

INSTITUTE OF MAYA STUDIES

OF THE MIAMI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

Newsletter



LAMAT

Hal C. Ball, Editor

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(May 12, 1976)



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MEETING NOTICE:

The Institute's regular monthly meeting will be held in the Museum of Science auditorium at 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 19th. The program for the evening will be presented by members who participated in the March IMS archaeological tour and will feature the Maya sites of Altun Ha, Xunantunich, Copan and Quirigua...

SYMPOSIUM ON MESOAMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY TO BE HELD IN CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND:

The second Cambridge Symposium on Recent Research in Mesoamerican Archaeology will be held at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge University, on August 28th-31st. The meeting will consist of single sessions and up to 30 papers will be accepted for full presentation. Accommodations are available at the College or nearby hotels and further information may be obtained by contacting the editor or writing to Dr. Norman Hammond, Centre for Latin American Studies, History Faculty, West Road, Cambridge, England...

NEW INFORMATION ON THE DISCOVERY OF YUCATAN BY PONCE DE LEON:

In an article in the April issue of American Antiquity (Vol. 41, No. 2), Michael P. Gloss presents new information relative to the discovery of Yucatan by Ponce de Leon in 1513. He believes this is confirmed by certain Texts in the books of Chilam Balam, which have several references indicating a probable Maya-Spanish contact in that year. The correlation of the Maya and Christian calendars is also discussed relative to a date recorded in the Chumayel as "when the mighty men arrived from the east," and the author concludes by suggesting that it may have been ill treatment by Ponce de Leon that provoked the hostility with which the Maya greeted Cordoba and his men in 1517...

CLASSIC MAYA POTTERY AT DUMBARTON OAKS:

This is a clothbound folio illustrating and analyzing 17 of the Maya vessels in the Dumbarton Oaks Pre-Columbian Collection in Washington, D.C. The text consists of 30 pages and the photographs of each vessel are in the form of looseleaf plates (11" X 17") of roll-out drawings in full color. (By Michael D. Coe, with plates by Felipe Davalos G. and Diane G. Peek.) Send \$20.00 to Dumbarton Oaks, 1703 32 St., Washington, D.C., 20007...

THE ETHNO-BOTANY OF THE MAYA AREA:

This book, which is considered a classic in anthropology and Maya Studies, is now available in reprint form from ISHI Publications, P. O. Box 2367, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103. The work is a transcription, translation, and study of Maya medical cures and is an important reference to ethnologists, archaeologists, botanists and students of pharmacology. (\$22.75 postpaid)...

NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM N.W.A.F. IN 1976:

The New World Archaeological Foundation has announced that the following Papers will be published in 1976:

Paper 30, Part 2: IZAPA SCULPTURE, by V. Garth Norman. 30pp., 210 figs.

Paper 31: IZAPA: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE RUINS AND MONUMENTS, by Gareth Lowe, T. A. Lee, Jr., and E. Martinez E. 100+pp. maps, 30 figs.

AUTHOR OFFERS NEW INTERPRETATION OF SYMBOLS OF THE OLMEC RELIGION:

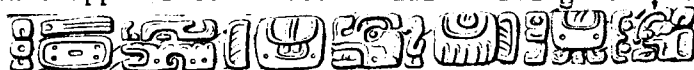
In his new book, Olmec Religion: A Key to Middle America and Beyond, Karl W. Luckert offers a new and revolutionary interpretation of the symbols of the oldest religion in Middle American civilization. He proposes that it was a serpent, not the commonly represented jaguar, which appears as the Olmec's religious symbol. His primary objective "is an interpretation of Olmec religious symbolism" and he emphasizes the history-of-religion approach, rather than the scientific or archaeological one previously used. 250 pages, 64 photographs and drawings. University of Oklahoma Press, \$9.95...

PERU AND ECUADOR STUDY/TRAVEL PROGRAMS FOR 1976:

During June, July and August, two cultural and educational programs in Peru and Ecuador are being offered by Portland State University. These will be in conjunction with the Catholic University of Quito and the Instituto Cultural Peruano Norteamericano in Lima and each program will consist of two weeks of seminars and two weeks of archaeological field trips. The first program (Ecuador) begins June 27. (See Editor's bulletin board for details.)...

SPECIAL EXHIBIT IN SAN SALVADOR FEATURES PRECOLUMBIAN MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:

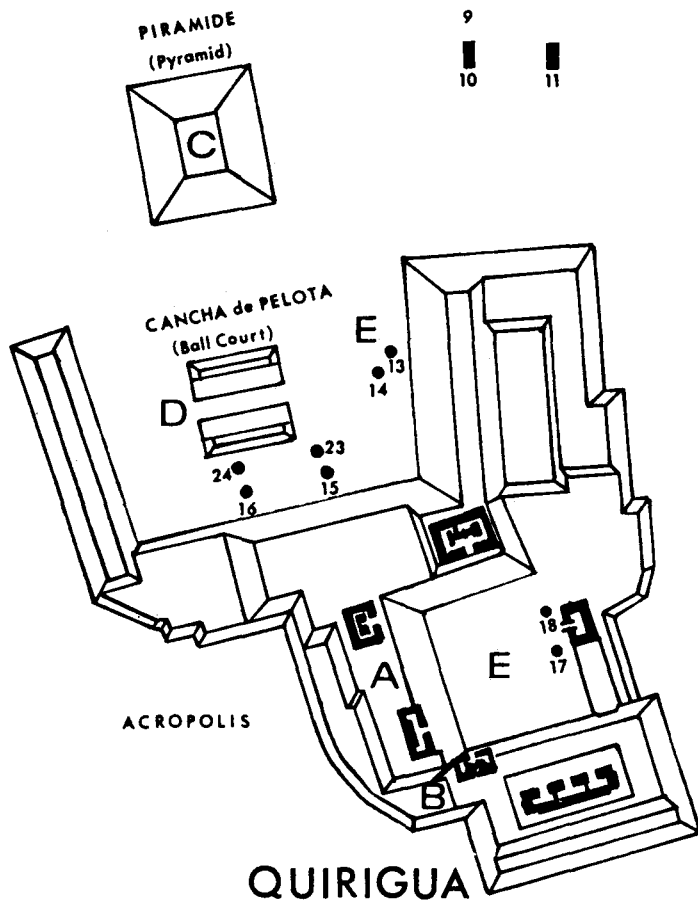
Now on exhibit in the west section of El Salvador's National Museum of Anthropology, is a select collection of the various types of pre-Columbian musical instruments that have been found throughout most of the country. Included in the exhibit are flutes, whistles and drums, and there is one example of a small flute in the form of a wheeled figurine. The exact tones of all the instruments have been identified and are indicated on a miniature bar of music that appears directly below the individual object. Several cross section drawings illustrate the arrangements of air passages within the clay instruments and above the exhibit case are two enlarged "roll-out" paintings of scenes from polychrome vases that depict pre-Columbian musicians participating in what appears to be ceremonial or religious processions...



EXCAVATIONS AT QUIRIGUA:

During the past two years excavations at Quirigua under the auspices of the University of Pennsylvania Museum have revealed new and somewhat unusual architectural features in the acropolis area of the Temple Plaza located at the south end of the site. Of particular interest was the discovery of a buried wall (A) that had three large mosaic stone masks on the outside of the wall facing west. All of the masks are similar in size and represent the Maya sun god, Kinich Ahau. Two of these are badly eroded, but the one at the south end of the wall still remains in good condition and the precisely cut stones show the detail of the mask very clearly. The wall is approximately 4 m. high and over 1 m. thick, and adjacent to each mask is a series of three window-like square openings. Careful examination by archaeologists working at the site indicates that the wall

was originally a free-standing structure and that it was not until a later date that the buildings adjoining it to the north and south were added to the complex. Archaeological investigations are also being conducted within the previously recorded stone structures that make up the acropolis of the Temple Plaza, and a corner mask (B) with especially prominent incisor teeth similar to the one reported by Morley (Carnegie, 1935) has been uncovered at the northwest corner of structure #2. During a conversation with Field Director, Robert Sharer and Christopher Jones, it was learned that the principal objective of the project is to determine the constructional history of the various structures and how it is tied in with the dates on the monuments. A chronological sequence of the pottery found at the site is also being prepared in the camp laboratory and may possibly be published during the coming year. Present plans are for the project to continue for two more years and in 1977 work will begin on the main pyramid (C), the ball court (D) and the removal of the thick layer of alluvial silt from the plaza floors (E).



THE ALARMING POPULATION RATES OF LATIN AMERICA:

In the recently published book on "World Population Estimates" by the Washington-based Environmental Fund, a warning is sounded of famine and death in Latin America unless an alarming population growth trend is not reversed. Estimates reveal that 327.6 million people already dwell in Latin America and that the figure is growing at an average rate of 2.9 per cent every year. The most disturbing thing about the figures is that the population is growing faster in the countries least able to afford it, such as Honduras and Panama. Also, by reason of the continuing high birth rates in Latin America, 40% of the national population is now under 15 years of age! Evidently the situation is much more serious than most people think, and such population control groups as those working for the Environmental Fund are endeavoring to arrive at a practical answer to the problem...

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE MOST ANCIENT RELIGIONS?

A publication up-dating all that is known about the Religions of Pre-historic times has recently been released by Centro Camundo Di Studi Preistorci in Italy. More than 50 authors have contributed to the book, which contains the Proceedings of the First International Symposium on Prehistoric Religions, and it explains some of the motivations behind the principal religions throughout the world. (See IMS Bulletin Board for more information.)



NEWSLETTER

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TIME VALUE

