

Museum are of his usual high quality, and each piece has a complete catalogue entry.

GEORGE KUBLER

Yale University

The Art of Two Worlds. Studies in Pre-Columbian and European Cultures. By ALFRED B. SCHUSTER. New York, 1959. Frederick A. Praeger. Figures. Plates. Index. Pp. 189. Cloth. \$10.00.

In this book the pre-Columbian and colonial arts of the Americas are compared and contrasted with European styles. The author points out the limitations of Toynbee's classification of cultures and the fallacy of a purely historical approach to early civilizations. Chapters on sculpture, painting, architecture, music and dance, literature, language and science present pertinent observations as to the differences in the "fundamental thinking processes." Schuster's thesis is that the American Indian has a plastic three-dimensional concept, in contrast to the linear or painterly preferences of European art. He wisely cautions against the *fata morgana* of the trans-Pacific importation of pre-Columbian civilization.

Among the 32 well-printed plates, a Maya relief is paired with one from classical Greece, the Caracol in Chichén Itzá with the mausoleum of Theodoric in Ravenna, and the architectural complex of the acropolis at Piedras Negras, Mexico, with the Spanish stairs in Rome. The 164 pages of text are augmented by 22 pages of commentary on the plates, offering considerable information and elucidation. The author displays an excellent knowledge of the vast literature of his various subjects. It is a refreshing work, with many original observations and the understanding and love of the arts of both worlds.

PÁL KELEMEN

Norfolk, Connecticut

Excavations at La Venta, Tabasco, 1955. By PHILIP DRUCKER, ROBERT F. HEIZER, and ROBERT J. SQUIER.

Washington, 1959. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology. Bulletin 170. Frontispiece. Illustrations. Appendixes by JONAS E. GULLBERG, GARNISS H. CURTIS, and A. STARKER LEOPOLD. Bibliography. Index. Pp. viii, 312.

This volume reports in great detail the extensive excavations of 1955 at La Venta, an isolated ceremonial center of the remarkable Olmec culture of southern Mexico. Considerable manpower was used to uncover areas that promised to throw light on the major constructional features at this site. Most of the work was done in Complex A, a court area just north of a truncated pyramid over 100 feet high. The results of this massive operation were gratifying, for important information was obtained on what was obviously a carefully planned ceremonial complex involving the nearby pyramid, a large ceremonial court, stone and brick-faced platforms, and several earthen mounds. With these structures were associated sculptured stone monuments and stelae, as well as a large number of dedicatory offerings that included mosaic pavement masks, pottery vessels, ceremonial celts, concave stone mirrors, human figurines and numerous ornaments made of jade, serpentine, and rock crystal.

Four constructional phases are demonstrated for Complex A, and a series of radiocarbon dates is interpreted by the authors as indicating a time span of 800 to 400 B. C. for this complex. They assign La Venta to the Formative or Preclassic stage of Mesoamerica. The concluding section of this volume contains a very useful résumé of opinion concerning the status of the Olmec culture.

T. N. CAMPBELL

University of Texas

Juan de Valdés y el pensamiento religioso europeo en los siglos XVI y XVII. By DOMINGO RICART. Mexico City, 1958. El Colegio de México. Index. Pp. 139. Paper.

Juan de Valdés is known in Spanish history as one of the Erasmists who