wife from Utila and their daughter to the mainland of Honduras to conduct a series of excavations for IHAH at Colonial-period sites including the 17th-century Sta. Lucia Mission in Comayagua, the 18th-century fortress of San Fernando de Omoa Omoa (1986, Investigaciones Arqueológicas en la Fortuleza San Fernando y el Asentamiento Colonial de Omoa. Estudios Antropológicos e Históricos, No. 6, IHAH), and the 19th-century salt manufacturing site at San Lorenzo. During this period, he also broadened his field experience in the prehistory of Honduras by directing excavations at the sites of Travesia, Curruste, and El Nispero. In 1978, Hasemann began his involvement in the El Cajon archaeological project with Kenneth Hirth (1989, *Prehistoric Cultural Ecology*, The El Cajon Archaeological Investigation and Salvage Project, Vol. 1, co-edited with K. Hirth and G. Lara Pinto). Among other responsibilities, he supervised the regional survey of this hydroelectric dam and 94 km^2 reservoir, a project that eventually culminated in several publications (e.g., 1987, Late Classic Settlement on the Sulaco River, Central Honduras, in *Chiefdoms in the Americas*, edited by R. Drennan and C. Uribe) and his Ph.D. dissertation.

In 1982, Hasemann settled in Tegucigalpa with his third wife and colleague Gloria Lara Pinto, to become a permanent staff archaeologist with IHAH and help raise their two children. Over the next 16 years, he served indefatigably as interim Head of the Department of Anthropological Investigations and then as the Head of the Archaeology Section, personally directing and/or coordinating numerous multi-disciplinary field projects in the central highlands, in the jungles of the Mosquitia, on the Caribbean and Pacific coasts, and in the Bay Islands. Hasemann was well suited to this new challenge, in which he could combine his wide field experience and intimate knowledge of Honduran geography and history with his love of public education and his inate organizational abilities to help steer the course of Honduran archaeology and anthropology into the late 1990s. With this responsibility came many frustrations for Hasemann and for others working with him, but he was unmistakably a team player, if an unconventional one at times.

The professional legacy that Hasemann has left after 20 years of archaeological research in Honduras is a more thorough understanding of the multi-ethnic nature of the SE Maya Periphery

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through time. Some geographical areas on this cultural frontier were explored for almost the first time by Hasemann and his colleagues, firmly placing sites in the Mosquitia and Olancho within the realm of Mesoamerica. Remains from other time periods were almost completely unknown before research coordinated by Hasemann, such as the discovery of the cave site of El Gigante, which conclusively dated human occupation of Central America to approximately B.C. 9000. These varied experiences enabled Hasemann to evaluate the place of Honduran prehistory within the larger Mesoamerican context (1993, *La Zona Central: Regionalismo e Interacción*, co-authored with G. Lara Pinto, La Historia General de Centroamérica, Vol. I, edited by R. Carmack, FLASCO; 1996, *Los Indios de Centroamérica*, co-authored with G. Lara Pinto and F. Cruz, Colección Indios de América, MAPFRE). Far from being an ivory tower archaeologist, however, he encouraged public education and appreciation of the past, initiating the multi-disciplinary study of a National Biological and Archaeological Park at Lake Yojoa and participating in the creation of a regional museum on the island of Roatan.

Hasemann also traveled abroad extensively as IHAH representative and enthusiastic ambassador of Honduran archaeology and history. He participated in ICOMOS conferences on conservation in Canada and Central America, in OAS conferences on Cultural Patrimony and Eco-Tourism in Barbados and the United States, and in a UNESCO conference on underwater archaeology in Cuba, while consulting for international traveling exhibits of Maya art in Germany, Austria, and the United States. In 1986, Hasemann participated in a six-week course in architectural conservation at the Jorge Negrete School of Conservation in Mexico City and was named Director General of the Copan Conservation Project in 1998 by IHAH.

As if not busy enough, Hasemann returned to pursue advanced graduate studies at the University of Kentucky between 1988 and 1993, with Kenneth Hirth and Thomas Dillehay. While a student, he was an instructor in archaeology and served as Assistant State Archaeologist with Burley Clay. His dissertation was accepted posthumously ("Regional Settlement History on the Lower Sulaco River, West Central Honduras: Rural Settlement Theory and Ancient Settlement Pattern in Highland Honduras") and he was awarded his Ph.D. in Anthropology in December of 1998. Hasemann's contributions to Mesoamerican archaeology will certainly last far into the future, but, for those of us who knew and cared about George, his personal legacy is the corpus of memories that have long ago entered into our collective folklore forever.

Boyd Dixon
International Archaeological Research Institute Inc.
Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

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