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17. Some Mexican Clay Heads.

Author(s): A. C. Breton

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CLAY HEADS FROM METEPEC, NEAR TOHICA, MEXICO.

ORIGINAL ARTICLES.

Archæology.

With Plate C.

Breton.

Some Mexican Clay Heads. *By A. C. Breton.*

17

The small clay heads, found in great numbers in the fields covering the site of Teotihuacan, are known in museums chiefly from one type with closely shaven head, although there are several other kinds, including some with elaborate head-dresses characterising certain divinities. After having visited many ancient sites, collecting the small objects brought to the surface year after year by rain and cultivation, it may be said that the shaven heads are peculiar to Teotihuacan and are found nowhere else.

In fields near Otumba (beyond Teotihuacan) there was such a profusion of clay heads, obsidian arrow points, &c., that after a week's collecting I threw away two baskets full, whilst bringing away a very large quantity. These were varied in character. Round Tlaxcala, within a radius of five or six miles, on almost every bare space of tepetate, small heads, human and animal, were strewn about. On a hill some miles from Apizaco (north of Tlaxcala), there must have been an altar or temple to a goddess of maternity, judging from the feminine figurines which my servant found there. These were sent to the National Museum at Washington, but failed to arrive.

Almost every site in that region has its distinctive type of the little heads. Those in Plate C are from Metepec, a hill-site in the plain of Toluca, beyond the mountains that shut in the valley of Mexico to the north-west. Although much battered and archaic in style, they are worth reproducing for the treatment of the eyes, which consist of double hollows separated by a ridge, with no pretension to represent the actual eye. Such noses as remain to them are unlike the usual Mexican type, also the peculiar head-dresses. The backs of the heads are quite flat. Decorated pots and "idols" were dug up at Metepec, but were carried off by an American collector about twenty years ago. The hill had been long under cultivation, but was known locally for the antiquities found there.

Miss H. Newell Wardle, of the Museum of the Academy of Sciences at Philadelphia, has looked over their large Mexican collections, and finds only three clay heads the eyes of which are treated similarly to these of Metepec, with surrounding ridges. Only one of these has the centre ridge. No provenance was given with them when received by the museum.

It is worth noting that the votive heads, held (by the long black hair) by the figures on the Ica tapestries,* have double eyes. These are two white quadrangular spaces enclosed by a dark line, which also divides them. None of the many other eyes in these tapestries are so treated.

All the Mexican clay heads need to be seen in the same lighting in which they were made, especially the more finely wrought ones of Teotihuacan. In a diffused light (as in a museum), the delicate details do not show, and they come out badly in a photograph, but when seen in a room lighted only by a door, Mexican fashion, many of them are surprisingly vivid, and real works of art. The heads illustrated are from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to nearly 7 cm. high. No trace of colour remains on them.

Also illustrated in the Plate is a polished stone frog, purchased at the Indian town of Zacatlan, near the northern border of the State of Puebla, and on the edge of the barranca that ends the high plateau there. The ancient site was covered with young barley at the time of my visit, so could not be investigated. The frog is of unusually hard, close grained rock, specific gravity 2.345, and appears from the shape to have been made from a celt. It is a rare specimen and I gave it to the National Museum at Washington, where it is among their best polished stone

* See MAN, 1918, 22, Fig. 4. Owing to the dark colouring it is difficult to see the details.

objects and is the only one of its kind. The dimensions are 8.3 cm. by 4.3 cm. The hollows show as pale lines, like most Mexican carvings. There are only four digits on each extremity. The officials of the National Museum kindly permitted me to make all these drawings during a recent visit.

The frog is intimately associated with the coming of rain in Mexico (also in Peru), and the specimen has hands uplifted in a praying attitude whilst the tongue hangs out as if with thirst. It is a fact that the frogs croak at the end of the long dry season when every one is looking at the sky and hoping for a shower, and cattle in the fields low, "calling the rain." Mexicans say the frogs pray for rain, and in Yucatan the croaking of the large frog is a sure sign of rain within three days. Their contented thankful chant afterwards sounds quite differently.

A. C. BRETON.

New Mexico: Folklore.

Parsons.

Mothers and Children at Laguna. By Elsie Clews Parsons.

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Wana's baby was two weeks old on my last (1918) visit to Laguna, and as the baby lay in her belhooded board cradle on the floor or, still in her compartment, on the lap of her mother or her great-aunt, our talk led naturally from her and her short experience to ways with babies in general. Like other Pueblo Indian babies, she had been taken outdoors and presented to the gods. On the fourth morning of her life, before sunrise, one of the two surviving medicine-men of Laguna, the *shiwanna* (thunder) *cheani* came to the house and laid out on the floor of the upper room of the two-storied house his altar paraphernalia. Wana made for me the following diagram of the altar :—

The *iyetik* is a fetich or symbol of the deity within the earth, a deity who is to the Keresans a source of being and the most revered of all their supernaturals, *naiya*