The Cuicuilco Excavation

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Abstract: A series of brief comments in which the author presents archaeological findings, architectural notes, and myths and legends that deal indirectly with the Book of Mormon. Dibble discusses the wheel, ancient irrigation methods, metals, Mexican and Mayan codices, Quetzalcoatl, ancient buildings, and numerous other related items. The tenth part covers archaeological work in Cuicuilco.
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CANCAS ARTIFACTS DATE.

The Valley of Mexico has long been an area of volcanic activity, and extinct volcanic cones are familiar landmarks. After the valley was peopled, a flow of molten lava poured down a mountain slope partially to cover a massive mound, which had served as the base for an altar.

The top of a mound protruding from a jagged lava surface suggests great antiquity, and Cucuilco has long been considered the most ancient temple on the American continent. Early geological estimates considered the lava flow to be five thousand years old, but subsequent archaeological investigations show the eruption to be more recent.

In 1826, Cucuilco was excavated; the lava was cut from the sides of the mound, and its original size and shape plotted. The center of the circular mound is formed of adobe, and the sides are faced with irregular rocks. The pottery and figurines uncovered suggested a B.C. date for the erection of the mound.

Recent work by Dr. George C. Valiant at the many early archaeological sites in the valley of Mexico brings the volcanic eruption down to a much later date. He has carefully compared the artifacts of Cucuilco with others from sites excavated and dated by him. It now seems very probable that the volcano erupted about 400 A.D., and that the mound was constructed a century earlier. This recent date is more in accord with an Aztec-Toltec tradition, as recorded in Los Angeles de Cuahtitlan, which recalls a volcanic eruption early in the history of the valley.

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