

## PHILIP AINSWORTH MEANS, 1892-1944

By WENDELL C. BENNETT

PHILIP AINSWORTH MEANS was born in Boston in 1892 and died in that city on November 24, 1944. With his death the Americanists, historians and archeologists alike have lost one of their leading scholars, and many of them, who were fortunate to have known him well, have lost a charming and stimulating friend.

Philip Means graduated from Harvard in 1915 and received a Master of Arts degree from that institution the following year. His studies were directed toward Hispanic America, and combined archeology, history, and literature. Formal university studies were supplemented by wide travel and study in museums and archives. In 1934 he married Miss Louise Munroe who accompanied him on his later travels and assisted him in his scholastic publications.



Philip Ainsworth Means

The details of Means' career and his many publications are well known. *Who's Who in America* presents a detailed biography, and a recent article by S. K. Lothrop<sup>1</sup> gives an extensive bibliography. Two 1940 articles in Spanish,<sup>2</sup> although modestly anonymous, are written in a style which leaves no doubt about their authorship. The second of these contains a complete bibliography up to 1940, including book reviews which are briefly annotated as "favorable" or "adversa"

with the appropriate modifiers "poco," "más o menos," and "muy."

Means was both historian and archeologist. His interests were of wide scope, and his researches led him into many ramifications of these fields. Peru

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<sup>1</sup> Lothrop, S. K. *Philip Ainsworth Means, 1892-1944* (American Antiquity, 11, No. 2, pp. 109-112, Menasha, 1945).

<sup>2</sup> *Datos biográficos del Profesor Ph. A. Means* (Revista del Museo Nacional, 9, No. 2, pp. 252-255, Lima, 1940).

*Bibliografía de Peruanistas extranjeros* (Boletín Bibliográfico, 13, No. 4, pp. 277-285, Lima, 1940).

was a dominant interest throughout his life and was, in many ways, the focal center of his studies. It was as a Peruvianist that I knew him, and in that field I am best able to appraise his works. It is natural, then, that I more or less limit my comments to that part of his career, particularly to his work in the field of Peruvian archeology.

In total, Means made five trips to Peru, all of extended duration. The first, 1914-15, was as a member of the Yale Peruvian Expedition under the direction of Dr. Hiram Bingham. This initiated his first-hand knowledge of Inca archeology in the region of Cuzco. During his 1917-18 trip he visited many sites from Bolivia in the south to Piura on the far north coast of Peru. In 1918-19 he again spent considerable time in Piura and supervised some excavations. After returning to the United States, Means was recalled to Peru in 1920-21 as Director of the National Museum. His final trip was made in 1933-34. Although he studied many sites personally, his approach was always synthetic rather than descriptive, so that he published no straight excavation or survey accounts. His interests were historical, and he supplemented his field knowledge with numerous studies in the leading centers of the United States and Europe.

Means published several articles on Peruvian archeology as a whole but his greatest contribution to prehistory was *Ancient Civilizations of the Andes*.<sup>3</sup> This volume is a unique account of the total history of the Andes within the limits of the Inca Empire. Archeological knowledge has advanced greatly in the past fifteen years, but Means' study is still considered as a basic introductory statement. Means' approach was frankly historical, combining early documentary and archeological evidence. Each period was described as if it were a living functional culture, and this approach, presented in his rich, fluent prose style, has made the volume one of the most widely read, by professionals and laymen alike. Means summarized accurately the archeological knowledge up to 1930. Today, certain major changes would be necessary, such as the new evidence about the position of Chavin, a modified interpretation of the Tiahuanaco Empire, and a revision of the relative dating of the Inca expansion. Means was thoroughly aware of this and had been planning a complete revision of the whole volume.

In spite of his historical approach to archeology, and in spite of the fact that his writings conformed to the accepted relative chronology, Means had little interest in the technicalities and details used by the "dirt" archeologists in their chronological studies. In fact he went so far as to state that the California publications on the Uhle collections had "injected a meaningless tangle of subdivisions into the discussion which will require years to unravel." His own approach to chronology, as expressed in *Ancient Civilizations* and in sev-

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<sup>3</sup> *Ancient Civilizations of the Andes* (New York, 1931).

eral articles,<sup>4</sup> was based on artistic developments and universal art trends. For example, the Mochica or Early Chimu was considered slightly earlier than Nazca because its art was more fresh and youthful. Likewise, Chavin was classed as post-Tiahuanaco because its flamboyant style seemed a fusion of Tiahuanaco and coastal styles.

This profound interest in art and art styles was reflected in many of Means' articles about Peruvian archeology.<sup>5</sup> He was one of the leading exponents of the view that these pre-Columbian materials belonged properly in the category of world art, and was instrumental in calling this to the attention of art galleries and art magazines. Since the pre-Spanish Peruvian cultures excelled, both technically and artistically, in textile weaving, it is logical that Means wrote extensively on this subject.<sup>6</sup> He classified the textiles by technique and cultural period for many of the leading United States collectors, both public and private.

Special topical articles resulted from Means' extensive perusal of documentary sources and museum collections. These include a detailed study of ancient social institutions,<sup>7</sup> a specimen distribution study of slings,<sup>8</sup> an article

<sup>4</sup> *An Outline of the Culture-Sequence in the Andean Area* (International Congress of Americanists, 19th session, pp. 236-252, Washington, D.C., 1917).

*Pre-Columbian Peruvian Chronology and Culture* (Man, 18, pp. 168-169, London, 1918).

*Aspectos Estético-Cronológicos de las Civilizaciones Andinas* (Boletín de la Academia Nacional de Historia, 1, No. 2, pp. 195-226, Quito, 1920).

*Nota Polémica: Cuzco-Tiawanako, su Verdadera Relación Cronológica* (Revista del Museo Nacional, 4, No. 2, pp. 205-208, Lima, 1935).

<sup>5</sup> *A Survey of Ancient Peruvian Art* (Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 21, pp. 315-442, New Haven, 1917).

*Realism in the Art of Ancient Peru* (Art and Archaeology, 6, No. 5, pp. 235-246, Washington, D.C., 1917).

*Pre-Columbian Art and Culture in the Andean Area* (Bulletin of the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 28, No. 3, Providence, 1940).

*Pre-Columbian Andean Art* (Magazine of Art, 33-34, Washington, D.C., 1940-1941).

<sup>6</sup> *A Series of Ancient Andean Textiles* (Bulletin of the Needle and Bobbin Club, 9, New York, 1925).

*A Group of Ancient Peruvian Fabrics* (Bulletin of the Needle and Bobbin Club, 11, New York, 1927).

*Peruvian Textiles: Examples of the Pre-Incaic Period. With a Chronology of Early Peruvian Cultures* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1930).

*The Origin of Tapestry Technique in Pre-Spanish Peru* (Metropolitan Museum Studies, 3, part 1, New York, 1930).

*A Study of Peruvian Textiles Illustrated by Representative Examples in the Museum of Fine Arts* (Boston, 1932).

*Ancient Peruvian Art on Loan at the Fogg Art Museum* (Cambridge, 1936).

<sup>7</sup> *A Study of Ancient Andean Social Institutions* (Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 27, pp. 407-469, New Haven, 1925).

<sup>8</sup> *Distribution and Use of Slings in Pre-Columbian America, with Descriptive Catalogue of*

on early navigation,<sup>9</sup> and one of the first descriptive reports on the important finds at Nepeña made by Dr. Julio C. Tello.<sup>10</sup> Although most of Means' archeological articles were limited to the Andean area, it was inevitable that he should also consider the relationship of this field to other high civilizations in the Americas. Two major articles reflect this interest.<sup>11</sup>

Means' contributions in the field of history were as prolific and valuable as those in archeology. He translated many of the basic documentary writings of the early chroniclers, such as Pedro Sancho, Fernando Montesinos, Pedro Pizarro, and Francisco de Elorza y Rada. His *Biblioteca Andina*<sup>12</sup> provided a valuable critical list of the early writers and their contributions. The *Ancient Civilizations of the Andes* was intended to be the first volume of a trilogy on the history of Peru. The second volume, *Fall of the Inca Empire*,<sup>13</sup> covered the period of Colonial history up to the rebellion of Tupac Amaru. The third volume on Republican Peru was never completed. Instead, the vast amount of materials which Means accumulated led him into other periods of history which resulted in a book on the discovery of America.<sup>14</sup> A further extension of his interest in early European exploration of the New World was shown in his study of Northman contacts centering around the Newport tower.<sup>15</sup> That his thoughts were not entirely diverted from his beloved Peru is demonstrated by a children's book on the Incas which he published in the same year.<sup>16</sup>

Means had a deep devotion for Peru, its past, its scenery, and above all its people. In turn he was beloved by the Peruvians. Honors of many kinds were bestowed on him, but the one that he treasured most was the official decoration of the order of "El Sol del Peru." His personal contribution was great, and his vast number of significant publications will continue to unite his country and his "segunda patria," Peru, in common intellectual understanding.

#### NEW HAVEN

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*Ancient Peruvian Slings in the United States National Museum* (Proceedings of the U. S. National Museum, 55, Washington, 1919).

<sup>9</sup> *Pre-Spanish Navigation off the Andean Coast* (The American Neptune, 2, No. 2, Salem, 1942).

<sup>10</sup> *Des Commentaires sur l'Architecture Ancienne de la Côte Peruvienne* (Bulletin de la Société des Américanistes de Belgique, No. 14, pp. 75-110, Brussels, 1934).

<sup>11</sup> *Las Relaciones entre Centro-América y Sud-América en la Época Prehistórica* (Boletín de la Sociedad Geográfica de Lima, 33, pp. 151-170, Lima, 1918).

*The Philosophic Interrelationship Between Middle American and Andean Religions* (in *The Maya and Their Neighbors*, New York, 1940).

<sup>12</sup> *Biblioteca Andina, Part One* (Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 29, pp. 271-525, New Haven, 1928).

<sup>13</sup> *Fall of the Inca Empire and the Spanish Rule in Peru: 1530-1780* (New York, 1932).

<sup>14</sup> *The Spanish Main* (New York, 1935).

<sup>15</sup> *Newport Tower* (New York, 1942).

<sup>16</sup> *Tupak of the Incas* (New York, 1942).