

INSTITUTE OF MAYA STUDIES

OF THE MIAMI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

Newsletter



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Hal C. Ball, Editor

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MEETING NOTICE:

The February meeting of the Institute will be held in Lecture Room "A" in the Museum of Science on Wednesday, the 18th, at 8:00 p.m. (The auditorium is not available due to a special event being sponsored by the Museum on that night.) The program for the evening will be presented by Samuel Block and Charles Lacombe, whose topic will be "An Interpretation of Pages 12-18 of the Madrid Codex as a Visual Astronomical Computer." The technique of the application of graphics to an interpretation of these particular pages of the Madrid Codex will be explained, and also how their study led to the recognition that the columns for the hieroglyphics for days appearing in the top explanatory section formed repetitive geometric patterns. For use as a reference, it is suggested that you bring the November and December issues of the Miami MUSEUM Magazine with you to the meeting...

IMS SEVEN DAY MAYA/ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOUR PLANNED FOR MARCH:

IMS Tour Director, Len Schafer, has announced that the Institute will conduct a 7-day trip during March to the Maya sites of Altun Ha, Xunantunich, Copan and Quirigua. The trip will depart the Miami International Airport on March 20th and return on the 26th. The cost is \$375.00 (based on double occupancy) and it is requested that those interested send a deposit check for \$100.00 made out to "Mayaworld Tours" to Len Schafer at 1320 Tangelo Isle, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., 33315. (Tel. 522-2177 or 792-4713)...

NEW INSTITUTE FOR MESOAMERICAN RESEARCH:

A new Institute for Mesoamerican Research is now in the process of being established by the Department of Anthropology at SUNY Albany, and the governing body will include Robert A. Carmack (Quichean studies), Lyle Campbell (linguistics), Peter T. Furst (prehispanic art and ethnology) and Dean R. Snow (prehistory). In addition to a regular research staff, the Institute will also be able to draw on the ten MA and eight doctoral students actively engaged in Mesoamerican research and dissertation writing. Nancy Troike will serve as editor of a new journal, TLACUILOLLI, which is expected to be a joint sponsorship with the Sociedad Mexicana de Antropologia, and a monograph series tentatively titled "Anthropological Papers in Mesoamerican Studies," is also in the planning stage...

MURAL WITH MAYA CHARACTERISTICS FOUND AT CACAXTLA, MEXICO:

At the prehispanic city of Cacaxtla, a mural has been discovered that still has excellent coloration and is unusual in that it has Maya characteristics depicted in the painting. The mural is also marked by Teotihuacan elements such as aquatic animals, flowers and serpents, and is being preserved with the use of acrylics. Archaeologists, Daniel and Diana Molina, are working on the excavation and reconstruction of the site, which is located on one of the high mountains that overlooks the Valley of Puebla...

RESEARCH CONTINUING FOR PUBLICATION OF AN ATLAS OF MAYA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN YUCATAN, MEXICO:

In May of 1975, The National Geographic Society supported Edward B. Kurjack of Western Illinois University in a project designed to overview precolumbian settlement patterns in northwest Yucatan by field checking aerial photography. The results were so interesting that I.N.A.H. has employed Kurjack and his assistant, David Vleck, to work with their Atlas of Yucatan projects. The survey, which is now in its second phase, began near Dzibilchaltun and as of the first of 1976, over 300 sites have been plotted.

"THE ANCIENT MAYA AND THE EVOLUTION OF URBAN SOCIETY":

This is a paper written by William A. Haviland (University of Vermont) that examines the beginnings of urbanization at the ancient site of Tikal, Guatemala. It deals with the author's belief that the fundamental nucleating force at Tikal was a strong religion which focused on the uncertainties of swidden agriculture, and a hypothesis is suggested that a new ecological adaptation was required for nucleation to proceed to a point where urban living could become a reality. (Published by the Museum of Anthropology of the University of Northern Colorado. Misc. Series No. 37, 35 pages, 1975. No price given.)...

TWO NEW PUBLICATIONS ON THE MAYA FROM MIDDLE AMERICAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE:

Archaeological Investigations on the Yucatan Peninsula (No. 31) A series of 8 different reports on the Maya sites of Gruta de Chac, Dzibilchaltun, Ikil, Muna, Cancun and the Rio Bec area (10 authors).

Zacualpa, El Quiche, Guatemala: An Ancient Provincial Center of the Highland Maya. Robert Wauchope. 308 pp., 53 tables, 31 tabulations, 2 charts, 213 figures. (Cost of the publications not known at press time)...

A LATE PRECLASSIC ARCHITECTURAL COMPLEX AT CHIAPA DE CORZO:

The New World Archaeological Foundation has just released its latest paper on archaeological work being done in the Mexican state of Chiapas. This one, which is No. 37 in a continuing series, is entitled "Mound 1A, Chiapa de Corzo, Chiapas, Mexico." It was written by Pierre Agrinier, and consists of 43 pages of text, plus numerous photographs and line drawings. (N.W.A.F., Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602---\$2.50)...

AN UNUSUAL MAYA ARCHITECTURAL FEATURE
AT THE RUINS OF KIUIĆ:

While traveling in Yucatan during the first part of January, the editor had an opportunity to make a trip to the Maya ruins of Kiuić (Kewick), where a rather unusual example of Maya architecture was observed. My interest in the site had been aroused during a conversation in Merida with Tony and Mrs. Joann Andrews, and arrangements were made for Tony to accompany us and also take along David Vleck, who had a sketch map of the site. Because of the poor condition of the narrow side road southwest of Xul, it was necessary to walk some 2 km., but the weather was cool (for Yucatan) and upon arrival, I began photographing the temples and palaces that still retained standing walls. The most interesting of these was a building that had a decorative feature on the facade that consisted of a combination of high columns and adjacent diamond shaped stones. Each of the columns were formed by five different carefully sculptured round stones that were placed one on top of the other, and their height was almost eight feet. The diameters of the columns varied from approximately 13 to 17 inches, and the space between each pair was inset with a series of eight flat stones that had been cut in the shape of a diamond. (See photograph above.) According to Andres and Vleck, this type of decorative motif on a Maya building is unique, and has not been reported at any other site besides Kiuić...



FIELD WORK TO BEGIN AT ABAJ TAKALIK IN FEBRUARY:

John A. Graham, Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, has announced that during the month of February he will conduct a preliminary field season at the site of Abaj Takalik, located in the southern part of the Department of Quezaltenango, Guatemala. The primary objective of the 1976 season will be the mapping and excavation of new sculptures at the site with emphasis on potbelly sculpture and Olmec related sculpture and monuments with early Maya hieroglyphic texts...

EVIDENCE OF 5,000 YEAR-OLD CORN FOUND IN ECUADOR:

During archaeological excavations at the small village of Real Alto, Ecuador, Dr. Donald W. Lathrap of the University of Illinois has uncovered evidence that domesticated corn was used in this part of the country more than 5,000 years ago! Lathrap's finding is of particular interest (cont'd.)

because (1) it pushed back in time the early domestication of corn, (2) it reopens the question of where wild corn (now extinct) originated, and (3) it illuminates some of the cultural origins of later and greater Indian civilizations, such as the Maya. Carbon 14 tests conducted on some of the artifacts indicate a date well before 3,000 B.C., and continued field research will include attempting to confirm the reports that teosinte has been found growing in the tropical lowlands of northern South America...

TEOTENANGO:

A possible missing link between the Teotihuacan and later Toltec cultures may be Teotenango, the Place of the Sacred Walls. The site is located near Toluca, and according to archaeologist, Javier Galan Villegas, it is one of the few fortified cities of ancient Mexico that has been explored and is being scientifically excavated. At present, no formal cemetery has been found and most of the burials that have been discovered have been under the floors of the former houses and consist of two or three persons placed together. It is believed that the town was built and occupied by the Matlantzinca people, a culture probably developed c. A.D. 650, and excavation and restoration is under the direction of Dr. Roman Piña Chan. (Thanks to Carl Compton, Editor, THE INTERAMERICAN. V.22 No. 6)...



NEWSLETTER

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