## Charles C. Di Peso, 1920-1982

Charles C. Di Peso died of cancer on 20 November 1982, at the Tucson Medical Center. Di Peso served for 30 years as Director of the Amerind Foundation, a non-profit research center in Dragoon, Arizona, devoted to the study of Native American culture history. His work on the prehistoric and early historic peoples of southern Arizona and northern Mexico is well known and respected. Di Peso belonged to many professional organizations, including the Society for Historical Archaeology, of which he was a founding member. His participation in the Society and in the profession will be greatly missed.

Di Peso was born on 20 October 1920, in St. Louis, Missouri to Charles Corradino and Emma Klein Di Peso and grew up in Chicago Heights, Illinois. While still in high school, Di Peso was invited by Paul S. Martin of the Chicago Field Museum of Natural History to participate in an archaeological project in Colorado. The experience confirmed an interest in archaeology, which he pursued at Beloit College, working as a student assistant under Paul S. Nesbitt, director of Beloit's Logan Museum. In 1941 Di Peso again joined Paul Martin on a Field Museum expedition, this time the Pine Lawn, New Mexico, project.

Di Peso graduated from Beloit in 1942 with a B.A. in Anthropology and a B.S. in Geology, and in June he married Frances Teague. From 1942 to 1946 Di Peso served in the United States Air Force as a First Lieutenant, Pilot, and Instructor in Advanced Training Course and Instrument Flying. After the war, he went back to archaeology as the Phoenix City Archaeologist. Following a brief hiatus (during which he earned a B.F.T. at the American Institute of Foreign Trade in Glendale, Arizona) Di Peso again returned to archaeology, beginning graduate work at the University of Arizona and accepting in 1948 a position with the Amerind Foundation. Di Peso was promoted to Archaeologist-in-Charge in 1950 and became the Foundation's Director in 1952, the position he held until his death.

Di Peso received his M.A. in Anthropology from the University of Arizona in 1950 and his Ph.D. in 1953. According to Emil W. Haury, his graduate advisor, Di Peso was the first Ph.D. in Anthropology at the University of Arizona, preceding his classmate, Joe Ben Wheat, only because degrees were awarded in alphabetical order.

At the Amerind Foundation Di Peso began an ambitious series of projects, designed to reconstruct the culture history of the native peoples of the American Southwest and North Mexico, the geographical area he later defined and called the Gran Chichimeca. His first major publication (1951) reported his excavations at the Babocomari village site, a late prehistoric site in the San Pedro River drainage of southeastern Arizona. In this first work, as in those that followed, Di Peso presented detailed reporting of the data (with emphasis on artifact use or function) and some controversial interpretations of those data. In order to include the contact and historic periods in the San Pedro sequence, Di Peso next excavated Sobaipuri Indian sites, dating from A.D. 1400 to 1700. The work is especially important to the literature of the historic Southwest. Few reports at this time (1953) provided such detailed information on historic artifacts or devoted so much attention to pertinent historical documents, and the work provided some of the first excavated information on a Spanish presidio site (Santa Cruz de Terrenate).

Di Peso next turned to the Santa Cruz river valley, where he excavated the Paloparado site, which he identified as the historic Pima village of San Cayetano del Tumacacori. In his published report, Di Peso presented what he called an "archeohistoric reconstruction" of the

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culture history of the Pimaria Alta based on documentary sources, oral tradition, and archaeological evidence. The data from the excavation are described thoroughly and organized by categories, emphasizing the function of artifacts in the context of native culture (rather than by strictly material categories—stone, bone, ceramics, etc.) in an effort to reconstruct village life. Di Peso's approach, integrating historical, ethnographic, and archaeological sources, is an important contribution. In addition to reporting the excavation and the archeohistoric reconstruction, Di Peso proposed a reinterpretation of Pimaría Alta culture history, which did not pass unnoticed. Di Peso restricted the use of the name Hohokam to an intrusive population out of Mexico, which moved into the area around 1000 A.D. The resident Ootam (a new term for the ancestors of the Upper Pima, previously identified as Hohokam) co-existed with eventually expelled the Hohokam between A.D. 1250 and 1300. At the Paloparado site, Di Peso identified two distinct occupations, a Hohokam and an Upper Pima (late Ootam), the latter of which was contacted by the Spanish and came to be called San Cayetano.

Di Peso returned to the San Pedro River valley for additional excavation to further amplify the history of southern Arizona. In the report Di Peso presented archaeological evidence for the occupation of the Reeve Ruin site by a western Pueblo people and discussed Pueblo-Ootam cultural contacts.

Di Peso's best known and certainly most ambitious work was in the Casas Grandes valley of northwestern Chihuahuha, Mexico. The research was a joint project of the Amerind Foundation and the Instituto Nacional de Antropologia e Historia of Mexico. After 15 years of work, Di Peso and his colleagues published their results in the eight volumes of Casas Grandes: A Fallen Trading Center of the Gran Chichimeca. Di Peso proposed the term Gran Chichimeca for the geographical area of the southwestern United States and northern Mexico to replace the term Greater Southwest. In the first three volumes, Di Peso presented the culture history of Casas Grandes (Paquimé) from 10,000 B.C. through the beginning of Apache raids in 1686 on the mission at the site, San Antonio de Padua de Casas Grandes. Throughout his discussion, Di Peso emphasized the impact of external cultural contacts, expecially trade contracts with the native people of the south. For each period, Di Peso presented a historical narrative of the Gran Chichimeca and contemporaneous Mesoamerica, along with detailed archaeological evidence, organized according to functional categories as in his previous publications. Volumes Four through Eight of the series, co-authored with John B. Rinaldo and Gloria Fenner, provided a very detailed catalogue of architectural data and artifacts in the traditional format, organized by material. The work is clearly a major contribution to the literature of the area, and Di Peso's extensive use of Spanish documents and attention to historic architecture and artifacts make the work a major resource for scholars of Spanish Borderlands ethnohistory and archaeology.

Though his work was often controversial, Di Peso's contribution to his profession did not go unacknowledged. He was awarded the Alfred Vincent Kidder Award for achievement in American archaeology by the American Anthropological Association in 1959, was made a fellow of Sigma Xi in 1961, and was awarded a Doctor of Science degree in 1970 by his undergraduate school, Beloit College. He served as President of the Society for American Archaeology in 1972–1973. In 1975, following the publication of the Casas Grandes volumes, Di Peso received the Governor's Commendation from the State of Chihuahua, Mexico, for his investigations at Casas Grandes, and a Special Award for Excellence from the Border Regional Library Association (El Paso, Texas) for the publication itself. Di Peso held many executive positions and appointments, including a position on the Board of Governors of Cochise College for nearly 20 years. In recognition of his service, the College Learning Resource Center was dedicated as the Charles Di Peso Library.

In 1981 Di Peso had surgery for stomach problems and was told he had cancer. For the following year, he continued to work, nearly completing the manuscript on his investigations at Wind Mountain, a prehistoric site he believed to be a Casas Grandes satellite on a trade route from Casas Grandes to Mesa Verde. (The Amerind Foundation plans to complete and publish the report.) At the time of his death, Di Peso was planning a new research project in the Gila River valley.

Di Peso is survived by his wife, Frances, his sons Charles and David, two grandchildren, and his sister. Memorial contributions in his name may be made to the Amerind Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 248, Dragoon, Arizona 85609, or to the American Cancer Society.

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