

BACKGROUND

Research and Reflections in Archaeology and History: Essays in Honor of Doris Stone. Edited by E. WYLLYS ANDREWS, V. New Orleans: Middle American Research Institute, 1986. References. Figures. Index. Pp. viii, 217. Cloth.

The Archaeology of Santa Leticia and the Rise of Maya Civilization. By ARTHUR A. DEMAREST. New Orleans: Middle American Research Institute, 1986. Tables. Figures. Plates. Maps. References. Index. Pp. xiii, 272. Cloth.

Research and Reflections in Archaeology and History is a collection of papers assembled to honor Doris Stone, a pioneering figure in the archeology of Central America, who is especially known for her work in Honduras and Costa Rica. The authors of the papers are scholars representing personal or institutional associations with Stone, and unfortunately their diversity prevents any thematic coherence in the volume. Besides a summary of Stone's career and compilation of her bibliography by Stephen Williams, only two papers treat Central American archeology (perhaps indicating that the field in which she pioneered still has a long way to go before being saturated by scholars). One of these is an amusing tongue-in-cheek reflection on the state of Honduran archeology by Agurcia; the other, by Lange, compares Central America with the Southwestern U.S., as two peripheries of the larger light of Mesoamerica. Seven papers treat various aspects of Mesoamerican archeology, including Olmec jades in the Maya area (Andrews), the Olmec calendar round (Edmonson), an important interpretation of Mars astronomical tables in the Dresden Codex (Bricker and Bricker), Yucatecan sculpture (M. Robertson), reflections on the Maya sociopolitical order (Willey), styles of Aztec sculpture (D. Robertson), and the history of Colonial Mexico's college of San Juan de Letrán (Greenleaf). One paper treats non-New World issues entirely, as Lamberg-Karlovsky provides a thought-provoking comparison of the origins of writing in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Indus valley.

The Archaeology of Santa Leticia is one of a growing number of monographs to emerge from one of the current "hot topics" in Maya archeology: the study of the area known as the "Southeast Periphery," i.e., modern Honduras and El Salvador. This region is of particular interest to Mayanists in the Late Preclassic period because of longstanding (if vague) theories concerning interrelationships between this frontier area and the lowlands which stimulated the development of Classic Maya civilization.

Santa Leticia is a small domestic and ceremonial site located in western El Salvador, and excavations at portions of the site dating between 500 B.C. and A.D. 100 have made substantial strides in resolving many of these questions. Although work at the site was initiated to investigate the nature of Middle Preclassic Olmec influences (reflected in the "potbelly" sculptures common on the Pacific

coast), the serendipitous discovery of a Late Preclassic domestic area—a house and storage facilities—demanded a revised excavation strategy. This resulted in the major achievement of the study: a detailed characterization of life in a Late Preclassic highland village, including tools, utensils, diet, and trade. The monograph is probably too technical to be of serious interest to most *HARR* readers, as it devotes many pages to description of ceramic types plus ten appendixes on lithics, botanical remains, technical analyses, etc. For specialists, however, it will be an important contribution to our understanding of this part of the Maya area.

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PRUDENCE RICE

The Southeast Maya Periphery. Edited by PATRICIA A. URBAN and EDWARD M. SCHORTMAN. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986. Drawings. Maps. Tables. Photographs. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 399. Cloth. \$37.50.

This volume represents the first major attempt to deal with the archeology of the Southeastern Maya Periphery as a distinctive area. The primary focus is on the reporting and interpretation of extensive field research conducted in southeastern Guatemala, western Honduras, and El Salvador during the last decade; together, the 22 papers by 21 archeologists represent an up-to-date synthesis of the archeology of the region.

The first half of the volume presents new information on the recent investigations at the Classic Maya sites of Quirigua, Guatemala and Copán, Honduras, and includes papers on history, chronology, settlement patterns, architecture, sculpture, iconography, epigraphy, and ceramics. Several studies explore the nature of the relationships between these sites and the adjoining periphery during the Classic period. An issue of central concern is the history of the interrelationships between the two sites; new readings of the hieroglyphic texts raise the possibility of Quirigua's conquest and domination of Copán in the eighth century, though the contributors are not in total agreement on the particulars of this reconstruction of events. The papers in this section of the volume are discussed in a summary paper by Gordon Willey.

The second half of the book contains studies of the greater southeast region beyond Copán and Quirigua. These cover a time span from Middle Preclassic to the Late Postclassic times and include a revision of the early ceramic sequence from Playa de los Muertos, Honduras (Nedenia Kennedy), a regional study of the Late Preclassic ceramic spheres of the southeastern highlands (Arthur Demarest and Robert Sharer), a study of the effects of the Protoclassic eruption of the Ilopango volcano in the Zapotitlán Valley of El Salvador (Payson Sheets), settlement pattern studies of the Sula, Comayagua, and Naco valleys of Honduras (Eugenia Robinson, Ricardo Agurcia, and Patricia Urban, respectively), as well as papers on Postclassic developments at Cihuatán, El Salvador (Karen Bruhns) and Naco,