

stupor from alcohol obtained from the Dutch merchants at Oranje (now Albany, N.Y.). The Jesuits were detained for three days at Kahnawake and lodged there in the longhouse of Tekakwitha, who was ordered by her uncle (who hated Christianity) to care for them. This short visit made a lasting impression on Tekakwitha and kindled the desire to become a Christian as her mother had been.

1676 - Tekakwitha was baptized on Easter Sunday at St. Peter's in Fonda, N.Y. and given the name Kateri (Catherine in English). Refraining from work on Sundays, she was denied food, called lazy and taunted by adults and children alike because of her religion. Some of her own people bribed a young man to pretend he was going to kill her. Raising his tomahawk as if to strike, she simply bowed her head causing him to flee in astonishment.

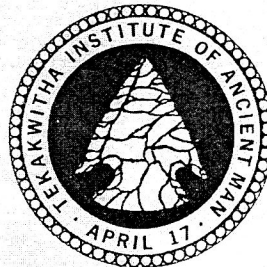
1677 - After enduring cruel treatment in her village for a year and a half she was advised to live at the mission on the St. Lawrence River two hundred miles to the north. She escaped in the autumn when her uncle went to trade at Oranje. He returned shortly and pursued her but was unsuccessful.

1680 - Tekakwitha had found great faith and joy in her new home as well as new trials and sorrows. The last twelve months of her life at Caughnawaga in Canada were filled with increasing illness. Kateri died smiling peacefully, her face radiant, during Holy Week.

The chronology above (based on research by Henri B  chard, S.J.) is sketchy by design, nonetheless the astute reader will notice an abundance of topics deserving further study. Cultural interaction, the care provided the handicapped and orphaned, and Christianity's role in clarifying and strengthening the Indians' ancient belief in one Supreme Being are just a few areas which require more research.

Further reflection on the effects of the peace which brought Tekakwitha's parents together might shed some light on a local problem in Northeastern archaeology - the curious Munsee culture. (The possession of an identical pottery tradition by "Algonquian-speaking" and "Iroquoian-speaking" Indians has raised serious questions in the Upper Delaware and Susquehanna River Valleys.)

In summary then, Tekakwitha is important today for many reasons beginning with her example of courage, fortitude and heroic faith.



# ANCIENT MAN INFORMATION EXCHANGE



**VOLUME 3: NOBLE CREATURES**

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# ANCIENT MAN INFORMATION EXCHANGE

## VOLUME 3: NOBLE CREATURES

Edited

by

Stephen E. Porcelli



TEKAKWITHA INSTITUTE OF ANCIENT MAN  
WOODBIDGE, VIRGINIA

## Introduction

In a way we owe the title of this third volume to Thomas Aquinas. His classic phrase "tam nobilis creatura" reminds us that the center of anthropology, namely man, has an exalted place in creation and in this sense is "such a noble creature".

It has been almost thirty years since Dr. Ashley Montagu, former chairman of the Anthropology Department at Rutgers, wrote Man: His First Million Years. In the preface Dr. Montagu suggested that anthropology is the most important of the sciences because it deals with the great questions of life and death - "What is man? What is he born as? What is he born for?..." Although one might suspect that Dr. Montagu would not endorse the direction in which we take his lead, nevertheless, the door has already been opened.

The first article by John Hardon, S.J. should be welcomed by readers who may have felt it was necessary to "bracket out" faith when dealing with the physical sciences, not unlike Newton did centuries ago.

The reports from Arizona, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia provide us with new data and also new insight into the lifeways of the past.

The reflections on the amateurs' role today and the flintknapper's experience with ancient thought patterns are intended to provoke further discussion and not be interpreted as the final word.

And Tekakwitha herself, the gentle flower of the ferocious Mohawks, continues to provide the human touch which makes the study of anthropology ultimately the study of ourselves.

S.E.P.

September 8

## *Tekakwitha: The Lily of the Mohawks*

by  
Stephen E. Porcelli

(What makes someone who died before her 24th birthday over 300 years ago in a quiet corner of North America important to the science of anthropology today?)

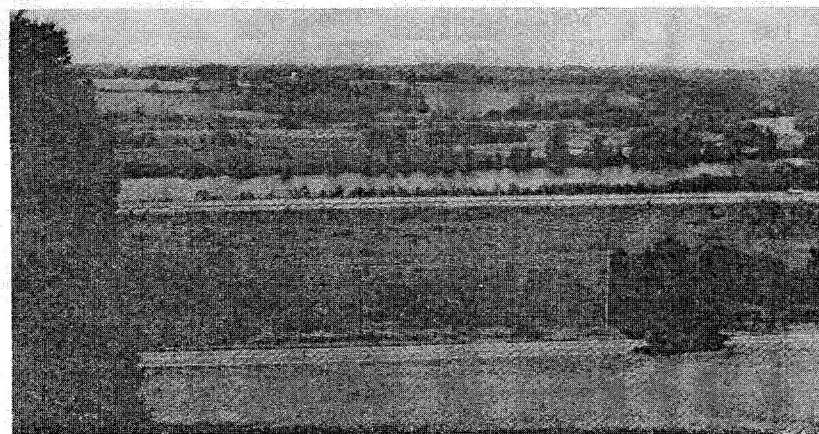
As we journey towards the year 2000 it may at first glance appear unusual to focus our attention on an individual who lived and died in the mid-1600's.

Who is this Tekakwitha the Mohawk? What makes someone who died before her 24th birthday over 300 years ago in a quiet corner of North America important to the science of anthropology today? Clues may be found in a brief review of her life.

1653 - Algonkin and Iroquois hunters, enemies in the past, agreed to an unofficial truce for unknown reasons. Different languages notwithstanding, the Iroquois were permitted to choose wives from among the Algonkin women. One of these young Algonkins, a devout Christian, was chosen by an Iroquois chief of the Turtle clan when she was fifteen or sixteen years old.

Making the journey southward from the Canadian border, down through Lake Champlain and the Lake of the Blessed Sacrament (now called Lake George) the small party finally reached the territory of the Iroquois (the five tribes: Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca).

The Iroquois chief and his new bride made their way to Ossernenon, the smallest village of the nation, to begin their lives together. (Only a few years earlier Isaac Jogues, Rene Goupil and Jean de la Lande came to Ossernenon where they were murdered for preaching Christianity.)



VIEW OF THE MOHAWK RIVER VALLEY FROM THE HILLTOP SITE OF OSSERNENON, THE MOHAWK VILLAGE WHERE TEKAKWITHA WAS BORN - NOW AURIESVILLE, N.Y.

The Algonkin newcomer had to familiarize herself with not only a different culture, but a new language as well. She seems to have adjusted rapidly and two years after her arrival she gave birth to a girl and later a boy.

1660 - Smallpox strikes all in the family killing the mother, father and little boy. Only the girl survives with a pockmarked face and damaged eyesight. Her aunts cared for her and, watching her grope along when the sunlight tortured her eyes, named her Tekakwitha which in Iroquois means "she who feels her way along".

1666 - When Tekakwitha was ten years old French soldiers from Canada burned the village and all its winter provisions in retaliation for past attacks. Her people took refuge in the woods and suffered intensely. The Iroquois then asked for peace and requested missionaries as a sign of good will.

1667 - Three Jesuits returned with the Mohawk delegates but were intentionally delayed from going directly to the chief Mohawk town of Tionnontonguen since nearly all the adults and many children were in a