Anthropology in Mexico

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Anthropology students at the National University of Mexico receive their degrees in "specialistas de historia". The Mexican students have had very little interest in anthropology, but recently there has been more attention paid to the sciences. The majority of the American students at the University are interested in receiving degrees in Modern Languages with the view to teaching Spanish in the States. A number of students, however, are drawn from the United States because of the remarkable opportunities in studying ancient American culture.

Because of the government's great interest in its vast Indian population and its extensive programs of field research in the primitive communities, ethnology is beginning to attract the attention of the students of the social sciences. Classes in Nahuatl and Maya languages are popular and field work is required of every student in ethnology courses.

About half a block from the school of "Filosofia Y Letras" (equivalent to our College of Arts and Sciences) is the National Museum. Here is a vast collection of archaeological specimens from all parts of Mexico, Sonora and Yucatan. A student's best opportunity to study is at the museum; there he may make use of large collections of maps, photographs, reconstructions, and material from Toltec, Zapotec, Mixtecan and other minor cultures. One of the several small libraries in the museum is devoted to archaeological literature, and of special interest in this room is the collection of old documents and manuscripts. With a group of trained museum technicians at work remodeling, rearranging, and re-lighting the building, this great wealth of material will be far more effective.

The opportunities of the archaeologists will be doubled in a few months by the opening of an institute for the archaeological research under the leadership of Alfonso Caso, one of the leading archaeologists in the Mexican field. This new feature in addition to the opportunities offered by the University and Museum and the comparatively low cost of education in Mexico will probably attract more foreign students in the future.

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