

embracing both science and the Christian faith. One need not subscribe to one or the other in order to benefit from reading this book. It is Dodson's splendid achievement to make one think while one learns. This book should enjoy wide appeal among those who care about the spiritual welfare of humanity.

Cenote of Sacrifice: Maya Treasures from the Sacred Well at Chichen Itza

Clemency Coggins and Orrin C. Shane III, eds.

Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984. 175 pp. \$35.00 (cloth), \$24.50 (paper)

Reviewer: Arthur Demarest

Vanderbilt University

This exhibit catalogue presents photographs and interpretations of Harvard's Peabody Museum collection of artifacts recovered from the Sacred *Cenote*, a natural well that was the central feature of the site of Chichen Itza on the Yucatan peninsula. Offerings cast into the well reflect the importance of the Chichen *cenote* as a shrine of the later Maya civilization (circa A.D. 800-1500). The catalogue covers many of the well's art treasures of jade, gold, ceramic, and bone, as well as rare examples of Maya wood and textile artifacts that were preserved by the mud of the well's depths.

The core of this volume is a catalogue of 300 objects presented in excellent black-and-white and color photographs, with occasional line drawings to clarify features of form or iconography. The careful visual presentation is matched by the quality of the text. A series of introductions by Gordon Willey, Linnea Wren and Clemency Coggins provide a general background on the Maya civilization, the site of Chichen Itza, and the excavations that recovered the Peabody Museum collection. Of particular importance is Wren's discussion (pp. 20-21) of the controversy on the chronology and culture history of Chichen Itza. Given its relevance to the study of the *cenote* offerings, the treatment of these issues is somewhat brief, although it does include most major positions and references to more extensive analyses of the dating question. Serious readers should refer to some of these sources and should keep in mind the chronological problems throughout their reading of this work.

In the catalogue itself, Coggins takes a highly interpretive, yet insightful approach to the collection. The descriptions are organized according to proposed major stages in the evolution of *cenote* ritual practices and offering style. As Coggins does not detail the sources for this chronology, it is not clear to what degree her stages are based upon object style, the minimal *cenote* stratigraphic evidence, or a variant of the disputed ceramic sequences for northern Yucatan. Nonetheless, the proposed stages form coherent clusterings of artifacts and an interesting framework for interpretations of both individual pieces and the overall evolution of *cenote* ritual. The catalogue descriptions themselves often go beyond standard treatment to discuss original perspectives on broader ideological themes, or the cultural and historical significance of the object. Alternative views are also considered.

The final section of the work (pp. 157-165) is a separate essay on the murals of Chichen's Temple of the Jaguars. Coggins contends that the murals form a sequence of scenes which are ordered according to the daily cycle of the sun and Venus — a metaphor for their representations of the historical struggle between the Mexican Venus-worshipping invaders and the local, more solar-oriented Maya. Coggins's

thesis is convincing, both in application to individual murals and as an assessment of their relationship.

Overall, this work is an outstanding study of a unique, contextually related, and extremely important corpus of pre-Columbian art. The excellence of visual presentations, thorough descriptions and insightful new analyses make it of interest to both general readers and specialists. These qualities also raise our expectations for the final volumes on the *cenote* materials that are now in preparation.

Micmac Lexicon

Albert D. DeBlois and Alphonse Metallic

Ottawa, Ontario: National Museum of Man Mercury Series, Canadian Ethnology Service Paper Number 91, 1984. xvii + 392 pp. gratis (paper)

Reviewer: Lawrence F. Van Horn

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This lexicon is intended for teachers, students, writers, “and any others who may have occasion to utilize the Micmac language” (p. vi). Micmac is the Algonquian language of the North American Indians with the same name who are located in the Gaspé Peninsula in Québec and in eastern New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia in Canada. Following a brief introduction on dialectal variation and orthography, this book is divided into Micmac-English and English-Micmac sections.

Since the written form of Micmac is still developing, one can debate in the classical sense about orthography. DeBlois and Metallic use the grave accent to mark vowel length with the indication that this is a “far-reaching modification” (p. vii) of Father Pacifique’s seminal work (1939). On the other hand, one could use pedagogic value to double the length of Micmac vowels in a simple and elegant way.

Because DeBlois and Metallic assume familiarity with the Micmac language, they do not provide introductory remarks on grammar. By contrast, relatively recent works on the Micmac language by both Williams (1972) and Fidelholtz (1968) provide a brief grammar. Such information is indeed helpful, and would make the work of DeBlois and Metallic more valuable even if it were regarded as unnecessary by some users.

As a final point, this lexicon is missing certain double entendres that add zest and fun to the Micmac penchant for punning. Nevertheless, we must welcome this worthwhile addition to the literature on the Micmac language and look forward to new editions. Happily, DeBlois and Metallic anticipate that “the number of entries in future editions will be expanded several fold” (p. vi).

References Cited

Fidelholtz, James L.

1968 Micmac Morphophonemics. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Ph.D. Dissertation in Linguistics.