

Ancient Cultures of Middle America Week 13

The Postclassic

The Early Postclassic: Toltecs and "Toltecized" Maya

We've arrived at the Postclassic, the end of which you will find to be more familiar than much of what have been looking at this semester.

First, on Tuesday, we'll have a look at the characteristics and diagnostic features of the Postclassic Stage, including a look at the great Toltecs of Tula, Hidalgo—the people the Aztecs most wanted to be like.

We'll have a look at the Aztecs, but before we do that **we'll take a break to have some Ancient Mesoamerican food on Thanksgiving Day U.S.A.**—featuring an American turkey, one of the very few Native American foods that the Conquistadores and their folks back in Europe took an immediate liking for (most of the rest of the New World foods they didn't originally much care for). And, of course, the squash (first cultivated in Mesoamerica 8,000 or more years ago), pumpkin (from close to the same time in Mesoamerica), tomatoes (originally a Nahuatl [Aztec] word *tomatl*), vanilla and chocolate (pre-Columbian cultivars), and maize (from west of Tehuacán) are all originally Mesoamerican foods. (The cranberries came from native North America.) (More on Aztec Feasts is available at http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth3618/maaztec_feasts.html.)

Toltec and Tula, Hidalgo



The Toltecs of Tula (of the modern State of Hidalgo) had great influence during the Early Postclassic, and were the defining civilization of the era. A northern Yucatán Maya city of **Chichén Itzá** became, in essence, a look-alike sister city of Toltec Tula. A week from Tuesday we'll have a look at Chichén Itzá—the city named after the “Well of the Itzá”—one of the most famous archaeological sites and prehistoric cities in the world.

video:

Chichén Itzá: At the Mouth of the Well

(27 min., 2001, UM DULUTH Library Multimedia F1435.1.C5 C44 2001 DVD)

[film HomePage](#)

[course viewing guide](#)







After we've finished with the Postclassic *stage characteristics*, and had a look around Tula and Chichén Itzá, we'll start to have a look at the **Postclassic Aztecs**. And, as we close out the semester in the remaining weeks, and if time allows, we'll also have a brief look at looks at the **Postclassic Mixtec** of Oaxaca, and their famous leader Eight-Deer Ocelot Claw—the Mixtec counterpart of the Aztec Moctezuma.









8-Deer, Mixtec Leader
(on the right)

And we'll finish the semester with the arrival of **Cortéz and the Conquistadors**.

Check the activities and assignments of the week on your **Moodle** HomePage. This week they include . . .




-  Forum: Return artifacts to Chichén Itzá or . . . ? (Due by End of Week 14, Friday, 5 December 2014)
-  Case Study: A Mesoamerican Personality is Due No Later than Saturday, 29 November 2014; Thursday is Thanksgiving) Assignment
-  Wiki: Contribute your question to the Final Exam (Due by the end of Week 14, Friday, 5 December 2014)
-  Response to the film *Chichén Itzá: At the Mouth of the Well* (Due by the end of Week 14—Friday, 5 December 2014; Your Name Will Be Logged) Feedback

Remember to check the results of the class Video Responses from earlier weeks when they close. You can find the results in the **Moodle** Blocks where they first appeared. This week have a look at . . .

-  Results--"Forests of the Maya" f2014
-  Results--*Culture and Math: The Maya* f2014
-  Results--*Cracking the Maya Code* f2014
-  Results--*Maya Lords of the Jungle* f2014
-  Results--*Lost Kingdoms of the Maya* f2014
-  Results--*Out of the Past: "The Collapse"* f2014

Don't forget, share your ideas. Discuss them on-line with the others in class . . .

f2014

-  Wiki for Project Collaboration
-  Live chat for Project Collaboration
-  Wiki for Project Collaboration
- QUICKMAIL (see sidebar)

The above items will be found at the top of your **Moodle** folder under "Student Collaboration Space".

This week's **(1) Topics, (2) Reading Assignments Listings, and (3) Activities** are detailed in the Week 13 Block of your **Moodle** folder.

As usual, if you have any questions, please let me know: <mailto:troufs@d.umn.edu>.

Have a great Thanksgiving.

And don't forget that Friday is World Buy Nothing Day (aka "Black Friday")

Tim Roufs