

Dear W. S.:

Frances Toors (A Treasury of Mexican Folkways, Crown, 1947) tells of customs so like those of our Indians, I thought you might be interested, if you have not already known of them:

Page 20: "Cigarettes are always served at fiestas and are never omitted from the offerings to the gods, as well as to both the good and evil spirits. The acceptance of a cigarette from someone who is asking a favor implies an obligation; and smoking together, friendship. When the Chamulas of Chiapas invite a stranger to smoke with them, they fill a small otate [bamboo-like] reed vessel with tobacco and narcotic herbs, and perforate it with as many holes as there are smokers, so that all can smoke at the same time, each with his own small reed tube."

Page 30: Re Maya Beliefs and Ceremonies: "The x-kol or sweet-voiced bird sings for the corn plants so that they may be happy. And there is one little bird that "stretches the corn-plants"; it jumps from plant to tree and back again, singing and jumping to make the plants grow."

Pages 251-261 deal with peyote cults.

You will find many other parallelisms. Though written in popular style, the book is documented and much of the material is first-hand. It furnishes a good background for the visitor to Mexico -- and you'll surely be going there one of these days!

We've had many expressions of pleasure from member/s of the Couples Garden Club, both that evening and later by phone, all high-rating you as a speaker, scholar and good friend. How satisfying it must be to go about enriching people's lives the way you do!

Jack joins me in sending affectionate regards and esteem.

*Lovie M. Whitaker*