

The 1993 Preston E. James Eminent Latin Americanist Career Award



Daniel W. Gade

Daniel W. Gade is the recipient of the 1993 Preston E. James Eminent Latin Americanist Career Award. Professor Gade is an eminent scholar of the cultural and historical geography of rural landscapes. He is recognized internationally as a leading authority on Latin America and especially the Andes and its core regions of Peru and Bolivia. As a member of the geography faculty at the University of Vermont for more than twenty-five years Professor Gade has participated fully as an academic and professional citizen. He has regularly taught, supervised students, reviewed and edited, and conducted a prodigious research career. His research oeuvre of highly original and significant works is represented by well over one hundred publications in professional journals and books.

Professor Gade's renowned volume on *Plants, Man, and the Land in the Vilcanota Valley* published in 1975 established a landmark for scholarship in the sub-field of "cultural historical plant geography." This volume offers a definitive description of the biogeography, use, and history of scores of cultivated and wild plants in the southern Peruvian landscape of Quechua-speaking peasants and villagers. *Plants, Man, and the Land* was derived from his dissertation filed in 1966 at the University of Wisconsin in Madison under the supervision of major professors William M. Denevan and Henry Sterling.

Daniel W. Gade's research for this doctoral dissertation was based on one-and-a-half years of pioneering field studies and detailed library and archival research undertaken between June 1964 and December 1965 in the bedazzling Vilcanota Valley. This comprehensive work set a new standard for Andeanist pursuits in geography ---as well as in related fields such as ethnobotany, human and cultural ecology, and ecological

anthropology --through its unstinting scholarship, the originality of its insights, and its inspired methodology blending extensive fieldwork with the scrutiny of other ethnographic and written sources.

In addition to his definitive studies on the agricultural plants, technologies, and techniques of the central Andes, Professor Gade set forth new findings on various other aspects of cultural and historical geography in these rural mountain redoubts: llamas and alpacas, guinea pigs and Iberian swine, earthquake cults, lightening, and petty crop theft, dye-producing insects, the threat of genetic erosion, and the demographic and environmental effects of pre-European disease and colonial resettlement. Recently he has turned his attention **[end p. 149]** on the Andes to themes of long-term settlement and the geography of social power and cultural identity.

This expansive range of topical interests belied a continuous connection of Daniel W. Gade's scholarship to a pair of vital geographical traditions. The Sauerian tradition and Carl Sauer himself, who directed a seminar at the University of Wisconsin that Gade attended immediately upon his return from Peru in 1966, have exerted a primary influence on him. Influence of that seminar was reinforced by Gade's principal mentors in graduate school --William Denevan, Jonathan Sauer, and Frederick Simoons--- who all belonged to this tradition that emphasized the cultural and historical shaping of rural life, landscapes, and resources. Gade has also followed in the geographical tradition of Carl Troll, Alexander von Humboldt, and ultimately the sixteenth and seventeenth chroniclers such as José de Acosta and Bernabó Cobo to whom he and many other Andeanists have owed their abiding interest in the ecology of agriculture, land use, and settlement in the montane tropics.

A rooting in these rich traditions have enabled Professor Gade to pursue his trademark of multi-faceted scholarship and, as he terms it, "universal curiosity." It led him to undertake extensive travel and research outside the central Andes of Peru and Bolivia, activities that have been as important to his Andeanist perspective as they were in their own right. His other studies have considered topics such as Brazil's water-buffalo, horsemeat and living fences in France, Italian lemon gardens, forests of wild orange trees in Paraguay, the history of exploration in Ethiopia, land and resource use in Madagascar and the island of Rodrigues, and not least weedy plants in his home state of Vermont. The truly symphonic scale of his unique research career reaches even to studies of geography's history embodied in such figures as O. F. Cook and George Perkins Marsh.

The sound scholarship, careful originality, and geographical imagination that are consistently present in Professor Gade's oeuvre have assured it a lasting influence on Latin Americanist geography.

Karl S. Zimmerer