

INSTITUTE OF MAYA STUDIES

OF THE MIAMI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

Newsletter

Hal C. Ball, Editor

Vol. 4

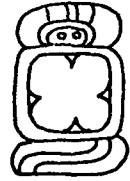
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(August 13, 1975)



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YAXKIN

MEETING NOTICE:

The Institute will hold its regular monthly meeting in the Museum of Science Auditorium on August 20th at 8:00 p.m. The program for the evening will be presented by Mr. Al Rosenberg, whose topic will be "Were the Maya Florida's First Tourists." Remember the date: Wednesday, August 20th...

IMS PLANS GUATEMALA TOUR:

A tour to Guatemala to visit Maya archaeological sites has now been planned for IMS members and students only, for October 9-15, 1975. Details may be obtained from Len Schafer, 1320 Tangelo Isle, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla...

NEW BOOKS DONATED TO IMS LIBRARY:

Our sincere thanks to Karen Bruhns and Robert Gorski for their donations to our library of the books "Monumental Art of Chontales" and "Pre-Columbia America: The Art and Archaeology of South and Central America"...

MUSEUM OF SCIENCE CELEBRATES SILVER ANNIVERSARY:

Although "it seems like only yesterday," it has now been 25 years since our Miami Museum of Science was first organized and began its activities in the Miami Woman's Club. During this relatively short span of years a new museum building has been constructed, an outstanding Planetarium built, 18 affiliates have been organized, and many new activities have been added to the Museum's expanding program of education and presentation of art and natural history. Our congratulations to the officers, Board of Governors and Trustees, all of the Museum's personnel, and the numerous volunteers and friends that have helped in making the Museum one of the important cultural institutions in the Miami area...

A RESTUDY OF MERIDA BEING UNDERTAKEN:

A new study of the city of Merida is being undertaken by the Mexican National Institute of Anthropology, which will use as a benchmark the research carried out in the 1930's by Robert Redfield in his investigation of four communities in the peninsula of Yucatan. The project is scheduled for two years and will focus on social mobility and urbanization from 1935-75...



A CERAMIC ANALYSIS OF CHINKULTIC POTTERY:

Joseph W. Ball, who has recently joined the research staff of the New World Archaeological Foundation, is presently conducting a ceramic analysis of the collection of pottery objects found at the Maya site of Chinkultic (Chiapas, Mexico). While making the study this summer and fall, he will be residing in Comitán, Mexico, where he will be examining all of the ceramic material collected at Chinkultic by the N.W.A.F. and the Milwaukee Museum during the late 1960's. This ceramic material derives primarily from the large "sacred" (?) cenote and from surface excavations carried out in the ball court and ceremonial acropolis areas. On preliminary examination, Dr. Ball has found that the cenote collections are predominantly of the Terminal Preclassic and Early Classic periods, and that those from the ball court and the acropolis areas are of a Terminal Classic and Early Postclassic date. Stylistically, however, most of the architectural and sculptural monuments at Chinkultic are Middle and Late Classic in date, and we thus look forward to the final report on the complete ceramic analysis of the site...

F.L.A.A.R. PHOTOGRAPHS OF PRE-COLUMBIAN CERAMIC ART AND STONE SCULPTURE:

The Foundation for Latin American Anthropological Research has now photographed, both in color and black-and-white, almost 1,000 masterpieces of Mexican and Guatemalan ceramic art, jade, and small stone sculpture that is presently in private collections. According to information received from the Director, many of the photographs of ceramic vessels are of polychrome Maya funerary vases and Teotihuacan cylinder tripods and incense burners, none of which have previously been available to archaeologists or art historians for study. For descriptive literature and prices, write: F.L.A.A.R. Apartado 1838, Guatemala City, Guatemala, C.A...

"PRE-COLUMBIA AMERICA"

A catalog for the new Pre-Columbian Archaeology exhibit at the Milwaukee Public Museum is now available for \$7.60, including postage. Subtitled "The Art and Archaeology of South, Central and Middle America," the 193 page handbook has over 270 illustrations of specimens and sites. It was written by Dr. Lee Parsons, and both the book and the exhibit are dedicated to Stephan Borhegyi, late Director of the Museum. Order from: The Milwaukee Public Museum, 800 West Wells Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233...

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ANNOUNCES NEW BOOK ON THE INCAS:

"Step back in time, and experience the splendor and glory of the Inca Empire." With this opening sentence, National Geographic has announced the publication of its new book, The Incredible Incas and Their Timeless Land. The book relates in detail how the Incas, legendary descendents of the sun, spread their rule over some 380,000 square miles, from northern Ecuador and Columbia to central Chile, and were then defeated by the invading Spaniards "by the sheer terror of charging horses and gunfire." Highly recommended...

THE CHURCH IN THE JUNGLE:
(ROM'S FIRST SEASON AT LAMANAI)

A very interesting article on the first seasons archaeological work at Lamanai (the old "Indian Church" site in central Belize) has just been published in volume 8, number 2 of the Royal Ontario Museum's magazine Retunda. It was written by the Director of the Lamanai Expedition, David M. Pendergast, and not only describes the initial excavations and the discovery of unexpected burials during the first year, but also tells of some of the problems and frustrations involved in the transporting of equipment and supplies to the site by boat and the subsequent construction of the project camp. The article is illustrated with both color and black-and-white photographs and is highly recommended for those interested in Maya archaeology in Belize. Send \$1.25 to ROM, 100 Queens Park, Toronto, Ontario---M5S 2C6...



BOWL AND CLAY HEAD FROM LAMANAI

UNUSUAL LANGUAGE CUSTOM OF THE MAZATECOS OF OAXACA:

George M. Cowan of the Summer Institute of Linguistics has reported an unusual means of communication used by the Mazateco Indians of Oaxaca, Mexico, when they wish to converse without strangers knowing what they are saying. This is accomplished by the use of tones, not words, and they are able to carry on long conversations using only high, medium-high, medium-low, and low tones that are whistled in various combinations. It is considered a true language and used most often by the young and adolescents of Oaxaca...

"SIXTEENTH-CENTURY MEXICO" (THE WORK OF SAHAGUN):

In this book just published by The University of New Mexico Press, ten eminent scholars examine some of the problems presented by Fray Bernardino de Sahagun in his masterpiece of historical and anthropological writing: "General History of the Things of New Spain." Their findings constitute a report on the many facets of Sahagun's achievement, describing what is known of the man, his times, and his subject. Edited by Munro S. Edmonson, Tulane...

LAMANAI: A Mayan word meaning "drowned insect"---laman, drowned; ai, insect. (Name of Maya ruins in central Belize)

AZTEC MEDICINE: MAGIC, RELIGION AND SCIENCE:

In a recent study of 25 different Aztec medicinal herbs, it was found that by the standards which take the etymology of disease prevalent at the time into account, 16 of the plants would have produced most of the effects claimed in native sources. In addition, the report shows that 4 others may possibly have been active and only 5 did not possess any of the activity claimed by native informants. The results of this study are of particular interest because at the time of the Spanish Conquest the medicinal concepts of the Aztecs were known to be a mixture of magic, religion and science, and each disease was attributed to a specific deity. (For example, blisters and eye diseases were believed to be caused by Xipe Totec.) However, now the chemical components of some of the medicinal plants have been evaluated to such an extent, that although magic and religion were quite important to the Aztec treatment of disease, there was also a strong empirical underpinning which until this time has not received the attention it merits...

MEXICO DROPS TOURIST TAX:

The government of Mexico has announced that effective the first of July, the 15% food and beverage tax will no longer be imposed on any persons who can show proof of being in the country as a tourist. (Passport, T/card, etc.)...

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NEWSLETTER

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TIME VALUE

