

The culture phase represented at each site is listed, and its location, date of discovery or exploration, principal investigators, and brief outline of the finds are presented.

The work is primarily a reference tool for archaeologists or historians interested in prehistory. General readers will not find a comprehensive discussion of the antiquity of man in Mexico and Central America but can, of course, refer to the numerous bibliographic sources included for detailed discussions. The work is a most thorough compilation.

It may be noted that the type of archaeology exemplified by this report has come of age in Middle America only recently. There is such a large number of ruins of villages, cities, and ceremonial centers of the great civilizations that evolved in Middle America that archaeologists have long tended to concentrate their attention upon these sites. Much information and great quantities of artifacts, many of extraordinary artistic value, have been recovered. Archaeological finds that consist of a few stone implements associated with bones of extinct animals or scraps of desiccated plants are far from spectacular, but they do furnish valuable information about the age, distribution, and types of cultures possessed by our earliest American Indians.

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Estudios de cultura Náhuatl. Vol. 3. México, 1962. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Instituto de Historia. Seminario de Cultura Náhuatl. Illustrations. Charts. Pp. 275. Paper.

Like its predecessors, this volume of *Estudios de cultura Náhuatl* consists of a series of essays by specialists on Mexican indigenous language and culture, stemming from the work of the Seminario de Cultura Náhuatl.

Nine papers are published, all relating to pre-Hispanic Indian civilizations. Ángel María Garibay K. describes the "international relations" of Aztec peoples, meaning by this relations

among the members of the Triple Alliance and between the Triple Alliance and its neighbors. Other topics studied are Aztec commerce by Miguel León-Portilla; Toltec culture by Demetrio Sodi M.; Aztec myths concerning the world of the dead by Vicente T. Mendoza; and the "paz azteca" by Rodolfo van Zantwijk. Siméon's summary of Náhuatl grammar is translated and commented upon by Enrique Torroella. Laurette Séjourné discusses the significance and the responsibility of Mexican archaeology. Finally, two students of the Seminario contribute papers: Armando Zárate on the "language of flowers" in the dialogue of Huexotzinco; and Lothar Knauth on a comparison of historical texts with his own experiences of hallucinations induced by mushrooms.

All the papers are worthwhile contributions to Mexican Indian studies. In technique and quality, though not in typography, they compare favorably with the materials of any scholarly journal. Now with three volumes in three years, the *Estudios* appears to be established as a regular annual.

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El pueblo del sol. 2nd ed. By ALFONSO CASO. México, 1962. Fondo de Cultura Económica. Illustrations. Bibliography. Indices. Pp. 136, Plates, xvi.

This is a reprint of a small classic in Mexican Indian studies, first published in 1953. *El pueblo del sol*, which has appeared in both English and Italian translation, is itself a revision and popularization of Caso's *La religión de los aztecas* (1936). It is generally considered to be the best short treatment of Aztec religion that we have.

Aztec religion was polytheistic, with a pantheon of deities of defined characteristics and a complex of magical, impersonal forces. Local gods were incorporated and subordinated to the Aztec tribal god, Huitzilopochtli. The famous assertions of monotheism by Nezahualcoyotl of Texcoco were intellectual and unpopular. The creation legends and the traits of particular gods

are described in some detail and illustrated (by Miguel Covarrubias) after codex paintings. There are sections on calendrical ritual and priestly organization. Aztec religion is analyzed as a fundamental native value governing Indian attitudes toward work, life, and society, in some degree, even to the present time.

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Venezuelan Archaeology. By IRVING ROUSE & JOSÉ M. CRUXENT. New Haven, 1963. Yale University Press. Illustrations. Appendices. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 179. Cloth. \$7.50.

The present volume is an effort by the authors to reduce their two-volume work, *An Archeological Chronology of Venezuela*, published in 1961 by the Pan American Union, to "simpler form for the benefit of the nonspecialist and layman interested in Venezuelan archeology" (p. vii).

Unfortunately, the goal is not met. The volume is difficult to read, terminology is highly technical, and periods (Paleo-Indian, Meso-Indian and Neo-Indian) are described in terms of series, styles, and complexes of stone artifacts and pottery that can interest only the specialist. A reader gets the impression that the pre-Spanish inhabitants of Venezuela spent their full time inventing local pottery styles without contact with or influence from the rest of South America, the Caribbean islands, or Central America. A popular book should create a dynamic picture of the way of life during each epoch and its adaptation to a variety of geographic situations that range from savanna to mountains to coast to tropical forest and to the network of rivers and tributaries. Compared to recent popular books on pre-Columbian Mexico and Peru by specialists, the historian will find Rouse and Cruzent very uninteresting reading.

As a reference work it must be used with caution. There are some bad errors resulting from contradiction between C-14 dates in the text as compared to listing in the Appendix table, assump-

tions made by the authors which later they state as if fact to argue proof of their point of view, and an almost total lack of recognition that the artificial modern political boundary of Venezuela has no bearing on aboriginal cultures of the past.

The two volume version published by the Pan American Union in both English and Spanish is equally readable, much better illustrated, and far more economically priced.

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A History of Spain. By JEAN DESCOLA. Translated from the French by ELAINE P. HALPERIN. New York, 1963. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Charts. Index. Pp. viii, 483, xi. \$7.50.

M. Descola chooses to see Spain "as a living person" and organizes his chapters in the image of personalities: the Cid, Ferdinand and Isabella, Charles V, Philip II, the ineffectual monarchs and militarists since 1788, and General Franco. Although he includes the most significant events, his book is not a formal interpretation of the structure of Spain's history but, rather, a somewhat sensuous appreciation of her mysteries and frustrations.

Charles V is portrayed as a king for whom Spanish affairs were "merely an additional concern," but the author demonstrates how thoroughly the emperor's obsession with heresy permeated Spanish life until after the death of Philip II and how the resultant ideal of national Catholicism would reappear with the Carlists and with the last Civil War. Descola implicitly suggests a unifying thread of ambivalence, due largely to the subjugation of national principle to personal endeavor, in several leaders, including the Cid ("man with two swords"), Cortés, Isabel II—of execrable memory, and Franco, everybody's yet nobody's ally. But as Stendhal is quoted (p. 453), the Spaniards are possibly "the last individuals left in Europe," and Descola succeeds in convincing us that personal principle is at once their flaw and virtue.