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Introduction

This is the third in a series of volumes intended to make available the corpus of primary data and interpretative studies produced by archaeologists and anthropologists throughout the Maya region under the umbrella of the Division of Historical Research of the Carnegie Institution of Washington (CIW).

The history and many accomplishments and criticisms of the Carnegie Maya program are presented elsewhere (Weeks and Hill 2006; see also Black 1990; Brunhouse 1971; Castañeda 1996; Givens 1989, 1992; Harris and Sadler 2003; Sullivan 1989; Taylor 1948; Woodbury 1954) and need not be repeated here. Suffice it to say that between 1914 and 1958 the Carnegie Institution of Washington sponsored archaeological and other investigations throughout the Maya region of southern Mexico and northern Central America. During these four decades the CIW was the leader in the field, with monetary and human resources that no university or other research program could match, then or since. The more than 300 publications produced by CIW researchers remain an important, indeed essential, resource for modern scholars. The CIW program is no more; although its framework has been modified, expanded, and replaced by several generations of new scholars. Its legacy stands as a firm foundation upon which an entire discipline has been constructed.

The Carnegie Institution of Washington series *Notes on Middle American Archaeology and Ethnology*, according to the original preface, was begun in 1940 “to give circulation to those random bits of information which all anthropologists accumulate in the

field, the museum, and the library,” which might be considered too unimportant, brief, or restricted to be submitted for publication. However, the papers included in the series have not been limited to a record of facts. Such short notes are often of great interest to the specialists for whose use they are designed and to whom their distribution is restricted. The series was intended primarily as an outlet for the staff of the Carnegie Institution of Washington. The editor, J. Eric S. Thompson, and the head of the division, Alfred V. Kidder, contributed 39 (30 percent) of the 131 articles that compose the series. Approximately 35 percent of the authors had no professional affiliation with the Carnegie Institution of Washington (Table 1).

The majority of the essays are on archaeological subjects (56 percent), followed by epigraphy (17 percent), ethnohistory and ethnography (each 12 percent), and linguistics (1.5 percent), among which those on Mayan are most numerous (80 percent). The subject and regional distribution of essays in *Notes of Middle American Archaeology and Ethnology* are given in Tables 2 and 3.

The *Notes* were first issued on letter-sized paper, and on only one side of the sheet. The page format was modified in the second volume. The paper used was thick and the book bulky and heavy, nearly three pounds in weight and almost 1.5 inches in thickness. At least four different formats were tried, and the second volume is in a fifth, as well as paper of slightly different stock and size. In the last four, comprising the final fifteen articles, insufficient margins were

left, especially at the right and the bottom, probably an ill-advised means of saving paper. However, as J. Alden Mason commented in his review of the first volume, "Middle Americanists, especially those with short contributions writhing for birth, welcome this new series with enthusiasm" (Mason 1944:212).

The 131 essays that make up the *Notes on Middle American Archaeology and Ethnology* series have been digitized and converted into files that could be manipulated. Other than some formatting revisions and obvious typographical errors, no changes were made. In addition, illustrations in the original series followed text. Wherever possible, illustrations have been integrated into the text in the present edition.

The concept of rapid dissemination of research results did not originate with the *Notes of Middle American Archaeology and Ethnology* series. The University of Pennsylvania conducted excavations at Piedras Negras along the Usumacinta River from 1931 to 1939. The initial publication outlet, the *Preliminary Papers*, consisted of five reports issued between 1933 and 1936. This series served as an expedient solution to the problem of publishing of the massive amounts of data being produced by researchers at the site. The series editor, Linton Satterthwaite, recognized the shortcomings of the *Preliminary Papers* but also realized that the dissemination of this work was important and that there was little hope of a more luxurious publication for the results of this research during the height of the Great Depression (Weeks, Hill, and Golden 2005:3). The *Preliminary Papers* series was eventually followed by five more reports in the *Piedras Negras Archaeology: Architecture* series, published between 1943 and 1950.

Two years after the first issuance of *Notes*, a similar series was initiated by the Middle American Research Institute at Tulane University. Titled *Middle American Research Records*, the first volume of the series, edited by Robert Wauchope, represents work published between 1942 and 1950. The sixteen articles considered archaeology (9), ethnography (4), physical anthropology (2), and the chemical analysis of clay from El Salvador. These articles appeared at irregular intervals and were distributed immediately upon being written. In this way the relatively inexpensive method of lithoprinting made it possible for scholars to keep abreast of current research without the usual long wait associated with anthropological publishing. The reviewer, Borhegyi, notes that only the Middle American Research Institute and the Carnegie Institution of Washington used this system of rapid publication of short articles. When an appropriate number of essays are published, they are compiled and edited with a table of contents. However, unlike the *Notes on Middle American Archaeology and*

Ethnology, the *Research Records* are not issued with an index (Borhegyi 1953).

Since that time, especially with the advent of digital media, rapid publication has become commonplace, especially in the subdiscipline of epigraphy. Some recent efforts include:

Copan Notes. Tegucigalpa: Copan Mosaics Project/Instituto Hondureño de Antropología e Historia, nos. 1–103, 1986–1993. In 1986, Linda Schele and David Stuart initiated *Copan Notes*, a series of short informal reports and papers deriving from their collaborative work in deciphering the hieroglyphic inscriptions of Copan, Honduras. Over time the *Copan Notes* expanded in their authorship and in their scope and quickly became a significant outlet for some of the cutting-edge epigraphic research of the time. The series was produced until 1993 under the auspices of the Copan Mosaics Project, directed by William Fash, Harvard University, and the Instituto Hondureño de Antropología e Historia (IHAIH). The digital archive is available at <http://www.utmesoamerica.org/CopanNotes.php>.

Glyph Dwellers. Davis: University of California, Davis, Department of Native American Studies, nos. 1–25, 1997–2008. An occasional publication of the Maya Hieroglyphic Database Project at the University of California, Davis, *Glyph Dwellers* is published by Martha J. Macri and Matthew G. Looper with the purpose of making available recent discoveries about ancient Maya culture, history, iconography, and Mayan historical linguistics deriving from the project. The digital archive is available at <http://nas.ucdavis.edu/NALC/glyphdwellers.html>.

Mesoweb, An Exploration of Mesoamerican Cultures. This site is maintained as a public service by Joel Skidmore and Marc Zender and provides an online presence for the Pre-Columbian Art Research Institute (PARI) and the Boundary End Archaeology Research Center (BEARC). *Mesoweb* is devoted to the ancient cultures of Mexico and adjacent Central America, including the Maya, as seen through archaeology and the written inscriptions left by the Maya themselves.

Research Reports on Ancient Maya Writing. Washington, DC; Barnardville, North Carolina: Center for Maya Research, nos. 1–62, 1985–2007. The Center for Maya Research publishes the *Research Reports on Ancient Maya Writing* (RRAMW), whose subject matter includes "interpretative works dealing with both Maya hieroglyphic writing and iconography, with emphasis on the former; issues of interest and utility

on the history and bibliography of Maya research; and the presentation of new texts and, when deemed desirable, the revision of previously available drawings of hieroglyphic texts.” The digital archive is available at <http://www.precolumbia.com/bearc/cmr/reports.html>.

The Texas Notes. Austin, nos. 1–80, 1990–1997. This series was produced by Linda Schele and other scholars during the early 1990s and offered numerous foundational observations and ideas about Maya hieroglyphic decipherment and iconographic interpretation. The digital archive is available at http://www.utmesoamerica.org/texas_notes.php.

Wayeb Notes. Bonn, nos. 1–28, 2003–2008. The *Wayeb Notes* series is an online series published by the European Association of Mayanists to provide scholars with rapid and seamless dissemination of research results from all subdisciplines of Maya studies. The digital archive is available at <http://www.wayeb.org/wayebnotes/archive.php>.

During the course of assembling this volume I was enthusiastically encouraged by numerous friends and colleagues. Special acknowledgment is

made to Ms. Tina MacDowell and John Strom at the Carnegie Institution of Washington headquarters in Washington, DC, for their support of the project. Dr. Richard Meserve, president of the Carnegie Institution, is aware of the project and has expressed amazement that data collected by the Division of Historical Research still has scholarly significance after nearly fifty years. While a graduate student I met with A. Ledyard Smith in Cambridge and Robert Wauchope in Guatemala City to discuss their archaeological work in the Guatemala highlands. Both men were generous with their knowledge and supportive of a novice. Since that time my interest in the Carnegie Maya Project has been sustained through conversations with Jeremy A. Sabloff and Robert Schuyler, both of whom had worked with Smith at the lowland Maya site of Seibal. Mrs. Mary Ricketson Bullard, whose parents and husband were Carnegie archaeologists whose contributions spanned from Chichen Itza, Baking Pot, and Uaxactun in the 1920s and 1930s to Mayapan in the 1950s, remains a limitless source of Carnegie oral history. Mrs. Bullard also has generously gifted to the library of the University of Pennsylvania Museum the photographic collection of William R. Bullard.