

they enclosed their ashes in statues of pottery made hollow.<sup>611</sup> The rest of the people of position made for their fathers wooden statues of which the back of the head was left hollow, and they then burned a part of the body and placed its ashes there, and plugged it up; afterwards they stripped off the dead body the skin of the back of the head and stuck it over this place and they buried the rest as they were wont to do.<sup>612</sup> They preserved these statues with a great deal of veneration among their idols. They used to cut off the heads of the old lords of Cocom, when they died, and after cooking them they cleaned off the flesh, and then sawed off half the crown on the back, leaving the front part with the jaws and teeth. Then they replaced the flesh which was gone from these half-skulls by a kind of bitumen, and gave them a perfect appearance characteristic of those whose skulls they were.<sup>613</sup> They kept these together with the statues with the ashes, all of which they kept in the oratories of their houses with their idols, holding them in very great reverence and respect. And on all the days of their festivals and rejoicings, they made offerings of foods to them, so that food should not

(Footnote 610 continued from page 130)

Urns with cremated remains, together with elaborate grave offerings, have been found in the interior of many pyramidal structures. With but few exceptions whenever a temple mound has been carefully excavated, these deposits have been encountered. Note E. H. Thompson's work (1938) at the High Priest's grave, that of the Mexican government at the Castillo (see Carnegie Inst., 1937), and that of the Carnegie Institution at the Temple of the Warriors (Morris *et al.*, 70-82), all at Chichen Itza. See also the Carnegie Institution work at Uaxactun (Ricketson and Ricketson), the temple at Holmul (Merwin and Vailant), and Thompson, 1940, 132.

Another method of urn burial is encountered in the Maya area where the body, in some cases undismembered, is placed in a squatting position inside an enormous urn. Thompson (1939, 285) describes this method of disposing of the dead. For a discussion of cremation, see the Wauchope paper delivered before the Mexican Congress in 1939.

<sup>611</sup> Landa, as noted before, describes in two other places cremated burial he himself saw at Izamal. The author knows of no burial containing ashes in hollow pottery statues." The effigy jars of very coarse clay, found principally on the eastern coast of Yucatan and associated with the very latest period of Maya history, may be the type of "statue" described here by Landa. For an extension, see Gann, 1918, Pls. 20, 119. See N. 502 for a discussion of Landa's terms, "statue," "image," etc.

<sup>612</sup> Small wooden statues have been recovered from the Cenote of Sacrifice at Chichen Itza. On wooden armatures with sticks for arms and legs are molded copal and rubber dyes with arms, legs and heads. In one of them there is a

fail them in the other life, where they thought that their souls reposed, and where their gifts were of use to them.

This people has always believed in the immortality of the soul,<sup>614</sup> more than many other nations, although they have not reached such a high state of civilization; for they believed that there was another and better life, which the soul enjoyed when it separated from the body. They said that this future life was divided into a good and a bad life—into a painful one and one full of rest. The bad and the painful one was for the vicious people, while the good and the delightful one was for those who had lived well according to their manner of living.<sup>615</sup> The delights which they said they were to obtain, if they were good, were to go to a delightful place, where nothing would give them pain and where they would have an abundance of foods and drinks of great sweetness, and a tree which they call there *yaxche*, very cool and giving great shade, which is the ceiba, under the branches and the shadow of which they would rest and forever cease from labor.<sup>616</sup> The penalties of a bad life, which they said that the bad would suffer, were to go to a

hole at the back of the wooden body in which ashes may have been placed as described by Landa.

<sup>613</sup> From the Cenote of Sacrifice at Chichen Itza, a skull has been recovered with the crown cut away, eye sockets filled with wooden plugs, and with remains of painted plaster over the face, evidently attempting a lifelike appearance.

<sup>614</sup> Compare Cogolludo, 4, VII. For beliefs of the Mayas and the Lacandones in the future life, see Tozzer, 1907, 156-7.

<sup>615</sup> This doctrine of retribution with a heaven and a hell seems almost surely to have been a reflection of Christian teaching. Redfield and Villa (374) write in connection with this passage, "We are presented with a parallel so close to Christian ideas and so different from Aztec and Indian thinking generally, that we suspect the correctness of his report."

<sup>616</sup> Compare Herrera, 4, 10, IV (Appendix A). According to the Avendaño Ms. (29, given by Means, 135-6, quoted by Genet, 1: 232-3, and by Roys, 1933, 102) the *yax cheel cab*, the "first tree in the world," is represented at Peten Itza by "the fragment of a column . . . made of stones placed on top of each other . . . it is like a table with round pedestal, upon which . . . there stands out towards the west a stone mask, very ill-formed which, together with the stone column, the petty king and the rest of his family and followers worship. The said column is called . . . *yax cheel cab* which means in their language 'the first tree in the world' . . . they wish to have it known they worship it because it is the tree of whose fruit our first father Adam ate." In the Chumayel (102) we read, "The first tree of the world was rooted fast."

(Footnote 616 continued on page 132)

place lower than the other, which they called *Metnal*, which means "hell,"<sup>617</sup> and be tormented in it by the devils and by great extremities of hunger, cold, fatigue and grief. They maintained that there was in this place a devil, the prince of all the devils, whom all obeyed, and they call him in their language Hunhau.<sup>618</sup> And they said that these lives, bad and good, had no end for the soul has none. They said also and held it as absolutely certain that those who hanged themselves went to this heaven of theirs; and on this account, there were many persons who on slight occasions of sorrows, troubles or sicknesses,

(Footnote 616 continued from page 131)

In the prophecy of Chilam Balam (N. 211) we have read of the "green tree of the world" and (N. 215) "tree of our life." The Tro-Cortesianus 75-6 may show this tree. See Seler, 1906, 3: 178.

Tozzer (1907, 154, quoted by Beuchat, 1907, 278, and from him by Genet, 1: 234) writes concerning the modern Mayas, "According to the natives of Yucatan, there are seven heavens above the earth, each of which has a hole in the center, one directly above the other. According to one idea, a giant ceiba (*yaxche*, *Bombax ceiba*), growing in the exact center of the earth, rears its branches through the successive holes in the heavens until it reaches the seventh, where *El Gran Dios* of the Spaniards lives. It is by means of this tree that the dead spirits ascend from one world to another until they reach the topmost one, where they finally remain."

<sup>617</sup> The Motul and later dictionaries have this word as *mitnal* or *metnal*, and this translation. This is almost certainly derived from the Nahuatl name for the lower regions, *mictlan*. Using both the Aztec and Maya beliefs, Thompson in Gann and Thompson (129-30) writes, "The Mayas believed in a future existence after this life. The rank and file and, according to the early Spanish friars, those that had led evil lives went after death to *Metnal*. *Metnal* was a dank, gloomy, cold spot beneath the earth, where those dead who belonged to the divisions enumerated above continued to live. Here under Ah Puch's rule they suffered an existence of gloomy ennui, relieved only by the periodic spells of intense cold. There was, however, no torture . . . Those who had committed suicide went to a special abode which was a paradise in every sense of the word. Judging from Mexican analogies this abode was ruled over by the Chacs or earth gods . . . The third land of the dead was, again according to the Spanish friars, who tended to inject Christianity into the pagan beliefs they recorded, reserved for those who had led good lives upon earth. However, in all probability, this heaven, which was situated in the sky, was the residence after death of those who had held high rank while on earth—the warriors, priests, those who had been sacrificed, and women who had died in childbirth." See Cogolludo, 4, VII.

The Lacandones believe that "below the earth is the abode of *Kisin*, the earthquake and god of the underworld (*metnal*). He is a god of evil . . . It is in this underworld that the spirits of those live who have committed suicide by throwing themselves into a cenote, or by some other

hanged themselves in order to escape these things and to go and rest in their heaven, where the goddess said that the goddess of the gallows, whom they called *Ix Tab*,<sup>619</sup> came to fetch them. They have no memory of the resurrection of the body and give no account from whom they learned of this heaven and hell of theirs. The sun never hides itself nor goes far enough away from this land of Yucatan so that the nights ever get to be longer than the days; and when they are longest, they are wont to be of equal length from Saint Andrew to Saint Lucia,<sup>620</sup> when the days begin to grow longer. They used as a guide by night, so as to

means. The spirits of all people who die go here for a short time, after which they pass through the several heavens where they live in happiness forever. The souls of men who have died in war and of women who have died in childbirth go directly to the upper world, without the intermediate residence in *metnal*." Tozzer, 1907, 156, 234-5, and Perez Martinez, 140-1. See Thompson, 1930, 67-8.

In Moran's Chol dictionary *Kisin* is the devil, the god of the underworld, and the same name is found among the Dolores Chols. Thompson (1938a, 595) adds that Moran gives the name *xibalba* for the underworld. This term appears with the same meaning in the *Popol Vuh* (1927 ed., 259). The Motul defines the term as "the devil." It is interesting to compare it with the name of a dance, *xibal okot*, "the dance of the devil," given by Landa as performed in *Ix* years.

<sup>618</sup> This is the god of death. Other names are *Cumhau*, given in the Motul as meaning, "Lucifer, prince of the devils," and *Ah Puch*. He is mentioned in the *Chumayel* (65). *Yum Kimil* (or *Cimil*) and *Kisin* (or *Cisin*) are other names given to the death god or god of the underworld. Tozzer, 1907, 156. Schellhas (1897, Eng. ed., 10-5) identifies this god (A) in the codices and after speaking of the great frequency of his appearance writes, "Not only does the figure of the god itself occur, but his attributes are found in many places where his picture is missing." The gods of death and of the underworld among modern Maya peoples have just been discussed. See also notes by Genet and by Seler, 1886, 1: 357.

<sup>619</sup> As pointed out by Schellhas (1897, Eng. ed., 15), "The name of this strange goddess, therefore, is the 'Goddess of the Halter.'" On Dresden 53a there is a death god and below a woman suspended by a rope around her neck, undoubtedly *Ix Tab*. Among the present Mayas there are malevolent spirits called *X Tabai*. They are female and can assume any form. Redfield and Villa (122) speak of these spirits as beautiful young women who try to induce young men to follow them into the bush. Thompson (1930, 156-9) gives tales about the *X Tabai* and Cornyn a poem about "*X* Tabai—the Enchantress." See also Gann, 1918, 40; Tozzer, 1907, 98; M.P. Redfield; P. Carrillo; and Ecarrea. See also N. 781.

<sup>620</sup> Dr. Juan Martinez H. has kindly furnished the author with the following comment on this passage: "Santa Lucia in the old Julian calendar of Landa falls on  
(Footnote 620 continued on page 133)