While symbolism is found in art, literature, religion, psychiatry, and many other areas of life, a very extensive and significant aspect of symbolism is the concern of political science. The essentially political nature of vexillology and the necessity of studying flags from the standpoint of political science derive from this little-studied subject of political symbolism.

In recent decades political scientists have become more cognizant that the spheres of behavior which may legitimately be labeled as political are much wider than had previously been assumed. Political science ultimately must analyze literally everything having to do with decision-making phenomena in society. At one time political science was interested only in formal institutions, such as legislatures and constitutions and political parties. Now, through the influence of behaviorism and sociology, we have come to recognize that all artifacts, actors, and actions which affect politics are political.

Symbolism is among the areas which only rather recently have been conceded as being important to politics. Political symbols themselves are not new—the world has known them for hundreds if not thousands of years. Rather, it is the case that they never before were considered by political scientists as legitimate subjects for study. There seem to be two reasons for this which it is important to take note of.

First, in outward appearance the political symbol—flags being the most important of these, at least in the modern era—seems to be mere decoration to “real” events, an outward aspect that has no deep importance. This imputed superficiality or triviality has meant that, until recently, there had been no attempt made on the part of social scientists to work out a systematic, theoretical explanation of what role symbols play in politics. Having no hypotheses, no theoretical framework allowing them to deal with the subject, political scientists have simply not known what to do with flags, how to think about them.

A further problem is that those who have dealt most directly with graphic symbols, in almost all cases, have been unfamiliar with political science. Those who have written flag books (and books on heraldry and seals and various other aspects of symbolism) have known little or nothing about political science, just as the political

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Editor’s Note / Note de la rédaction

IT IS A GREAT HONOR TO INTRODUCE THIS LONG-AWAITED THIRD ISSUE OF Flag Research Quarterly, dedicated to the work and legacy of Whitney Smith. Whitney’s immeasurable contribution to the study of flags is no doubt seen in every article published in Raven and FRQ, as we who continue the study he inaugurated are always treading on paths he cleared. For this reason, the Association’s publication committee felt it appropriate to commemorate and celebrate the transfer of the Flag Research Center collection to the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at The University of Texas by reprinting two of Dr. Smith’s seminal works on vexillology that articulate the foundational concepts of the discipline, yet are not readily available to current and future generations of flag scholars. May his words, which have not dimmed in the decades since their first publication, continue to illuminate our way to a future where the study of flags will be more robust, more inclusive, and more firmly secured in scholarly discourse.

Alongside Dr. Smith’s articles, short essays by Dr. Scot Guenter and Hugh Brady contextualize the work that has been and will continue to be done, as the Flag Research Center collection transitions into the next phase of its existence. Dr. Guenter provides the long view, drawing a historical sketch of vexillology and explaining the great potential embodied in this historic moment, as Dr. Smith’s life work is not only preserved, but made available to students and scholars on an unprecedented scale. Hugh Brady provides insight into the plan to move the FRC to Texas and describes the monumental efforts carried out by multiple individuals and organizations to make Dr. Smith’s dream of an institutional home for his life’s work a reality.

On a final, personal note, I recall meeting with Whitney at the Flag Research Center some years ago, along with my parents and my wife. Whitney remarked to my father how pleased he was to see that my mother and my wife were there with us. Noticing Emily and I sharing a quick embrace on the porch before we left, he told my father how wonderful it was to see young people in love. While we who study flags most often celebrate Whitney’s mind, we should also recognize his heart. He was drawn to flags because he wanted to explore how they participate in the human experience, because studying flags was, and is, an underappreciated way of studying what it means to be human. Let us all follow this example when exploring flags in all of their dimensions, to learn all that these mysterious objects have to teach us about ourselves.

KENNETH HARTVIGSEN

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FLAG RESEARCH QUARTERLY / REVUE TRIMESTRIELLE DE RECHERCHE EN VEXILLOGIE

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Smith: Theses needed to avoid “random or purposeless” activity

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scientist has, as a rule, known little or nothing about symbolism.

In brief the subject of political symbolism has consistently lacked any rigorous, scholarly application of social-scientific principles. The present reexamination and reformulation of the subject leads to some tentative hypotheses which, if accepted and acted upon, will influence the way in which vexillology develops in the future.

In the broadest sense a symbol is anything that conveys to the human mind a kind of meaning other than its own. If one looks at a rock and thinks only “rock,” there is no symbolization. If one looks at Plymouth Rock and thinks of Pilgrims and the founding of the first English colony in Massachusetts, the rock is functioning as a symbol, i.e. it means something other than what it itself is. It is important to note, of course, that anything can be a symbol in that sense because anything can, potentially, be used to recall something to someone else.

Not all objects which serve as symbols are created by the human mind, but the process of symbolization exists only in the minds of men and women. Red means revolution not because that is an essential, inherent characteristic of redness, but because people have chosen to associate the two, color and quality. There are no inherent, immutable symbols since the mind, through social interaction, can be changed. The differing meanings of the swastika are but one example of this fact. The chief characteristic of signals, signs, and symptoms is that they originate in nature—that is to say, when we see a certain appearance of the skin, it is a symptom of some physical condition—not just an attribution conceived by our minds, without any organic relationship to the condition. We recognize the meaning, but we have not created it. In contrast the true symbol is anything which has been consciously devised or employed by a human being in order to recall to his/her own mind (or the mind of somebody else) some object or concept. A further essential element in almost all symbols lies in the fact that the mental image they produce leads people to particular attitudes or acts. In other words, symbols induce people to do things.

The temptation is strong to formulate categories of political symbols on the basis of their outward forms. When we look at the world of symbols, it is very easy to say that it is divided into flags, seals, coats of arms, uniforms, medals, and so forth. The more difficult but more useful and more sophisticated typology is not by form—not by what Aristotle would have called the ‘formal characteristics,’ i.e. ones involving outward appearances—but by function.

If for no other reason, function must take precedence over form in the categorization of symbols because a single symbolic form (the uniform for example) may and usually does play a number of different roles. A given form does not necessarily always correspond to the same function; the uniform may serve for identification, for threat, for enforcement, or the creation of loyalty. Moreover, a single function—for example, the assertion of political independence—may be fulfilled by a great variety of symbolic forms. A nation proclaiming its independence may do so by the issuing of postage stamps or a set of coins, by the hoisting of a flag, by a declaration of independence, by changing the uniforms of its soldiers, and/or by one of a number of other things. To pay attention only to the outward forms of symbols, moreover, in many cases diverts us from the heart of the matter.

Based on broad functional differences, we can distinguish three kinds of symbolism in politics. First there is referential symbolism, in which the symbol simply transfers attention from one thing to another. For example the elephant, in the normal context of American politics, is no more and no less than a reference to the Republican Party. It recalls without giving any value judgement.

Condensation is involved in many usages of referential symbolism. The verbal referential symbol “free elections” has a referent or set of meanings; if they are written into a treaty, as long as everyone agrees to the same meaning, this symbol—“free elections”—means a great economy of style.

Because referential symbols have a one-to-one relationship to the thing or things symbolized—they refer directly to an idea—they tend in politics to be “unstable,” quickly transformed into one of the other two forms of symbolism.

The most important category (at least in politics) is what may be called “hortative symbolism.” Symbolism of this kind goes beyond mere reference and conveys some positive or negative idea about the thing symbolized, encouraging the individual or group which receives the symbol to do something about it. If, for example, there is a national flag displayed on a speaker’s stand, this influences the audience to think of that individual and his/her views as patriotic. It may be used by someone who wants to disguise the fact that the ideas expressed under the flag actually are subversive of the nation’s interests or it may be used by someone who wishes to alter the opinions of the audience about what should be considered as patriotic.

“Interpretive symbolism” is the third category. Through this symbolism we are (potentially) gaining knowledge, actually increasing our appreciation for something through the use of symbols because they interpret for us the nature of ideas or of things. A coronation ceremony exemplifies this. The process of having the individual enter a special hall, bow before a high religious official, and receive certain kinds of regalia is interpretative of the imputed nature of the sovereign. Through the
coronation symbolism we gain an appreciation for what a monarch is all about. Without it the king would be less of a king, because we would understand less well just what it was that he was supposed to be and do.

There are other ways of analyzing the subject of symbolism which must be considered. Formal characteristics, as I have suggested, are not the most important but they do deserve some attention. There are four categories useful in political science. In verbal symbolism use is made of words, phrases, slogans, documents—even war cries and mottoes. This is perhaps the most common type of political symbolism. Studies have been undertaken, for instance, of newspaper editorials and the way in which they rely on certain verbal symbols—“democracy” and “free enterprise” or, in a Communist country, “democratic centralism” and “proletariat”—to inculcate certain attitudes into people.

There are also concrete symbols: these are actual objects which have symbolic as well as practical functions. The Valley of the Fallen in Spain, which Franco created as a symbol of his struggle to establish the Spanish State, is one example; another is the mausoleum of Lenin in Red Square. In every major city there are found contrasting or complementary symbols of a concrete nature. Washington has its Capitol Building, Paris the Arc de Triomphe, Kampuchea the ruins of Angkor Wat.

Active symbolism is where individuals do something which is symbolic. Saluting, for example, has no substantive object or function. It does nothing except that, as a symbol, it indicates loyalty or submission or respect.

Finally there is graphic and plastic symbolism—“graphic” meaning a drawing or illustrated object, “plastic” referring to something which has a motive and/or tactile nature. Flags are both graphic and plastic symbols. Their composition (colors and designs, individually and collectively) makes a graphic statement of symbolic import, yet an essential element in their transmission of information lies in the fact that a flag drapes, waves, flags, otherwise moves. Thus when we illustrate a flag, we eliminate its plasticity and reduce its symbolism to the graphic aspect, i.e. the design only. In doing so we are changing the formal nature of the flag and what it has the power to accomplish.

There exist a great number of ways in which symbols play important roles in politics. They are, for example, significant elements in the input systems within a given political structure. The masses in every society, not normally actively involved in politics, nevertheless want certain things from their governments and they frequently express these in terms of symbolic demand. A group of people marching with placards, uttering certain slogans, and bearing armbands expresses some kind of political demand to the ruling elite, but so do bumper stickers, lapel pins, and almost every kind of flag display.

Symbols are also important in the output of the political elite (including responses to input demands), sometimes even to the exclusion of measures actually dealing with the substance of the demand.

Recent speeches by General Jaruzelski, for example, have been made in settings whose symbols heavily emphasize Polish nationalism. On the other hand, in the American system it would be very upsetting to the public to see their President dressed like Jaruzelski in military uniform because, traditionally, it simply isn’t done. Americans have the idea that no matter how bad things get in their country, the President is a civilian officer—Commander in Chief perhaps, but essentially a civilian. Therefore, symbolically it would be frightening to see the President in military uniform, even though in substance it is still just another suit of clothes. In the same vein other nations have regular ceremonial occasions replete with symbols.

Every single country has adopted symbols; none has failed, for instance, to adopt a national flag. None has failed to have some kind of official symbols on its coins and postage stamps. Affirmation of the values of the society and/or state are inherent in the uses of all such symbols. There is also a constant dispensing of honors, awards, and other symbols whose meaning in the political context is to reaffirm rank and hierarchy, to command duty, and to maintain loyalty.

Symbols constitute a means of communication; they are tools in the media of social intercourse, a way in which individuals and groups get ideas across. Symbols also can help constitute a pattern of mutual comprehensibility. Each country has a style of politics, a system of social life, which is different from the style in another country.

The kinds of flags, campaign posters, lapel buttons, slogans, rallies, uniforms, and mottoes that are used are entirely different from one country to another, but they do have a common functional characteristic: familiar forms of symbols justify demands and actions, establish their legitimacy.

At a higher level, each society has its own “political culture” whereby expectations are built up on the part of the people and of the government which must be fulfilled if stability is to be maintained. Every nation—or at least those whose masses have political awareness—has a worldview, which is created by special symbols and maintained in terms of them. Secondly, each society has one or more myths which spell out the proper roles and actions, legitimate ends and means of government.

The myth of authority allows the head of state—who is after all only a human being—to take certain god-like decisions, to undertake certain actions which other individuals are not allowed to do. Political theorist Jean-Jacques Rousseau pointed out the necessity of this even in the totalitarian state when he said the strongest are yet never sufficiently strong to insure mastership unless they find a means of transforming force into right and obedience into duty. Symbols play a major role in that process.
Rousseau’s dictum frames the problem of every state, democratic or authoritarian—how to transform force, the naked, brute ability to get people to do what the elite wants them to do, into right, where to say a certain word or to use some kind of symbol affects the beliefs of people and commands their obedience without force. The legitimization of the state and of a specific regime are especially important in new countries where there is a tendency to rely more on weaponry than on some kind of symbol system. The reason, very simply, is that the symbol systems don’t exist in many new countries. A great deal of the nation-building process in modern Asia and Africa involves the creation and strengthening of symbols of all kinds, verbal, active, graphic, plastic, and concrete as well as political myths and ceremonies.

The flag has been defined by one author as “the strongest and most independent of time of all the symbols,” that is to say, in any given situation it is the most forceful symbol that can be used and its form is something which is independent of all history. In fact the flag has been subject to cultural change and growth and historically was not the primary political symbol that it is today. Although we find symbols in most urban civilizations, past and present, there have been essential differences over time. Our information on the subject is still very meager; we cannot, for example, yet answer the question of when flags first arose. Was it when tribes which had been nomadic became sedentary? When they first went to war? When they became commercial and went out on the seas and traded with other peoples? Or was it urban civilization—that is, the building of cities—that was in some sense the prerequisite for the use of flags?

Regardless of their origin, flags have long been political symbols of the hortative variety. Flags represent or identify the existence, presence, authority, loyalty, glory, aspirations, or status of a person, organization, or political entity. They may be used to honor or dishonor, to encourage or warn, to promise or threaten, to commemorate or deny. They are employed to remind and incite and defy the child in school, the soldier, the voter, the enemy, the ally, the stranger.

Flags can authenticate a claim, territory, or possession; dramatize a political demand; help to establish a common framework within which interest groups are willing to confront one another and work out mutually agreeable solutions. They were used to assert the identity of an individual group or political entity long before the hoisting of a flag at United Nations headquarters came to be an expression of national “coming of age.” They have long been used to coerce masses of people on a political question, the use of flags in Nazi Germany being only the most obvious example. Flags have served to promote the glorification and sanctification of the state.

Plasticity allows flags to attract, hold, and focus attention on a particular political message which can be made in almost unlimited numbers of situations—on the street, indoors, at congresses, in schoolrooms, meeting rooms, even in outer space. Compactness, brilliance of color or design, simplicity of form, ease of identification and reproduction, arresting mobility—all of these are factors favoring the effectiveness with which flags are used in a political situation.

Historically, there are two functions with which flags are associated. First we find the flag, as a political emblem, is ever concerned with the unity and identity of an “in-group.” Any symbol, but particularly a flag, provides a label—“We belong to this group as opposed to that group and we use this symbol to show that we belong, that we are united, that we have a common identity, heritage, and destiny.” Evidence of this fact is found in situations where a flag is being developed. In 1964, Canada went through a major national debate to find out just what “Canadian” meant. The new flag chosen emphasized unity by avoiding all symbols associated with the ethnic constituents of the Canadian population. The same kind of political struggle over symbols occurred in the 1920s when white South Africans tried to define for themselves what their country was. The statement made by the flag may be translated “We are Europeans, first and foremost, and, secondly, we are from Dutch and British stock; furthermore we are proud of these traditions.” Many other nations have been through the same process at one time or another.

Another element inherent in flags is communion of the group with, and its participation in, some kind of higher order of existence. In other words, there is a sacred element in almost every flag. The people who use that symbol believe it is something more than simply the cloth of which it is manufactured, more than simply the number of people who live in a territory. The flag incarnates something spiritual; it embodies aspirations and hopes for the future; it implies goals and ways of reaching these objectives; it means some kind of participation in a prior understanding of national destiny, usually based or tradition.

It is not surprising that flags should be considered as having a sacred nature because like other symbols they have always been cherished as sources of power. The use of symbols is usually related to what ancestors passed down about the origins of society (the sun of the Japanese flag) or associated with nature and the sources of life and strength (the tree of the Lebanese flag) or with the totems and deities of the particular land (the Soyombo of the Mongolian flag). In most cultures the earliest form of the flag is essentially a religious symbol attached to a pole so that it can be carried, so that it will be higher than anything else, and so that it will be easily visible. Even today there is a retention of this tradition in the use of special finials (emblems at the tops of poles like the royal crest on British military colors) and in other symbols.

It would be possible to continue in this vein with further
facts about the nature and uses of flags. More importantly, however, vexillology needs to develop and test major and minor hypotheses about flags and their study so that the activity of vexillologists will not be random or purposeless. What is presented here can only be considered a preliminary formulation that will require rigorous testing, both from the standpoint of logic and from the standpoint of correspondence with actual facts. The first question we must ask ourselves is what constitutes the fundamental nature of flags. Regarding this, the following theses are advanced:

1. Flags are artifacts conceived of and constructed by human beings interacting within their cultures.
2. All flags are messages of intentional (and, sometimes, unintentional) content made by one or more individuals and addressed to themselves and/or others; i.e. flags are a form of social communication.
3. The purpose of the study of flags is to understand more accurately and more completely the nature of human society.

If these are conceded, further theses may be set forth concerning the nature of the study of flags:

4. The study of flags is part of the social sciences.
5. The study of flags must be undertaken in coordination with, or at least with an understanding of, other social sciences.
6. No understanding of flags in general or of a particular flag is complete until the relationships it has with the society in which it appears are understood.
7. No understanding of human society in general or of a particular society is complete until such flags as it uses are understood.
8. Until the study of flags is taken into account the social sciences are incomplete.

Acceptance of these leads to propositions implicit in the social scientific nature of our work:

9. The study of flags must be undertaken from a scientific standpoint.
10. Objectivity, comprehensiveness, openmindedness, and rationalism are necessary for the study of flags.
11. The study of flags must be value-neutral and analytical, not hortative or normative.
12. Hypotheses derived from observation must be tested by further observation, by logical analysis, and by experimentation. Hypotheses found wanting must be revised accordingly or discarded.
13. Scientific knowledge of flags presupposes the existence of accurate data concerning flag design, symbolism, usage, and history.
14. Regularities, similarities, special cases, changes over time, causal relationships, and social functions of flags require statistical analysis.
15. Scientific knowledge of flags presumes that data are organized into meaningful statements which convey an understanding about flags above and beyond the information directly implicit in the data themselves.
16. Recognition of the legitimacy of the scientific approach to the study of flags means neither that such a study is completely autonomous nor that it is completely subsumed in the study of another subject.

Finally, practical experience in the matter suggests that the importance of the following be recognized and taken into consideration:

17. The study of data on any aspect of flags does not impute the existence of, nor must it entail the development of, a partisanship towards the existence (or maintenance or expansion) of the forms and functions under study. Promoting flags is different from seeking to understand them.
18. The designing and making of flags, the display of flags, promotion of flag usage, collecting of flags, the use of flags to achieve certain ends, and analysis of the relative artistic merits of various flags are not subsumed in the study of flags, although the study of any of the above activities is.
19. Involvement in non-scientific aspects of flags, especially for ideological or commercial ends, may distort perspectives of data and/or relevance in the pursuit of scientific knowledge of the subject.
20. The value of a parallel study of related symbols (such as heraldry) is proportional to its adherence to the scientific principles and procedures applicable to the study of flags itself.

Since vexillology is still very much in its infancy, it is impossible at present to say what directions it will take in the future. Indeed it is not at all certain that it will achieve the "escape velocity" necessary for launching as a recognized scientific discipline. A century from now it is possible that the study of flags will be considered exactly as it was a century ago—an antiquarian curiosity suitable as a hobby for children or the retired, but scarcely a fit subject for the serious consideration of adult women and men. If so, the failure will be ours for having inadequately developed the inherent possibilities of the subject.

The present century has seen the growth of sciences—nuclear physics, selenology, social psychology, and anthropology to cite but a few—scarcely imagined by previous generations. On the other hand the facts forming the bases for those studies have existed for thousands of years—as have the facts about flags which those who call themselves vexillologists must address.

The Next 25 Years of World Vexillology

By WHITNEY SMITH

Ralph Bartlett in his excellent presentation “25 Years of World Vexillology” made clear that we have gone through two stages in the study of flags. The era of “pre-vexillology” was characterized by individuals interested in flags who collected and wrote and published but who, for the most part, had no contacts with other individuals and who never thought of their subject matter as a coherent body of scientific knowledge. That era ended with what might be called “the birthday of vexillology” on 1 October 1961 with the publication of the first issue of The Flag Bulletin, reinforced four months later by the formation of the Flag Research Center.

The subsequent “developmental stage” of vexillology has been characterized by the formation of institutions, associations, and the [Fédération internationale des associations vexillologiques] itself; the holding of regular meetings and congresses; the development of preliminary terminology and scientific hypotheses; the publication of vexillological serials; and other forms of interaction among those consciously pursuing the nascent scientific discipline of vexillology. All these indices suggest that vexillology is real and that it is here to stay as part of human society.

Now a quarter century after the inception of vexillology, we are or should be on the brink of a new era in which past achievements will be consolidated and expanded and new goals projected and achieved. What those directions are, exactly how this new stage is constituted, and how we may carry vexillology into the 21st century—these are the points to be addressed in this presentation. It may seem from the success of our publications and associations and congresses that vexillology as an institution is secure, but unfortunately this is not the case. To begin we should consider some of the shortcomings, some of the failures, some of the inadequacies of our present situation.

Lest this review seem unnecessarily negative, the author wishes to stress that he believes the achievements of our mutual efforts have been very impressive indeed. In a remarkably short space of time vexillology has acquired characteristics which many other disciplines took decades longer to attain. This has been done, moreover, without external encouragement and support: the concepts, programs, and results are entirely due to the enthusiasm, hard work, and imagination of individuals basically motivated by their own interest in the subject.

More remarkable still, there has been almost no monetary support for these enterprises from foundations or governments or similar sources and consequently, unlike almost every other discipline in the entire realm of the sciences, vexillology has financed its own development. This is the more unusual because very few of the individuals involved have had the possibility of working full-time on vexillology, but have been forced to find marginal opportunities while maintaining a full commitment to another vocation. In this light, what must surprise an outside observer is not that we face substantial challenges in the future, but that we have traveled so far in so short a time in an undertaking which commands such meager resources. It is to encourage this process that the author turns to some of the largely unrecognized problems we must face if progress is to continue.

Simply stated, so far we have not achieved an organizational infrastructure sufficient to guarantee thorough, permanent, and expanding vexillological activity. No current vexillological institution possesses a building of its own, has paid full-time employees, or disposes of an adequate budget. Realistically speaking, the advancement of vexillology today depends on a small number of key individuals and the personal economic situation, health, age, and interest in the subject of each of them has a direct and on-going impact on what is achieved.

In the few cases where flags are dealt with in a solid institutional structure with regular housing, staff, budget, and programs, the contributions to vexillology are minimal. Government and quasi-government establishments like the Institute of Heraldry of the United States Army and Britain’s College of Arms devote only a small amount of attention to flags and generally limit themselves to vexillography (flag design). They have no regular publications, no outreach programs; even public access to their collections is severely limited. Certain organizations—such as the Japan Flag Society, the Australian National Flag Association, and the National Flag Foundation—are almost exclusively dedicated to propaganda on behalf of patriotic causes in their native countries. Manufacturers of flags and museums with large flag collections have other concerns, which prevent them from devoting time and effort to the study of flags.

In light of the dependence on part time volunteer efforts, achievements in vexillology not surprisingly have been sporadic, largely uncoordinated, and all too often impermanent. There is too much duplication of effort, the repetition of research and publication diluting meager resources still further. Considering the total audience reached, there are simply too many vexillological serials and too often much of their content
is rather shallow. Possible support resources have not been exploited and modern technology is almost completely absent from vexillological activities. In a word, what we need is institutions which have lives of their own—budgets, programs, collections, and professional personnel who can carry on regardless of the specific individuals involved.

As a consequence of its present status, vexillology is not recognized in the world at large. We cannot consider that we have been successful in our endeavors until the principles of vexillology are known and taken into account by university departments of history, political science, social psychology, art history, communications theory, semiotics, and similar disciplines. Up to the present, we must admit that in large part our efforts and accomplishments have resulted in greater personal satisfaction than in practical applications; moreover the usefulness of flag study has so far proved of greater commercial value than scholarly benefit. If we are serious in claiming that satisfaction than in practical applications; moreover the use of flags in the understanding of human society.

There are some specific problems which must also be addressed. Many a collection, built up laboriously over a lifetime by an individual vexillologist, has disappeared at his death—scattered, locked away inaccessibly, or burned. Even in the best of cases such a collection ends up in a library which has many more significant concerns: thus there is no development, no building on the past, no real attempt made to utilize that collection to advance vexillology. In the worst case the knowledge and experience of the individual are totally destroyed. If he or she concentrated on a time or subject or area from which other sources of documentation are lacking, it may literally be impossible for us to reconstruct that knowledge.

In the past 25 years many useful and interesting flag hooks have appeared, yet no publisher has made a clear and firm commitment to vexillology as a topic. Even the updating of books on national flags becomes increasingly difficult due to the expense of color plates and the desire of international publishing conglomerates to get the greatest profit out of every book, regardless of scholarly standards. The Flag Research Center in a modest way has tried to serve as a specialized vexillological publisher, but it has had its own problems as many of you are well aware. The Flag Bulletin has too often been late, technical problems have created annoying situations, books have gone out of print without revised editions being issued, and new undertakings have been promised more often than they have been realized. Fifteen years ago, for example, the author had high hopes that Fort Independence in Boston Harbor would be fully restored with state funds and be made available as a flag museum and research facility. Ten years ago I worked closely with Brown University for use of their resources in a similar direction. Neither of these materialized and vexillology still does not have a secure “home” anywhere in the world.

Other FIAV associations and institutions have had difficulties; some which ten or twenty years ago seemed healthy and full of promise have turned into shadow operations or have disappeared entirely. We have spent too much time in the FIAV General Assemblies on what might be called political details and too little on vexillology itself. We have had attempts by small groups to manipulate FIAV to promote their own ends—as, for example, in the “anti-Congresses” which were held in 1969 and 1981 in competition with the official International Congresses of Vexillology. A similar attempt in 1989, when the 13th International Congress of Vexillology is held in Melbourne, Australia, would tarnish the golden achievement implicit in this spread to a new part of the world by the community of flag scholars.

Finally, it would be foolish to assume that significance to the rest of the world, institutionalization of efforts, and a detailed program for action can be attempted without adequate funding. It is extraordinary that we have achieved so much with so little; it is encouraging to think how much more we could do with an infusion of funds which, by the world’s standards, must be considered very modest indeed. While money can never be a substitute for intelligence, imagination, and dedication, it can go a long way towards making sure that we get the best results out of the human and documentary resources at our disposal

None of the shortcomings of the present situation can be overcome without a program, a vision, a master plan according to which we can set our goals, measure our success, marshal our resources, and interact effectively with the rest of mankind. Just as in the era of pre-vexillology the concept of that discipline was implicit in much of what was done, so in the developmental stage of world vexillology during the past quarter century we have frequently acted as if there were a consensus about where we were heading and how. That needs now to be made explicit: FIAV and its members as well as private vexillologists need to hammer out and put into operation a coherent framework which—subject to appropriate change in its evolution—will consolidate our past and guarantee our future.

In 1984, a questionnaire was circulated through The Flag Bulletin to vexillologists across the world. Based on an analysis of the responses which they so generously gave and on input from many other individuals—including those who attended a special meeting at the 1983 conference of the North American Vexillological Association in New York City—it is now possible to present here a preliminary overview for Flagplan 2011. The point of this enterprise is to set concrete goals to be realized
no later than the 50th anniversary of vexillology in the year 2011, to recommend procedures for their achievement, and—hopefully—to stimulate discussion and action on the part of vexillologists in all parts of the world leading to the necessary modifications in Flagplan 2011 and eventual realization. In this way we can reasonably expect to meet the needs of vexillology for the 21st century.

The plan posits the creation of a non-profit International Foundation for Vexillology. Assuming that the promise implicit in Flagplan 2011 is realized, what might we hope to find in that year as we gather for the 24th International Congress of Vexillology as guests of this new foundation? First, we note that it has substantial headquarters of its own, although possibly operating as part of another institution such as a university. That the site of the headquarters, the buildings on it, and the activities within are devoted exclusively to vexillology is evident to everyone who approaches. This is not a war memorial nor a local historical shrine nor a flag factory nor a library which happens to include flags nor a private home or government office which happens to encompass research. More than just a location, a physical structure, a collection of artifacts, this is clearly the international focal point for vexillology.

Both the general public and specialists find the facilities and activities of the foundation’s headquarters aimed at making the world of flags available to the fullest. There are exhibit halls, reading rooms, a preservation laboratory, conference rooms, and an auditorium, as well as an outdoor flag display and a gift shop. The serious student finds ready access to the library stacks, the storage areas, and the offices of the foundation’s personnel. Much of the material is already familiar to the visitor because he or she has had access through the computers, videodiscs, and equipment not today available which have been made available by the foundation to associated institutions across the world. Nevertheless the thrill of seeing the original fabric, or handling the actual book, and of meeting the leading individuals in flag study inevitably draws people to this vexillological mecca.

The collection of the Flag Research Center is permanently housed at the foundation and, projecting into the future on the basis of its past growth, we are not surprised to find about 5,000 real flags (not replicas), a library of 50,000 volumes, and over a half million individual documents. There are prints, posters, charts, magazine articles, monographs, manuscripts, photographs, clippings, slides, recordings, films, note cards, paintings, postcards, stamps and coins, games and puzzles, and every other conceivable kind of flag-related item. Relevant material from related fields such as heraldry and sphragistics is also included. Everything is fully catalogued and accessible by technology so that the efforts of everyone who visits—from scholars to school children—can go directly into the creative process of utilizing information without wasting countless hours in first assembling it. The flag manufacturer, the flag collector, the flag designer, the flag hobbyist, and others find it possible to achieve total immersion in the shapes and colors and symbols and usages and history and meanings of every flag that ever existed for which data can be found anywhere in the world.

The foundation is not static, however, awaiting an inquiry or visit. Writers, artists, textile and document technicians, photographers, editors, and many other specialists work there full time. Research, educational outreach, technical services, publications, and future planning are constantly carried on. It is impossible to detail here all the distinct activities envisaged by Flagplan 2011, but one typical example may be cited. The foundation brings promising young scholars from countries where little or no vexillological research has been undertaken and gives them specialized training. Once prepared, the new team returns to Paraguay (or Mongolia or Iceland) and begins a comprehensive survey of their local resources. Every library, museum, historical institute, government office, and private collection which is willing to cooperate has a thorou supplied inventory made of its flag related resources. A permanent record on color film is made with one copy remaining in the country and another going to the foundation for safekeeping, utilization in publications, and distribution to interested persons. No other scientific study matches this program in thoroughness of document collection and preservation. With this as a basis, scholarly analysis and the formulation of scientific principles are made with an assurance of solid grounding in the facts of flag history.

The foundation is actively committed to collecting, organizing, preserving, disseminating, analyzing, and integrating knowledge. It seeks to educate, involve, stimulate, cooperate, and lead. Its physical plant and holdings are necessary to those ends, but more important still is the guiding philosophy on which it was founded and the dedication of its management to those principles. In the simplest terms, we can say that the primary objective of Flagplan 2011, as manifested in the foundation, is the pursuit of vexillology—that is, the development of knowledge about flags to the furthest possible extent and the development of scientific principles based on that knowledge.

If we are to reach this point by the year 2011, it is clear that there are fundamental commitments which must never be forewarned or subverted. The proposed foundation must be:

- Scholarly—always characterized by the highest standards of academic excellence and activity;
- Impartial—never beholden to commercial ends, ideology, nationalism, or the interests of specific individuals or governments;
- International—recognizing of flags as a phenomenon encompassing all eras and areas of human society and one which can-
not be understood through a parochial or xenophobic approach;

Permanent—with the staff, headquarters, organizational structures, and above all the financial resources guaranteeing the possibility of pursuing its objectives indefinitely into the future;

Cooperative—actively engaged both in research and services with other associations and institutions for that mutual enrichment possible only by interaction with the whole of the vexillological world; and finally,

Vexillocentric—in principle and in fact always measuring its success in terms of what has been done to advance the study of flags.

The obvious question to be answered now is this: how can we move from our present situation to the higher state anticipated by Flagplan 2011? The Flag Research Center does not have the legal standing as a non-profit institution nor does it have adequate financing nor the institutional structure which would allow it to realize the objectives of this program. Until the conditions envisioned by Flagplan 2011 have been met, the Center will of necessity continue under its present mode of operation. On the other hand an entirely separate organization, the Flag Heritage Foundation, will henceforth work specifically on the realization of Flagplan 2011 by utilizing its non-profit status and its not inconsiderable resources which, fortunately, are unencumbered by long-standing commitments to existing activities. Its Board of Trustees will, for example, draw on the foundation’s collection of over 600 flags to set up high-impact exhibits, simultaneously serving the public and garnering support for future activities. The first such exhibit, which opened in the central rotunda of the Massachusetts State House the first week of August 1987, will be viewed by over a third of a million people a year. More will be heard of this foundation in the future as its programs are developed.

Rather than waiting until all objectives of Flagplan 2011 can be met simultaneously, the foundation will gradually inaugurate further modest programs—for instance, a computerized, ongoing update of the vexillological bibliography first published by this author in 1965. In addition it will utilize its financial resources to seek out grants and donations adequate for a regular full time staff, an operating budget, and a permanent building fund. Specific projections for growth in all areas will be found in the detailed Flagplan 2011 prospectus to be published by the foundation in the near future.

If, as it appears, the Flag Heritage Foundation has the best prospect of eventually becoming 2011’s International Foundation for Vexillology, what role is there for existing associations and institutions? In large part, of course, they will continue with the specialized programs they have already developed and which must not be allowed to falter or lapse. Nevertheless, to stimulate new initiatives, to find as yet untapped reservoirs of energy which can be counted on for the future, the Flag Research Center calls on vexillologists throughout the world to consider the following challenge. This year, on the occasion of its 25th anniversary, the Flag Research Center proposes the following possibility: that institution which, over the course of the next ten years, best demonstrates that it is prepared to realize the aspirations of Flagplan 2011, either alone or in conjunction with the Flag Heritage Foundation, will receive the collections of the Flag Research Center—including its 10,000 books, its 1,000 flag charts, and its 100,000 documents—as a donation. In addition the director pledges that his personal efforts will thereafter be dedicated to meeting the goals of that new institution. Here is an unrivaled opportunity for the German or North American Vexillological Associations or some university foundation to carry vexillology forward to a new and higher stage. The detailed conditions which define the terms of the donation will be subject to negotiation between all the interested parties.

Regardless of the success of the enterprise proposed, the author expresses appreciation for all that has already been done by individuals and groups in the past. Those of us who have labored for the past quarter century or longer to make vexillology what it is today derive great personal and professional satisfaction from seeing the growth of a younger generation to carry on this work. Eventually it is on the shoulders of people like Ralph Bartlett and Jim Ferrigan and María José Sastre y Arribas that the task of carrying forward this work must eventually be totally devolved. As they take on these commitments—now or in 2011 or at some other time—they will find the joys of scholarship and of fellowship in vexillology which I and Otfrid Neubecker and Ted Barraclough and so many others have had the privilege of enjoying over the past 25 years.

The Three Phases of Vexillology

By SCOT M. GUENTER

Every discipline or field of study evolves and changes over time. This is because, ultimately, whatever academic paradigm of belief system one operates in, it is still a cultural construction, and as culture is a living vibrant thing, it, too, is ever evolving or being inevitably affected and modified by encounters and interactions with other cultures.

Most students in any discipline become aware of this phenomenon in undergraduate study. In the field of Literary Criticism, for instance, students learn how the so-called New Criticism of the 20th century gave way to Structuralism, then Post-Structuralism, then the New Historicism of Cultural Studies. Or consider the field of History, where after the so-called scientific method of writing history developed in Germany in the nineteenth century and then spread to North America, where American history was only beginning to be studied at the university level, Consensus versions of history gave way over time to those favoring Conflict, and as intellectual history’s influence lessened and social history’s influence grew, rising demands for retrieving and appreciating the often unacknowledged but very significant contributions of women and members of minority groups transformed the focus and approach of history, starting in the turbulent 1960s and advancing forward, to the currently favored strategies in that discipline at the present moment.

What about Vexillology? Deep thinkers such as Ernest V. Mittlebeeler, Whitney Smith, Søren Askegaard, and several others have written essays in the past panning out on the current state of the field and opining how it might go forward—Peter Orenski published an entire book on this topic entitled Quo Vadimus? in 2001. However, to date, no one has written a thorough, contextualized intellectual history of the nascent discipline, documenting the rise and fall of different analytical approaches or schools of thought. Perhaps that is for the best: in such a small field, just getting started, focusing in and reviewing in detail past strategies and debates over which approaches to adopt and why might reveal more about personality clashes or feuds than it would of distinctive intellectual paradigms or coalescing perspectives on how best to go about the meaningful and scholarly study of flags.

Still, every now and then, and particularly in moments of notable change, it is beneficial for those engaged in any sort of intellectual pursuit to stop, step back, and try to get a sense of where they are in that moment, to assess how the current context in their field of study fits into the larger historical trajectory of that discipline. Now is such a time for vexillology.

To help give us a sense of perspective and renew our sense of purpose, let us consider the three phases of vexillology.

Phase One

This phase started thousands of years ago. Certainly on the most basic level of listing guides of varying meanings or taxonomies for different regions or groups represented, flag charts or summary lists have no doubt been around since proto-vexilloids being used in a religious or cultural procession or ceremony gave way to banners bearing the symbol, such as, the skull of a bear as a totem for a Bear Clan being replaced by a banner marked with a symbol representing the Bear. We know that flags were used thousands of years ago, for varying reasons, in such diverse places as India, China, Iran, and coming a bit closer toward the present, Rome. This first phase of flag studies reaches back to when someone, millennia ago, sat down with such symbols on parchment, clay tablet, or some other medium, memorized their meanings, and disseminated that knowledge (perhaps integrated with some spiritual beliefs) to others. It comes forward, down through time, to flag books copied by hand, and then after the invention of the printing press, with the creation of flag charts and flag books in Europe and beyond, as the number of people not just interacting with, but studying, flags continues to go up.

This phase moves forward as flag studies begin to grow in length and intellectual sophistication. The great historian of the U.S. flag in the 19th century, George Henry Preble, first published his seminal History of the American Flag in 1872. On page 11 of that text he writes: “Symbols and colors enabling nations to distinguish themselves from each other, have from the most remote period exercised a very powerful influence upon mankind.” He then goes on to suggest a need for deeper and more meaningful study and analysis: “History has, in general, failed to appreciate the value of these symbols, which have often given ascendency to party, and lead armies on to victory with more certainty and dispatch than the combinations of tactics and the most disinterested valor.”

This first phase of flag studies can be marked from the beginning of organizing, memorizing, and teaching others the basic meaning of flags to the growing sophistications in histories of creation and usage pioneered by Preble in the United States and by others, often in Europe, in the 19th and into the 20th centuries. Ottfried Neubecker’s 1929 Die deutschen Farben and his 1931 dissertation, Das Deutsche Wappen 1807-1871, are, for example, two notable works in German created during this
period. This phase comes forward to a turning point in flag studies, when an increased level of reflexive awareness is combined with one individual’s vision and determination to gather in the data and push forward a more formalized topic area of studies solely centered on flags: Whitney Smith’s creation of the term “vexillology.”

Phase Two
Whitney Smith, born in Arlington, Massachusetts in 1940, not only conceived the term “vexillology” as a teenager, he dedicated his life to carving out a place for it in the larger organizational structure of all scholarly study. The 1960s were a crucial decade for the groundwork he laid in this endeavor. In 1961, along with Bronx school teacher Gary Grahl, he published the premier issue of The Flag Bulletin, the first vexillological journal, and he also graduated magna cum laude from Harvard. The next year he founded The Flag Research Center in Winchester, Massachusetts, his consulting business related to all aspects of flag studies, drawing upon his ever-growing collected research materials for this topic area.

In 1964, Smith began teaching political science at Boston University while pursuing his doctorate there. The next year, with Louis Mühlemann and Klaes Sierskma, he organized the first International Congress of Vexillology at Muidenberg in the Netherlands. In 1967, due to his planning and promotion, the North American Vexillological Association, serving the United States and Canada, was established. Smith earned his doctorate in political science in 1968; the title of his dissertation was “Prolegomena to the Study of Political Symbolism.” The Fédération internationale des associations vexillologiques (FIAV) was formally established at the 3d International Congress of Vexillology, which Smith hosted in Boston in September 1969. He served as FIAV Secretary-General until 1991, and helped ensure the growing number of organized vexillological groups, many of them with their own scholarly publications and periodicals, had a secure structure and a system to gather biannually while also welcoming in new groups, from new lands, as the pursuit of organized vexillology spread from Europe and North America to the rest of the world. In 1970, at the end of this crucial, formative decade for vexillology, Smith left his position as Assistant Professor of Political Economy at Boston University to dedicate his life to serving vexillology with a full time commitment to the Flag Research Center.

It was Smith’s passion for and precision in the scholarly study of flags that brought many to vexillology in the second half of the 20th century; it was his thoughtfulness in planning such structures as NAVA and FIAV, and then his willingness to step aside and let others rise to oversee these frameworks independent of his control, that ensured their ongoing success. Other distinguished flag scholars arose, chief among them William Crampton, who established the Flag institute in the United Kingdom in 1971, becoming its first director as well. He, too, published a noteworthy dissertation in vexillology, receiving a Ph.D. in 1995 for “Flags as Non-Verbal Symbols in the Management of National Identity.” In 1994, the establishment of the Flags of the World website by Giuseppe Bottasini marked the spread of organized, analytical vexillology into cyberspace, while ICVs in Australia (1989), South Africa (1997), Argentina (2005), and Japan (2009) demonstrated the advancement of this field of study around the entire planet.

Phase Three
The final issue of The Flag Bulletin, No. 233, with the title “Celebrating 50 Years of Vexillology,” was published in October 2011. On July 16, 2013, in a formal ceremony in Danvers, Massachusetts, the scholarly holdings of the Flag Research Center were turned over to the Briscoe Center at the University of Texas, where they shall become the Whitney Smith Flag Research Collection. These two events signal a significant transition and the beginning of a new phase for flag studies.

The largest collection of flag study reference and resource materials is becoming accessible to all interested scholars who wish to access it at a distinguished major public institution of higher education. It could well serve as a magnet to draw other formerly private collections of valuable vexillological materials as bequeathments or donations in the future. Impressive presentations by flag scholars from India and China at the 25th ICV in Rotterdam in August 2013, signaled a vibrant new growth of organized flag studies currently underway in Asia, and this was only further substantiated by the formation of the Thai Vexillological Association, which established its Facebook page on September 9, 2013. This periodical, Flag Research Quarterly, has appeared in the past year, and four new associations (the Bulgarian Heraldry and Vexillology Society, the Portland Flag Association, Bandiere Storiche, and the Genealogical Society of Ireland—Vexillological Ireland) have just joined FIAV. Plans are underway for the 26th ICV to be held in Sydney.

This is an exciting time to be involved in flag studies. Where might this third phase lead? Perhaps to more meaningful and deeper interdisciplinary collaboration with scholars in associated (or currently unassociated) fields. Perhaps to an international database open to all, pooling our shared knowledge and online resources in ways only dreamed of at this point. Perhaps to new discoveries about old flags, new uses for new flags, new models for flag designing, new technologies for flag production and conveyance, new paradigms for flag analysis. This third phase is just beginning; it is up to us. Do your part and help! Study and research in the areas and aspects of vexillology that appeal to you. Contribute, by sharing your information, research, and interpretations through our associations and periodicals, in scholarly community with other students of vexillology both online and in the “real” world.
For decades, Whitney Smith and others have been engaged in finding a permanent home for the Flag Research Center collection at a major research institution. I am pleased to report the success of that mission and to discuss what lessons, if any, this endeavor holds for vexillologists.

The story, of course, begins in the exciting era of the 1950s, when flags were changing to reflect both the post-war appreciation for independence and the geopolitical realities of the Cold War. This era sparked Whitney Smith’s imagination and laid the groundwork for our discipline. With the founding of the Flag Research Center in 1961, the need for a working collection to document the historical, social, cultural, and political uses of flags was immediately felt and sparked its creation.

Whitney Smith expressed the moral duty of vexillologists to secure their collections in a way that advances our discipline. “Many a collection,” he wrote, “built up laboriously over a lifetime by an individual vexillologist has disappeared at his death—scattered, locked away inaccessibly, or burned.”

Twenty-five years ago, Dr. Smith sketched a compelling vision for the responsible disposition of his life’s work. Whitney sought an institution that would make the collection available to scholars and schoolchildren alike so that they could engage “directly in the creative process” themselves, “without wasting countless hours” having to hunt and search for sources. He wanted an institution that would provide a place where it was “possible to achieve total immersion in the shapes and colors and symbols and usages and history and meanings of every flag.” And Dr. Smith called for the institutional holding of his collection “to carry vexillology forward to a new and higher stage” to meet the needs of the 21st century vexillologist.

Throughout the years, and with disappointing success, Whitney attempted to achieve this vision by negotiating the relocation of the Flag Research Center. Since at least 1987, Dr. Smith has been engaged in securing the future of the FRC collection at a major research institution that would agree not only to preserve the collection, but sustain it and grow it by continuing the acquisition of flags and flag-related material. He approached Harvard University, Brown University, Boston University, the Smithsonian, and other institutions. For a variety of reasons, which mostly had to do with money and collection management, these efforts were ultimately unsuccessful.

After one of the last unsuccessful attempts, Whitney discussed his frustration with Charles Spain, a former president of the Association and current Secretary-General of the Fédération internationale des associations vexillologiques. He told Kin that he had almost given up trying to entice a major institution to acquire the collection.

Kin listened. (I understand some of you are amused by that statement.) And after he listened, Kin shared Whitney’s concerns with his husband, John Adcock. John, a proud ex-student (that’s what we call alumni) of The University of Texas, calmly suggested that UT was the perfect home for the Flag Research Center collection. The University has many powerhouse collections, but the Dolph Briscoe Center is arguably the first among equals on campus because of its tremendous stewardship, scholarship, and outreach that encourages the critical exploration of human culture and its history. The Briscoe Center collects, preserves, and makes available documentary and material culture evidence encompassing key themes in the human experience. Researchers, students, and the public mine its collections for a wide range of academic, professional, and personal uses, which have been the centerpiece of books, exhibits, programs, films, and other educational materials.

Kin agreed. (I understand some of you are amused by that statement.) He immediately contacted Pete Van de Putte and me to discuss whether this was possible. Kin and I talked for a long time during that initial conversation that Kin had to pull over in Brenham, Texas, to buy a mobile phone charger so that we could continue talking.

The three of us agreed that UT was the best choice. We invited Whitney to a Sunday lunch during NAV A 41 in Hartford. At that lunch, we discussed that the FRC and UT were the perfect fit. The University of Texas is one of the world’s leading research institutions—the Times of London ranks it as number 25 in its World University Rankings. It has an internationally diverse student body and its faculty is home to award-winning professors, including Nobel laureates. The leadership of the Briscoe Center is committed to the interdisciplinary approach to the study of mankind and to fostering collections that span both centuries and disciplines.

I’m not entirely sure that Whitney was completely convinced. Like most New Englanders—indeed, most non-Texans—his notions of Texas were informed by Westerns and other popular media that paint Texans as chauvinistic, rich oilmen and ranchers who buy everything at Neiman Marcus and look down their nose at intellectuals and “book-larnin.” Like all
the Texas Declaration of Independence. The failure of the Mexican government to provide free public schools was cited by the Texas Declaration of Independence as a reason to break with Santa Anna. Over 117 institutions of higher education were chartered in Texas before the Civil War. The Constitution of 1876, which still governs the state, directed the Legislature to establish a university of the first class,” which it has undoubtedly become. For most of the 20th century, The University was the only Texas member—and one of only three southwestern members—of the Association of American Universities, the 62 universities of the highest academic standing in Canada and the United States.

The motto of The University of Texas is disciplina praesidium civitatis: a cultivated mind is the guardian genius of democracy. The motto is attributed to the second President of the Republic of Texas, a gentleman named Mirabeau Bonaparte Lamar. Despite attacks on it by the forces of ignorance, The University has strived for over 125 years to educate the best minds and set them loose in the world to make it a better place.

We realized that the only way for Whitney to understand this was to get him to Texas and showcase The University. And that’s what we did with NAVA 42 in Austin.

Set in the splendid Renaissance Revival secular cathedral that is the Texas Capitol, NAVA 42 was designed from beginning to end to persuade Whitney that Texas would be a fitting home for his life’s work. Joined by the entire FRC board—the first time all three members attended a non-national meeting together—the opening reception was held on the penthouse rooftop of a nearby building with gorgeous views not only of the Capitol, but of the city and what O. Henry aptly described as its “Violet Crown”—the magnificent purplish-orange sunsets highlighting the rises of the Texas Hill Country.

Vexillological treasures from the Secretary of State, the Texas House of Representatives, the Texas State Archives, and the Briscoe Center itself highlighted Texans’ strong identification with flag culture and our steady stewardship of these artifacts. The tour at the Briscoe Center provided Whitney a chance to visit with the staff and appreciate their abilities. At the magnificent keynote dinner, held in the Lieutenant Governor’s Reception Room, Whitney was strategically seated next to Dr. Patrick Cox, the Center’s then-associate director, and Dr. Robert Maberry, who authored the seminal work on Texas flags and delivered the keynote address. Lively and highly intelligent conversation between the three men sparked Whitney’s interest in Texas so much that he delivered a paper the next year at NAVA 43 in Charleston that was a study of quilts by Texas women incorporating the Texas flag, drawing in part on the Briscoe Center’s collections. For this paper, Whitney received the William Wharton Award from the Vexillological Association of the State of Texas for this distinguished contribution to vexillology in Texas. Finally, Whitney was made an Honorary Texan by the governor; lest you think this made him unhappy, the certificate was proudly displayed in the front room of the FRC.

Originally, our plan was to seek a special appropriation from the Texas Legislature in the 2009 session to fund the acquisition of the FRC collection and provide for its cataloging, upkeep, and expansion. The Great Recession of 2008, and its concomitant effect on state revenue, required us to shelve that idea and look for other ways to compensate Whitney fairly for his life’s work and provide for its continuation.

So, after NAVA 42, we all worked to provide Whitney and The University with the information each needed to reach an agreement. The Flag Heritage Foundation, with Dr. Kirby Baker and Trustees Scot Guenter and David Phillips, was brought in as a strategic planning and financial partner. Trustee Annie Platoff provided valuable advice related to preparing the collection for review. VAST underwrote many early expenses through its external fundraising, including a 2009 Boston meeting between Whitney, Kin, and Dr. Don Carlton, the Briscoe Center director, to examine and value the collection.

At NAVA 44 in 2010, while others were at the Autry Center on a sunny California Saturday, a meeting was held at the host hotel between the key players to reach a tentative agreement and work through the remaining details. At the dinner that night, Dr. Whitney Smith announced that he had signed a letter of intent with The University to transfer the FRC collection to Austin and a new home at the Briscoe Center.

The next steps in the process were to identify this collection and make plans for its transfer. These steps took time, of course, because of the Dr. Smith’s ongoing research and publishing activity. In February, those plans were finalized and Whitney’s work was settled enough to permit the transfer of the FRC collection to The University in July of this year.

The FRC collection is currently housed at Sid Richardson Hall on The University’s campus, adjacent to the Lyndon B. Johnson Library, awaiting cataloging and processing. That will be a monumental task, with over 1,000 boxes, map cases, filing cabinets, and other material that will need review and classification. Dr. Carlton has expressed a desire for a cooperative partnership with the vexillological community; that commitment will permit us to continue to further interest in flags and promote research that explains the human condition.

Having observed similar processes, I can say that there are a million ways for a deal to go wrong and few ways for a deal to go right. This was one of the times things went right, and be-
cause of one reason: vexilocentrism.

That is the singular lesson to be drawn from this experience: the importance of being vexillocentric—the approach, that, “in principle and fact [is] always measuring [our] success in terms of what has been done to advance the study of flags.” Each decision along the way was subject to this standard. No one let personalities, parochialism, or pettiness invade the process. That is no small feat.

This endeavor would not have succeeded without the tireless efforts of Secretary-General Spain, Dr. Guenter, Dr. Carleton, Dr. Baker, Ms. Platoff, Mr. Philips, Pete and Senator Leticia Van de Putte, VAST President James Liston, the support I received from other NAVA members, and—most importantly—Whitney and Austin Smith.

For many of us, Whitney Smith was our first introduction to vexillology. Whether through personal contact at meetings and congresses, by mail, or through his books and publications, Whitney is the reason that most, if not all, of us are engaged in the scholarly study of flags.

The process, then, has been going on since a young boy in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, decided that we wanted to know why a country as large as Greenland (ranking in size with Africa) did not have a flag of its own and wrote a letter to that colony’s governor.

Anyone who has ever visited the FRC collection knows that it is a rare treasure— indisputably the largest and most comprehensive collection of vexillological and related research material in the world. It is worthy of preservation, support, and expansion. It is the lodestar of our discipline. And its new home at the exquisite jewel that is The University of Texas at Austin will ensure that the widest possible range of scholars and enthusiasts will be able to stand on Dr. Smith’s shoulders and expand our understanding of why humans use flags to communicate complex concepts in a simple and efficient form.

In July of this year at the Boston ceremony to mark the transfer to Austin, Dr. Smith reminded us of the quarter-century endeavor to secure the FRC, ending appropriately with the words, “We did it.”

Amen.

This essay is based on Brady’s keynote speech given Oct. 12, 2013, at the inaugural Whitney Smith Dinner at the Lion House during the Association’s 47th Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah.
Remarks at the Ceremony Transferring the Flag Research Center Collection to The University of Texas

July 16, 2013
Danvers, Massachusetts

(Charles A. Spain) Good morning, everyone. We are here today to celebrate a unique achievement—the placement of the largest vexillological collection in the world in a major academic research library. This is a triumph in the professional career of the world’s greatest vexillologist, Dr. Whitney Smith.

Joining Whitney today are his son Austin Smith, his sisters Sybil Smith and Lynne Hartwell, his longtime assistant Terri Malgieri, Hugh Brady, Dr. Scot Guenter, and Dr. Don Carleton. I am Charles Spain, the Secretary-General of FIAV, the Fédération internationale des associations vexillologique, and a past president of the North American Vexillological Association.

I first met Whitney Smith in October 1988 in Dallas at NAVA 23 and quickly found an eager mentor for my research into Texas flags and seals. This was all the more amazing because the first thing I did was to question Whitney’s statements about Texas flags in his Flag Book of the United States. Not only did he not take offense, he encouraged my work.

By 1991, Whitney asked me, along with others, to help him find a permanent home for the Flag Research Center Collection. And after many twists and turns, here we are today.

Behind Whitney there are the flags of the United States, Massachusetts, Texas, FIAV, NAVA, VAST, the FIAV Secretary-General’s flag, and the NAVA past president’s flag. One might legitimately ask why, and this gets to the heart of why vexillology matters.

When Napoleon proposed the creation of the Légion d’honneur, the Council of State objected. Napoleon responded to his critics by bluntly declaring, “I defy you to show me a republic, modern or ancient, that did without distinctions. You call these ‘baubles,’ but I assure you that it is with baubles that men are led!”

C’est avec ces hochets qu’on mène les hommes. These pieces of cloth lead people. At times, they led them to their deaths.

This is why vexillology is a serious social science that helps explain the human condition.

This is why it matters.

Today we celebrate the transition of the Flag Research Center Collection from its home at 3 Edgehill Road in Winchester, Massachusetts to The University of Texas at Austin’s Dolph Briscoe Center for American History. The key institutions that made this happen are represented here this morning, and I will ask for brief remarks from each.

I now call on Hugh Brady, the vice-president of the Vexillological Association of the State of Texas, the president of the North American Vexillological Association, and a Fellow of FIAV.

(Hugh L. Brady) The motto of The University of Texas is discipina praesidium civitatis: a cultivated mind is the guarantor of democracy. If vexillology is understood as recognizing the importance of flags and flag usage in the understanding of human society, then the transition of the Flag Research Center Collection by this Honorary Texan to the Briscoe Center is a monumental expression of that motto’s spirit.

Whitney Smith has consistently expressed the moral duty of vexillologists to secure their collections in a way that advances our discipline. “Many a collection,” he wrote, “built up laboriously over a lifetime by an individual vexillologist has disappeared at his death—scattered, locked away accessibly, or burned.” This transition avoids that fate and fulfills that moral duty—and quite magnificently!

Twenty-five years ago, Dr. Smith sketched a compelling vision for the responsible disposition of his life’s work. He spoke of this collection being made available to scholars and schoolchildren alike so that they could engage “directly in the creative process” themselves, “without wasting countless hours” having to hunt and search for sources. He envisioned a place where it was “possible to achieve total immersion in the shapes and colors and symbols and usages and history and meanings of every flag.” And Dr. Smith called for the institutional holding of his collection “to carry vexillology forward to a new and higher stage” to meet the needs of the 21st century vexillologist.

On behalf of both the Vexillological Association of the State of Texas and the North American Vexillological Association / Association nord-américaine de vexillologie, both organizations have supported Dr. Smith’s vision and worked to make it a reality during my tenure as an officer. We’ve dreamed and imagined with those here today and across the globe. We’ve always stood ready to facilitate and participate in discussions, meetings, lunches, and dinners. And through it all, our constant goal and constant role has been to provide support and encouragement to the major participants in this lasting effort.

Dr. Smith believes the true measurement of our success as vexillologists is “what has been done to advance the study of flags.” We do, too. By that simple, yet exacting, standard, Whitney and Austin Smith, the Flag Heritage Foundation, and the
Briscoe Center have achieved an unassailable accomplishment. Thank you for the opportunity to play a small part in the realization of Dr. Smith’s vision for vexillology.

[Spain] I now call on Scot Guenter, past president of the North American Vexillological Association, Laureate and Fellow of FIAV, Whitney Smith Fellow, and trustee of the Flag Heritage Foundation.

[Scot M. Guenter] It is with great pleasure and anticipation that the Flag Heritage Foundation notes this transition of the remarkable and unparalleled scholarly holdings of the Flag Research Center of Winchester, Massachusetts, to the Briscoe Center for American History at The University of Texas at Austin.

For over forty years our foundation has worked to advance the scholarly study of flags; that is our raison d’être. As a board, we are in unanimous agreement that this arranged institutionalization of these particular resource assets opens up this field of scholarship in profound and exciting ways that will have positive impact for decades to come and on a truly global level; therefore, we are gratified to be supportive and contributing to this realization.

Whitney Smith has amassed by far the most important collection of vexillological research materials in the world; his beneficence in ensuring these materials will be available to scholars across the disciplines for generations to come is laudable and visionary, as is the recognition by the Briscoe Center for the academic need to keep the collection process ongoing and up to date. The Flag Heritage Foundation looks back with deep appreciation for all Dr. Smith has done to advance this field for more than half a century, it looks forward with exhilaration for the possibilities this transition suggests for vexillological scholarship in the future.

Thank you to all the organizations and individuals involved for their help in making this possible. Inspired by you, Dr. Smith, we shall ensure that vexillologists of the future keep studying those flags.

So most of all, thank you, Dr. Whitney Smith.

[Spain] I will now read remarks from Michel Lupant, President of the Fédération internationale des associations vexillologique:

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES ASSOCIATIONS VEXILLOLIGIQUES
BUREAU DU PRÉSIDENT

Ottignies, 10 July 2013

Dear Whitney,

As President of the Fédération internationale des associations vexillologiques, I could not miss the opportunity at this meeting to address to you some words in the name of FIAV’s Board, Charles Spain, Graham Bartram, and I. At my request, my friend Charles will read these words to you.

Today is a great day for you, the goal of your flag life is realized, your library and collection will stay together in good hands. During our last meetings you discussed with me about the future of vexillological collections. What can we do to keep it all together and to preserve it for the next generations? You have found the solution!

On this special day where you are gathered with your family and friends, my thoughts are with you.

This day celebrates the achievement of your dream, the Flag Research Center Collection will be transferred to a major academic research library, specifically The University of Texas. A dream has become a reality!

Whitney, you have been the reference for so many vexillologists across the world, and you are a kind of father for all of us! You have revolutionized the study of flags.
You were interested by flags when you were a child, that passion grew more and more until today there is flag information in dictionaries and libraries, but for you it was never enough!

In the past, flags were mostly connected with heraldry, but you felt it was necessary to adopt a name of its own for such a science. As teenager you wanted a truly scientific approach to flags, their history, symbolism, and use. You choose the word “vexillology” from vexillum, a Latin word for flag (used by the Roman legions) and “ology” (from the Greek [logia]), a suffix describing the character or department of one who speaks of a certain subject. Now that word vexillology, which appears in dictionaries, is translated in many languages, and when you speak about vexillology, people are always surprised such a word exists!

With Gary Grahl you created a bulletin which would update the available information as it changed and the possibility for other vexillologists to publish their articles in it. It was published for the first time on 1 October 1961, and in 2011 we celebrated its 50th anniversary—233 Flag Bulletins were published in 50 years! The Flag Bulletin was expected each time by subscribers; it was a kind of bible! It was the first flag serial, and it gave, later, the idea to many others.

Together you established a central base for vexillology, the Flag Research Center on 1 February 1962. It became the world center for flag study. Its library became the most important in the world, collecting not only so many rare books and almost all new items, but also material coming from deceased vexillologists. You became the executive director of the FRC. It was with a great stupefaction when I entered for the first time inside the FRC in 1989, a full house dedicated to flags, incredible!

Together with Dr. Ottfried Neubecker of Germany, Klaes Sierksma of The Netherlands, and your compatriot Gary Grahl, you opened the door to flag collaboration through research, studies, and exchange of information. The First International Congress of Vexillology at Muiderberg, The Netherlands was organized in 1965. At that Congress, it was suggested that an international organization will be formed to coordinate the work of several organizations attending. You helped organize the Third International Congress of Vexillology in Boston, Massachusetts in 1969, where FIAV was created. You became its Secretary-General until 1991.

You founded the North American Vexillological Association in 1967 and served as its president for a decade.

You wrote so many books and articles, but one book, published in 1973, has taken a giant place in the world of flags, Flags Through the Ages and Across the World, translated in many languages. That book was a kind of bible for all of us, with so much flag information, history, and illustrations.

You have traveled a lot participating in almost all the NAVA conventions and International Congresses. It was such a great honor when you paid me a visit in Belgium in March 1987; it was our first meeting, but not the last. I was so happy to see you last in Winchester in 2011.

You have received many honors, but I will only remember the following in connection with FIAV, 5 July 1991 Laureate of the Federation and 27 July 2001 Fellow of the Federation. On 10 August 2007, your and Howard M. Madaus’s book, The American Flag: Two Centuries of Concord & Conflict, received the Vexillon.

You are number one on flags and you have developed so many relations and friendships that flag scholars became a family surrounding the world like a spider’s web.

In the future, I hope to come once again to Austin to see the Flag Research Center at The University of Texas.

It is certain that no one has spent more time on vexillology than you!

The Board salutes you with a great respect.

/s/Michel Lupant

[Spain] I now call on Don Carleton, executive director of The University of Texas at Austin’s Dolph Briscoe Center for American History.

[Dr. Don E. Carleton] Dr. Smith, on behalf of the Dolph Briscoe Center and The University of Texas at Austin, I want to express our gratitude to you for allowing us to serve as the permanent home for your magnificent collection documenting the history of flags and the role they have played in human culture.

I believe the Flag Research Center Collection has an immense research and teaching value that is impossible to estimate. It may be the most comprehensive archive in existence documenting its subject. Because of its breadth and depth as a collection as well as its intellectual richness, this wonderful collection is well positioned to serve for many years in the future as an incubator for theses and dissertations on a wide range of subjects broadly related to flag history. The Flag Research Center Collection is an outstanding addition to the research holdings of the Briscoe Center, which is one of the leading American history research centers in the United States.

We are pleased to name this valuable collection “The Whitney Smith Flag Research Center Collection” in acknowledgment of your pioneering work in this field. Dr. Smith, thank you for honoring the Briscoe Center by placing this collection in our care, where it will be maintained and open for research to all who seek access to its resources.

[Dr. Whitney Smith] This has been something that I’ve worked towards for many years. There were times when people did not believe it could be accomplished. There were several occasions when we thought we were close, but were passed by. Collections have been lost because family members and friends did not understand the value and joy we get from studying flags. But we stayed focused on what we were trying to do. I am grate-
ful to everyone who has contributed to this making this happen.

After all these years, we got it done!

[Spain] I call on Austin Smith, who was prophetically named, for a response from Whitney's family.

[Austin Smith] Thank you all for your kind words.

I speak now for my father and our family. We are pleased, grateful, and proud to be here to celebrate this transition.

In 1951, at the age of eleven, a young boy clipped his first flag article from a local newspaper. Sixty-two years later that boy, now a man, has dozens of books on flags to his credit, has published The Flag Bulletin for nearly 50 years, has provided accurate information about flags to governments, businesses, and the public, and has corresponded with countless colleagues from around the world. My father, Whitney Smith, without argument the world’s greatest vexillologist, a term he coined incidentally, is proud to present his collection and life’s work to the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at The University of Texas at Austin.

Flags embody a host of meanings—historic, symbolic, political, and emotional. The topic is so broad and multi-faceted that it is too much for any one person to capture in his lifetime no matter how passionate his pursuit of the subject. As my father passes his life’s work on to the Briscoe Center, he passes on more than a collection of books and papers. The seeds of vexillology have sprouted and will continue to thrive and blossom in The University of Texas’s academic environment.

We are extremely pleased to be part of this transition and grateful to those who have helped us achieve this disposition and the preservation of the collection. In no particular order, I would like to thank the following institutions and individuals. If I overlook anyone, I apologize.

First and foremost, let me say thank you to the Briscoe Center at The University of Texas for its vision and commitment to sustaining, maintaining, and ensuring access to the future use and development of this great collection and the discipline of vexillology.

Many thanks to the Flag Heritage Foundation, represented here today by Scot Guenter, for its guidance, resources, and eagerness to promote the study of flags.

Three flag groups have also been instrumental in today’s events, VAST, the Vexillological Association of the State of Texas; NAVA, the North American Vexillological Association; and FIAV, the Fédération internationale des associations vexillologiques. Although their activities have been largely behind the scenes, they have earned our sincere thanks.

On a personal note, I would like to thank Charles Spain for his guidance, patience, and willingness to help me navigate the world of vexillology.

[Spain] I appreciate everyone’s thoughtful remarks. Hugh Brady wanted to say a few words about the Whitney Smith Fellow.

[Brady] As you know, Dr. Smith, the North American Vexillological Association / Association nord-américaine de vexillologie has recognized you by naming its highest honor after you. As originally conceived by President Guenter, it was initially called the Whitney Award, and has been presented to you, Grace Rogers Cooper, John Purcell, and Dr. Guenter. The executive board renamed it as the Whitney Smith Award in 2011. In deep appreciation for all that you have done for the advancement of vexillology in North America and worldwide, the board recently redesignated this honor as the Whitney Smith Fellows. This designation indicates to the greater community of scholars in all disciplines both the immense honor for those who continue your work and the high esteem in which we hold you.

[Spain] I first visited the Flag Research Center in December 2009 with Dr. Carleton. After we spent the day talking with Whitney, Don left and I had dinner with Whitney, explored the house, and just talked. It finally became clear to me to me that I was at the Galactic Library at Trantor in the presence of Hari Seldon. I expected to see you, Whitney, at your desk with the vexillological equivalent of the Prime Radiant. I joked about that, and you confessed you also loved Isaac Asimov and his Foundation stories. Suddenly, after all the years of knowing you, I saw you with your books, in your home. It made sense.

I’m not going so far as to say that moving the FRC Collection to Texas is like moving it to Asimov’s fictional Terminus, although I know, Whitney, that you sometimes see us as civilization’s edge. But rest assured, your dream is safe, and the project about which you spoke to me in 1991 has succeeded.

We saw it in 2008 that you were made an honorary Texan, something I know you don’t entirely dislike. Your dreams are vast and your ambition mighty, and like your fellow Texans, whether by birth or character, you get it done.

So we salute you, Whitney—your dreams, your work, your gifts. Texas has and will continue to watch you and your great vision of the study of flags.

I didn’t graduate from The University of Texas, but I did attend one semester of summer school in 1978. That makes me a Texas Ex. And today I proudly ask us to stand and sing UT’s school song, “The Eyes of Texas,” as a closing tribute to our friend, the chief herald of vexillology in the modern world, Dr. Whitney Smith:

The Eyes of Texas are upon you,
All the live long day.
The Eyes of Texas are upon you,
You can not get away.
Do not think you can escape them
At night or early in the morn—
The Eyes of Texas are upon you
’Till Gabriel blows his horn.
Messages of Congratulations Read at the Whitney Smith Dinner

The following letter, cosigned by almost every FIAV Member that participates in the FIAV General Assembly, was read during the inaugural Whitney Smith Dinner at NAVA 47.

Fédération internationale des associations vexillologiques
Bureau du Président

Ottignies, 12 October 2013

Dear NAVA friends,

I send you all my greetings at the occasion of your 47th convention, and I wish you a great success.

I ask my dear friend Charles Spain to address to you some words in the name of the FIAV Board on the occasion of your first annual Whitney Smith Dinner.

This dinner will celebrate our friend Whitney, our father in vexillology. Founder of that science, he has put all his energy into it, founding NAVA and co-founding FIAV. He has brought into contact so many people throughout the world. Thanks to him, vexillology has grown so much that it continues to cover the whole world, most recently Thailand!

His dream to gather, through meetings, so many vexillologists has become reality. Through this dinner, which bears his name, you will celebrate not only a great man but also the achievement of his personal dream—placing the Flag Research Center Collection at a major academic library. His life work is safe at The University of Texas, for all to use.

Naming the dinner for Whitney honors NAVA and its members. My fellow Board members Charles Spain and Graham Bartram, along with the vexillological associations and institutions listed below, join me with great pleasure to celebrate Whitney Smith and his work.

Kind regards,

Michel R. Lupant

Joined by:
Charles A. Spain, Secretary-General
Graham M. P. Bartram, Secretary-General for Congresses

Cosigning Members of the Fédération (by order of admission):
Société Suisse de Vexillologie (SSV)
Nederlandse Vereniging voor Vlaggenkunde (NVV)
The Flag Institute (FI)
Centro Italiano Studi Vexillologici (CISV)
Nordisk Flagselskap (NF)
Sociedad Española de Vexilología (SEV)
Societas Vexillologica Belgica (SVB)
Associazione Catalana de Vexilologia (ACV)
Flag Society of Australia Inc. (FSA)
PartiOheraldikot r.y. (PH)
Société française de vexillologie (SFV)
Southern African Vexillological Association (SAVA)
Czech Vexillological Society, (CVS)
Canadian Flag Association / L'Association canadienne de vexillologie (CFA)
Centre Belgo Européen d’Études des Drapeaux (CEBED)
Heraldica Slovenica (HS)
Asociación Argentina de Vexilología (AAV)
World Vexillological Research Institute (WVRI)
Fundación Centro Interdisciplinario de Estudios Culturales (CIDEC)
Centrum Flaga Ziemi (CFZ)
Chesapeake Bay Flag Association (CBFA)
New Zealand Flag Association (NZFA)
Polskie Towarzystwo Węksyologiczne (PTW)

Ukrayins'ke Heraldychne Towarystwo (UHT)
Hungarian Flag Society (MЗT)
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Flaggenkunde e.V. (DGF)
Keverze Vannisioiliheid Vreei (KVV)
The Burgee Data Archives (BDA)
Great Waters Association of Vexillology (GWAV)
New England Vexillological Association (NEVA)
Instytut Heraldyczno Węksyologiczny (IHW)
Japanese Vexillological Association (JAVA)
“Paul Gore” Heraldry and Genealogy Society (SCHAPG)
Flags of the World (FOTW)
Vexillological Association of the State of Texas (VAST)
Flag Heritage Foundation (FHF)
Russian Centre of Vexillology and Heraldry (RCVH)
Flag Data Centre (SVI)
Croatian Heraldic and Vexillological Association (HGZD)
Schichting Vlaggenmuseum Nederland (SVN)
State Council of Heraldry at the Parliament of Georgia (SCHG)
Schichting Vlaggenparade Rotterdam (SVPR)
Macedonian Heraldry Society (MHZ)
Bulgarian Heraldry and Vexillology Society (BHVS)
Bandiere Storiche (BS)
Genealogical Society of Ireland Limited / Vexillology Ireland (GSI)

Due to the letter’s subject matter, NAVA and the FRC were not asked to cosign.

Many individuals wrote letters congratulating Dr. Smith and NAVA. The following letter from the president of the Société Suisse de Vexillologie (SSV) was read at the Whitney Smith Dinner. In 1991, Dr. Dreyer succeeded Dr. Smith, who had served as Secretary-General since 1969.

Dear Charles,

The Société Suisse de Vexillologie (SSV) feels much honoured to receive an invitation both from Michel Lupant, the President of FIAV, as from our American friends in NAVA to join in a celebration in honour of Dr. Whitney Smith. Whitney is best remembered by our very first SSV members, when Société Suisse de Vexillologie joined hands together with him in Zurich at the familiar founding ceremony of FIAV in 1967.

That delicate seed of an international flag association has since grown into a respectfully sized and enthusiastic body reaching its welcoming hand out to hundreds and hundreds of vexillologists all over the world. A great deal of this success was due to the efforts and skills of Whitney Smith, who gathered people in respect to each other through flags. He taught us that flags do not only distinguish, but they also unite.

The Swiss Society is very proud of having been among the first vexillological societies to join the ideals of Whitney Smith in promoting vexillology, and we highly honour and estimate him as the founding father of our science. The SSV is very happy to learn that his invaluable legacy of documents will be preserved and opened to academic knowledge for the benefit of mankind. We thank all those involved in this huge task, either intellectually, sentimentally, or economically, and we wish them all the best.

The SSV joins you all in a toast to our great friend and scholar, Dr. Whitney Smith!

Enjoy your dinner.

Kind regards,

Emil Dreyer FF
Président, Société Suisse de Vexillologie
FIAV Secrétaire général émérite