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A Hieroglyphic Block from the Region of Hiix Witz, Guatemala

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In recent years, private collectors in Guatemala have been registering their holdings of Precolumbian art with the Registro de Bienes Culturales. This agency, part of the Instituto de Antropología e Historia (IDAEH), is responsible for bringing privately held artefacts into the official registry of Guatemalan national cultural heritage. Not only does this

process end any possibility of these works entering the international art market, but it makes them available for scholarly study—thereby enriching both our knowledge of the past and the cultural patrimony of Guatemala.

Where Maya objects carry hieroglyphic inscriptions there is the potential of “re-provenancing” them, using mentions of



Figure 1. The hieroglyphic block registered by IDAEH as No. 1.2.144.915 (photograph by Dorie Reents-Budet).

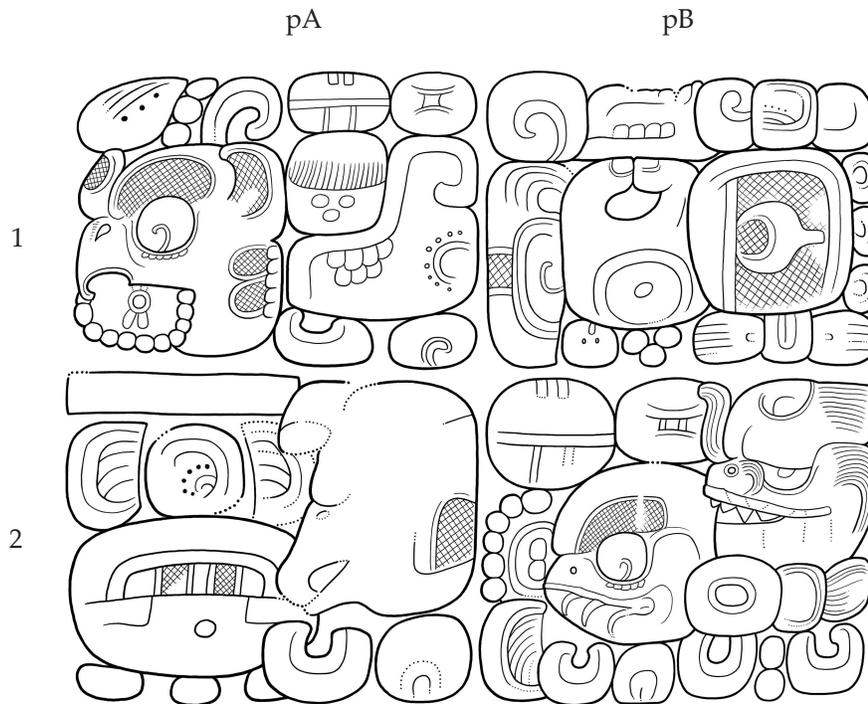


Figure 2. The inscription of the new block (drawing by Simon Martin).

specific people and places to determine their origin and restore them to the historical narrative of the Classic Period. Such is the case with a finely carved panel recently registered with IDAEH as No. 1.2.144.915.¹

This sculpture, currently in a collection in Guatemala City, is a carved block of fine-grained limestone of pale buff color that bears eight hieroglyphs, most in excellent preservation (Figure 1). It measures 37 cm in height, 41 cm in width, and is 15 cm thick. The nature of the inscription makes it clear that it is but part of a much longer text and this, together with its format and size, suggests that it was once a riser from a hieroglyphic stairway.

The Inscription

The text we have begins midway through a phrase and lacks its opening date and verb, both of which fell on a preceding, now-missing block. Instead it starts at pA1a with what we can take to be the name of the principal participant, which consists of the head of a bird with a beaded motif in its mouth and additional elements above (Figure 2). This is a conflated spelling that, thanks to comparable examples elsewhere, we can disassemble with confidence. It begins with the beaded motif—note the diagnostic “propeller” device at its heart—that seems to depict a flower of some kind and reads **JAN/JANAAB** in other contexts.² Best known from the name of K'inich Janaab Pakal, the great king of Palenque, it is more widely seen as part of G3, one of the nine calendrical patrons known as the “Lords of Night.” The

next term is formed from the three-part superfix and the pictographic position of the “flower” in the bird’s mouth. These constitute the sign **TI'** “mouth,” whose stand-alone form combines the superfix with a stylized mouth. The issue is a little more complex, however, since this design also forms the basis for two other hieroglyphs, the verbs **UK'** “to drink” and **WE'?** “to eat,”—which are distinguished by the signs for “water” or “bread” set into the mouth area respectively (Stuart in Houston, Stuart, and Taube 2006:110, Fig. 3.5 a-d). Since these distinctions can be omitted in fused spellings such as this one, it can be hard to determine the correct reading.³ As we shall see in a moment, the comparable spellings suggest that a plain **TI'** is intended in this case. Finally, we come to the avian itself which is read **O'**, the onomatopoeic name for a type of bird. As a whole, the reading is therefore **JAN(AAB)-TI'-O'** or *Jan/Janaab Ti' O'*.

The next glyph, pA1b, identifies this character as a human ruler by means of the emblem glyph **HIIX-**

¹ We wish to thank Sofía Paredes Maury, Director of the Fundación Ruta Maya, for bringing this monument to our attention.

² Syllabic substitutions for this sign give **ja-na-bi**, but there are some indications that its base value is actually **JAN** (Marc Zender, personal communication 2008).

³ This formula of x-in-the-mouth-of-y appears elsewhere in the personal names of humans or supernatural beings. For example, the name of one *way* “spirit companion/co-essence” is **K'AHK'-TI'?-SUUTZ'**, literally “Fire-mouth? Bat” (see Grube and Nahm 1994:701). At least one of these names does involve a verbal form, however, in this case “to eat,” as seen in **K'AHK'-WE'?-CHITAM** (see Grube and Nahm 1994:698).



Figure 3. Map showing the location of La Joyanca, Pajalar, Zapote Bobal, and other sites referenced in the text (Precolumbia Mesoweb Maps).

WITZ-AJAW-wa “Jaguar Hill Lord.” This refers to a polity that has been recognized by epigraphers for some time, but only recently has evidence emerged linking it to the ruins of La Joyanca, Zapote Bobal, and Pajalar (Stuart 2003; see also Arnauld 2002:49-51; Breuil-Martínez et al. 2005:304-307; Gámez, Fitzsimmons, and Forné 2007; Stuart 2008). Lying in the western portion of the department of Petén, Guatemala, this area is bounded by the sites of El Peru to the north and Itsimte-Sacluk to the east (Figure 3). The distribution of Hiix Witz names and titles at three sites is unusual but not unprecedented, perhaps reflecting a system of multi-capital governance or a sequence of shifting seats of rulership. Pajalar has at least one early monument and it has been persuasively suggested that its imposing hilltop acropolis is the original “Jaguar Hill” (Stuart 2008). Zapote Bobal is the largest of the three, with the greatest number of monuments, and may well have been the dominant center in the Late Classic period (Breuil-Martínez et al. 2005; Gámez, Fitzsimmons, and

Forné 2007).

The same Janaab Ti’ O’ name and Hiix Witz title appear on at least four unprovenanced vessels in the Kerr archive at www.mayavase.com: K1387, K5646, K8665, and K8722 (Figure 4a–d). They provide good examples of the flexible spelling strategies used in the script, with the same sequence of terms represented in varied ways, especially in the emblem glyph. It will be noted that none of these expanded renderings shows evidence for the “eat” or “drink” derivations of the mouth sign, and its value is therefore to be understood as a plain TI’. One or more of these individuals may be the self-same Janaab Ti’ O’ of the new block, although given the enthusiasm with which Maya dynasties mined their own history for later regnal names we should not be surprised to find multiple kings with this appellative (in one especially common pattern new rulers took the names of their grandfathers). In addition, there is evidence for this name-title combination on one, or more likely two, stone monuments—to which we will

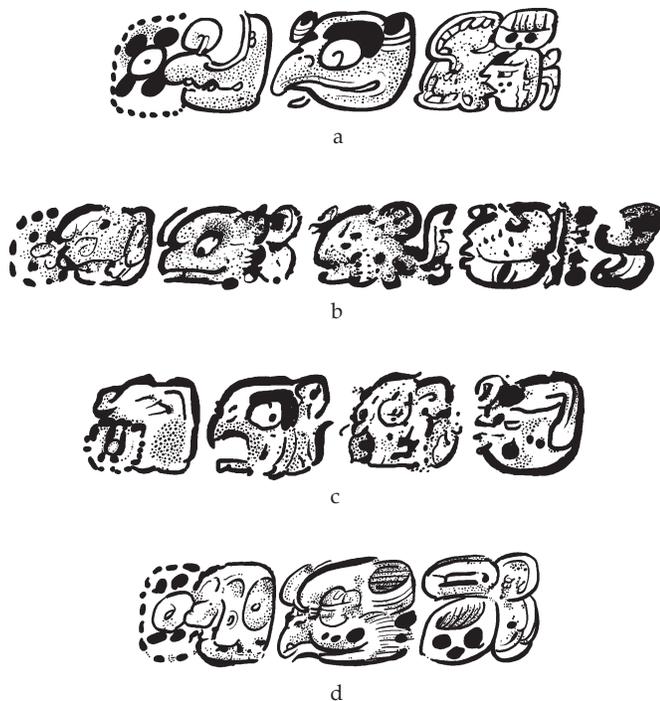


Figure 4. Names of Janaab Ti' O' of Hiix Witz on painted vessels: a) JAN(AAB)-TI' O' HIIIX-WITZ-AJAW-wa (K1387); b) JAN(AAB)-TI' O'-o HIIIX-wi tzi-a *ja-wa (K5646); c) JAN(AAB)-TI' O' HIIIX[WITZ?] AJAW (K8665); d) JAN(AAB)-TI' O' HIIIX-WITZ-AJAW (K8722). Drawings by Simon Martin after photographs by Justin Kerr.

return momentarily.

The next block, pB1a, is filled with *yi-chi-NAL-la* for *yichnal* “before/in the sight of.” This term is used where the actions of one participant are “overseen” by another, in the sense of supervision or sanction.

The person who does the overseeing comes at pB1b, where we find the spelling *yu[ku]-no-ma-CH'EEEN* *Yuknoom Ch'een*. This was the name of a well-known king of Calakmul, Mexico, who reigned from AD 636 to either 685 or 686 (Martin and Grube 2000:108-109). He is mentioned in the inscriptions of Dos Pilas, Cancuen, Uxul, El Peru, La Corona, Moral-Reforma, and an unknown site close to Piedras Negras—and of course at Calakmul itself (Martin 2000:43). The largest of the Classic Maya political centers, Calakmul lies approximately 130 km (80 miles) to the northeast of the Hiix Witz region.

The next glyph-block, pA2a-b, supplies the title “Five K'atun Lord” in the form *5-WINIKHAAB?-AJAW-wa*. This is a marker of advanced age (beyond 79 years) that *Yuknoom Ch'een* achieved in 680 (Martin 2005:8). If used contemporaneously then it would place the now-missing event rather precisely to the period between this date and his death in 685 or 686. However, since there is some possibility that it is applied retrospectively, all we can be certain of is that the stone was carved after 680 and refers to an event before 686. The titles of *Yuknoom*

Ch'een conclude at pB2a with the familiar emblem glyph of Calakmul: *K'UH-ka-KAAN-AJAW-wa k'uhul kaan ajaw* “Holy Snake Lord.”

The final compound at pB2b is another familiar term, this time *u-ti-ya uhtiiy* “it happened (at).” Often associated with Distance Numbers that count back to an earlier date, it is also used to introduce the location where a given event took place (Stuart and Houston 1994:7-12). In such cases it can define a particular locale within a home site—such as a building or architectural complex—or a different center entirely. Given the range of sites that used the Hiix Witz title we might appreciate the need for specificity, but it could refer to a distant place like Calakmul. Hopefully the emergence of additional blocks in the series will ultimately allow us to understand its role in this case.⁴

Observations

This delicately carved block is a fine example of Classic Maya calligraphy in stone, but it is the content of the inscription that imbues it with historical importance. As well as it can be reconstructed, it refers to an action performed by the ruler of Hiix Witz under the supervision of the Calakmul king. As such, it supplies new information about the political circumstances of the Hiix Witz kingdom in the Late Classic and is the clearest evidence yet that it fell under the sway of Calakmul.

Other factors are relevant to this issue. The appearance of a *Janaab Ti' O' of Hiix Witz* on K1387 (Figures 4a, 5) is significant because this is a codex-style vessel of the kind closely linked to the Calakmul kingdom and the sites under its control.⁵ The chemical composition of this particular vessel, however, does not match those sampled at Calakmul, nor that at any site in the Mirador Basin that lies to its south—seemingly the core production area of this ware. Stylistically, K1387 is closely wedded to fellow codex-style vessels and perhaps this vase, and a matching dish K1388, were simply made at a Mirador Basin center for which we have no comparative material. In any event, it is extremely rare, even unique, for a polity outside the greater Mirador area to be named on a codex-style vessel, and this was already a clue to a connection between Calakmul and

⁴ A stone of similar format but unknown size, also in a collection in Guatemala (Mayer 1991:Pl. 97a), could be another block from this series (David Stuart, personal communication 2009). The content of that text is entirely chronological, but cannot be fixed in the Long Count.

⁵ Stanley Guenter (2003:Note 9) has noted the resemblance of K1387 to a codex-style vessel naming *Yuknoom Ch'een* found in Tomb 4 of Structure 2 at Calakmul (although it does not appear to be in the same hand) and accordingly suggested that this king and the Hiix Witz lord were contemporaries. Additionally, a plate now labeled K3636 (originally published in Robicsek and Hales 1981:Table 2a) is said to be in codex-style and carries the name of a different Hiix Witz lord: *yu-ku-la CHAN-na K'AWIIL*.



Figure 5. Photograph K1387 © Justin Kerr.

Hiix Witz.⁶

The link was enhanced with the appearance of one of the aforementioned stone monuments. This features a ballgame scene with two players, one of whom is captioned with a clear Janaab Ti' O' name and an eroded but discernible Hiix Witz title, the other evidently identified as the Calakmul king Wamaaw K'awiil (Tunesi 2007:15-18, Figs. 4, 6).⁷ The latter is known from just one other text dated to 736 and could not have been in power before 731 (Looper 1999:270; Martin and Grube 2000:112-114). Falling some years after the last possible date of the new block, we might suspect that this ballgame involves a later namesake of our Janaab Ti' O'. In fact, since an inscription at another site places a Hiix Witz ruler of a quite different name to the year 732, we can take this as very probable.⁸

Another monument, this time a fragmentary block currently in storage at the Museo Sylvanus Morley, Tikal, Guatemala (Mayer 1991:Pl.155), provides a better candidate for our Hiix Witz lord. This is one of a group of stairway risers that David Stuart (personal communication 2006) has linked to matching blocks found at the site of El Reinado, Guatemala (Mejía and Laporte 2004:249-251, Figs. 13-26)—just a little to the south of the Hiix Witz region. Here a Janaab Ti' O' name bears a suspected Hiix Witz emblem and has been dated to around 692, based on the record of the 9.13.0.0.0 Period Ending on a companion block (Stanley Guenter, personal communication 2006).⁹ There is a Calakmul connection here too, since this calendrical ceremony is performed at, or in some other way connected to, that city.¹⁰

The nature of Calakmul's influence across the central lowlands is clear from the hegemonic character of its relationships with other polities (Martin and Grube 1995, 2000). This is especially true of the foreign references to Yuknoom Ch'een, which consistently state or imply his dominant status. These include several cases in which

he supervises the inaugurations of subject rulers, twice using the *yichnal* term employed on our new block. Whatever the precise nature of the missing verb, the new block is important in confirming that Hiix Witz was directly engaged in Calakmul's sphere of interaction in the late seventh century and took a subordinate role. In

⁶ Laura Gámez, James Fitzsimmons, and Mélanie Forné (2007:361) posited a relationship between Hiix Witz and Calakmul based on their parallel associations with the polities of El Peru, Piedras Negras, and Dos Pilas.

⁷ This would be one of the very few occasions on which the Hiix Witz title includes a **K'UH(UL)** "holy" prefix. A regular feature of emblems, its near-absence at Hiix Witz may be relevant to its political structure and, on a more practical level, makes it hard to distinguish a "king" from a wider *ajaw*-status class in this territory.

⁸ Yaxchilan Hieroglyphic Stairway 3, Step V, records the capture of one Hiix Witz lord in 732 (Mathews 1997:146) and the "arrival here" of another a few months later. Neither carries the Janaab Ti' O' name, with the first identified by the sequence **na-ku chi-u**, the second by **?-TI'-K'AWIIL** (see also K2803). Given the unknown governmental structure of the dispersed Hiix Witz kingdom—together with the problem of distinguishing a true "king" in the absence of a full emblem glyph—this is not so much conclusive as highly suggestive that the later reference to Janaab Ti' O' introduces a new character.

⁹ The **JAN(AAB)-TI' O'** sequence runs from pC2b to pD2a, while the damaged jaguar head at pD2b seems to be a conflated form of the emblem **HIIX[WITZ-AJAW]** (Mayer 1991:Pl. 155). The eroded phrase continues, possibly naming Janaab Ti' O' as a vassal of Yuknoom Ch'een (David Stuart, personal communication 2010).

¹⁰ This date, expressed only as a Calendar Round, is linked to the Calakmul toponym *Uxte'tuun* via an as yet unreadable term (David Stuart, personal communication 2006; see Mayer 1991:Pl. 156, 158). But this intriguing monument could be rather later than 692. One phrase might describe the local ruler of El Reinado as the grandson of the Dos Pilas king Bajlaj Chan K'awiil (c. 648-692>), as identified by a rare subsidiary name in the sequence pA3b-pA4a (Mayer 1991:Pl. 127). (It is conceivable, but not without difficulty, that the same fragment names another grandson, the Dos Pilas ruler K'awiil Chan K'inich [741-761].) We should also recall that Dos Pilas was another polity with relations to Hiix Witz, since Bajlaj Chan K'awiil sought refuge there after a defeat by Tikal in 673 (Fahsen et al. 2003; Guenter 2003:24).

this it joins a chain of contacts from Cancuen in the far south to Uxul on the periphery of the Calakmul polity (see also Freidel et al. 2007).

We cannot yet say if this stone originated at Zapote Bobal, Pajalar, or La Joyanca—or, indeed, at some other as yet unrecognized locale—but we can situate it with reasonable assurance within the ancient Hiix Witz kingdom. Once an isolated fragment, it now finds a home in our ever-growing understanding of Classic Maya political dynamics.

Summary of the reading

- pA1a **JAN(AAB)-TI'-O'** *Jan/Janaab Ti' O' Janaab Ti' O'*
 pA1b **HIIX-WITZ-AJAW-wa** *Hiix Witz Ajaw*
 Jaguar Hill Lord
- pB1a **yi-chi-NAL-la** *yichnal* overseen by
 pB1b **yu[ku]-no-ma-CH'EEN** *Yuknoom Ch'een*
 Yuknoom Ch'een
- pA2a **5-WINIKHAAB?** *Ho Winikhaab?* Five K'atun
 pA2b **AJAW-wa** *Ajaw* Lord
 pB2a **K'UH-ka-KAAN-AJAW-wa** *K'uhul Kaan Ajaw*
 Holy Snake Lord
 pB2b **u-ti-ya** *uhtiiy* it happened (at)

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Palenque from 1560 to 2010

MERLE GREENE ROBERTSON

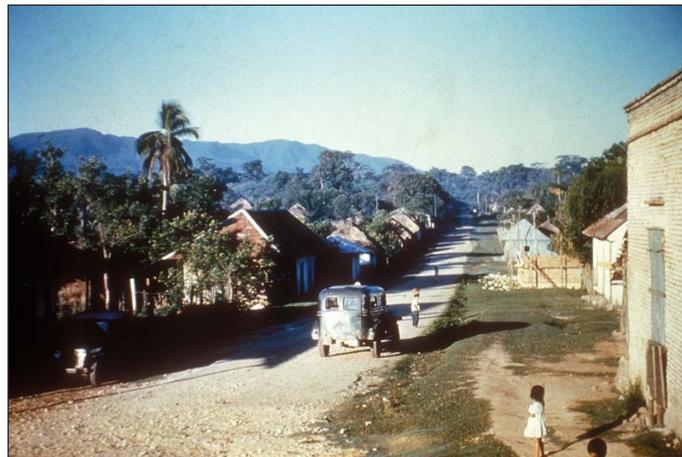
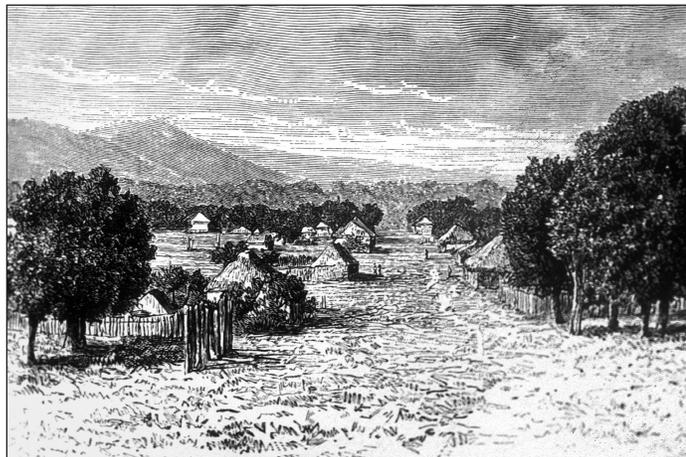


Figure 1. Palenque in 1573 and in 1952.

This is going to be an overview of Palenque from the time of its first discovery in 1560 up until the present day (Figure 1). In the year 1560 Fray Pedro Lorenzo de la Nada came from Spain to work in the Indian communities, and by 1564 he had settled some of the Indians in Ocosingo and some in Yajalon, as well as some of the Chol villages such as Tumbala and Tila. Some of the Chol Indians finally accepted his offer to settle near the Chacamax River near the present-day town of Palenque. Between 1567 and 1573 he made three trips to Spain to arrange for the legal foundation of Palenque. On his last trip he brought back three bells, the smaller one with the date 1573 engraved on it, telling us that this was the date of the foundation of Palenque. This bell is still in the municipal auditorium. De la Nada not only founded Palenque but gave it its name as well.

During the following years many explorers came to Palenque. I am not going to report on all of them, but I will mention a few who have become quite an impressive part of the village's history. In 1784 José Antonio Calderón, a local official, acted as guide for Antonio Bernasconi from Spain. I photographed all of the pieces brought back to Madrid by Bernasconi when I made a trip to the Museum of the Americas on a cold December day when the museum was boarded up and unheated while in the process of renovation.

Then in 1786 Captain Antonio Del Río went to the site with crowbars and pick axes looking for gold. In his report he stated, "There remained not a portion that was not thrown down." Of all the explorers, Del Río was the most destructive. He did however make many drawings, most of them very good, suggesting European likenesses, but recognizable.

In 1807 Captain Guillaume Dupaix, a retired officer of the Mexican dragoons, was commissioned by the Spanish government to check on the Mexican antiquities. It was not until 1832 and 1835 that Jean Frédéric Waldeck, calling himself the "Count de Waldeck," spent time at Palenque, where he made drawings of the site. In his fanciful view of the Temple of the Cross, the high mountains behind it are reduced to just a peak, but it does show a stream of water rushing down from the temple (Figure 2). We know that there was water there, so either there was a lot more when Waldeck did this drawing or his imagination got the better of him, which is more likely to have been the case. His picture of the figures of the Eastern Court of the Palace against the western face of House A is more accurately done (Figure 3).

The explorers who did the most for making Palenque known to the rest of the world were John Lloyd Stephens and the British artist Frederick Catherwood, who came to Palenque in 1840. Catherwood's paintings using the camera lucida and then the next year the new daguerreotype camera were so good that although portions of buildings are no longer there at some sites, archaeologists know that they must surely have been there at the time Catherwood did the painting. In Catherwood's painting of the Temple of the Inscriptions, although the temple itself is rather fanciful, the whole is most appealing with the multitude of roots growing from the roofcomb and the powerful domination of the enormous tree taking up the whole right side of the picture (Figure 4).

The Frenchman Désiré Charnay was greatly influenced by Stephens and decided to become a photographic explorer. He went to Palenque in 1847,

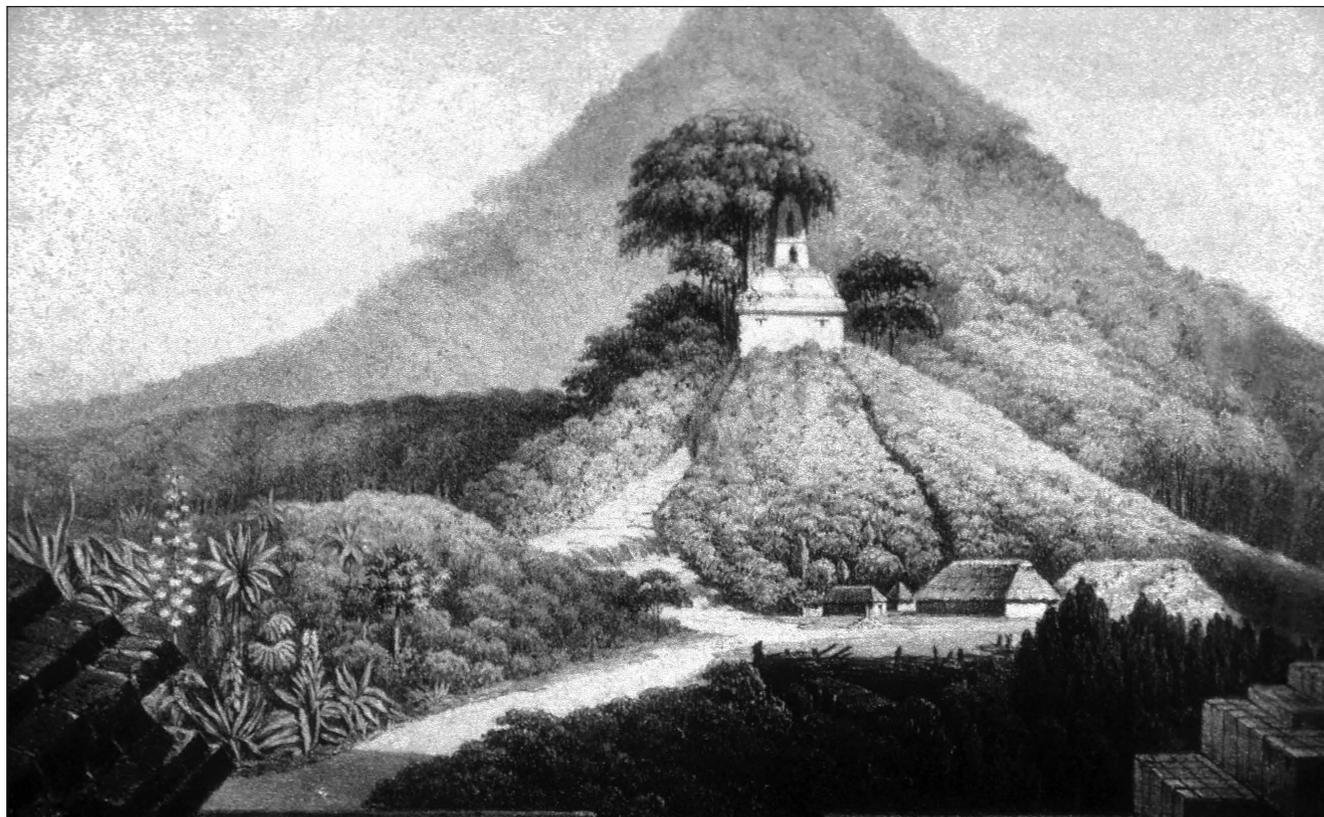


Figure 2. Waldeck's view of the Temple of the Cross and (supposedly) El Mirador.

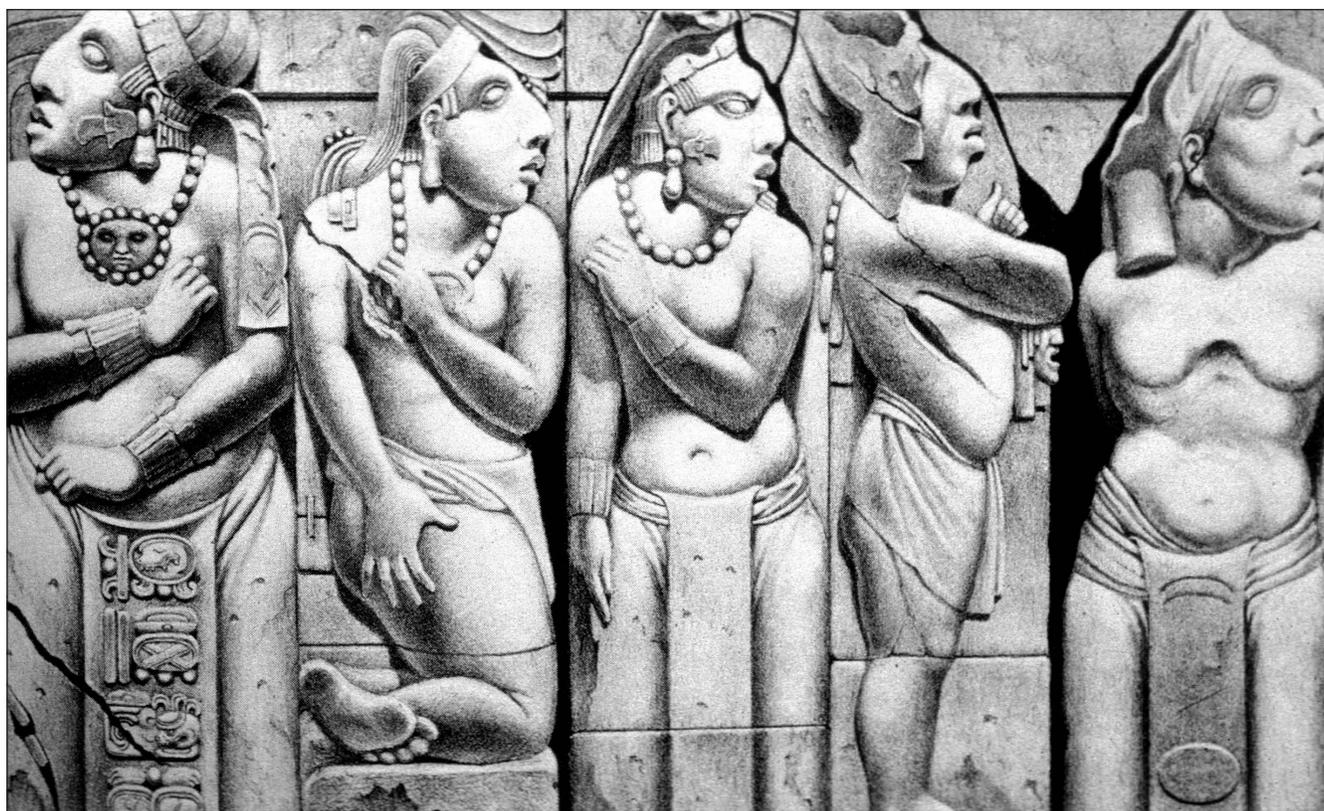


Figure 3. Palace East Court figures by Waldeck.



Figure 4. The Temple of the Inscriptions by Catherwood.

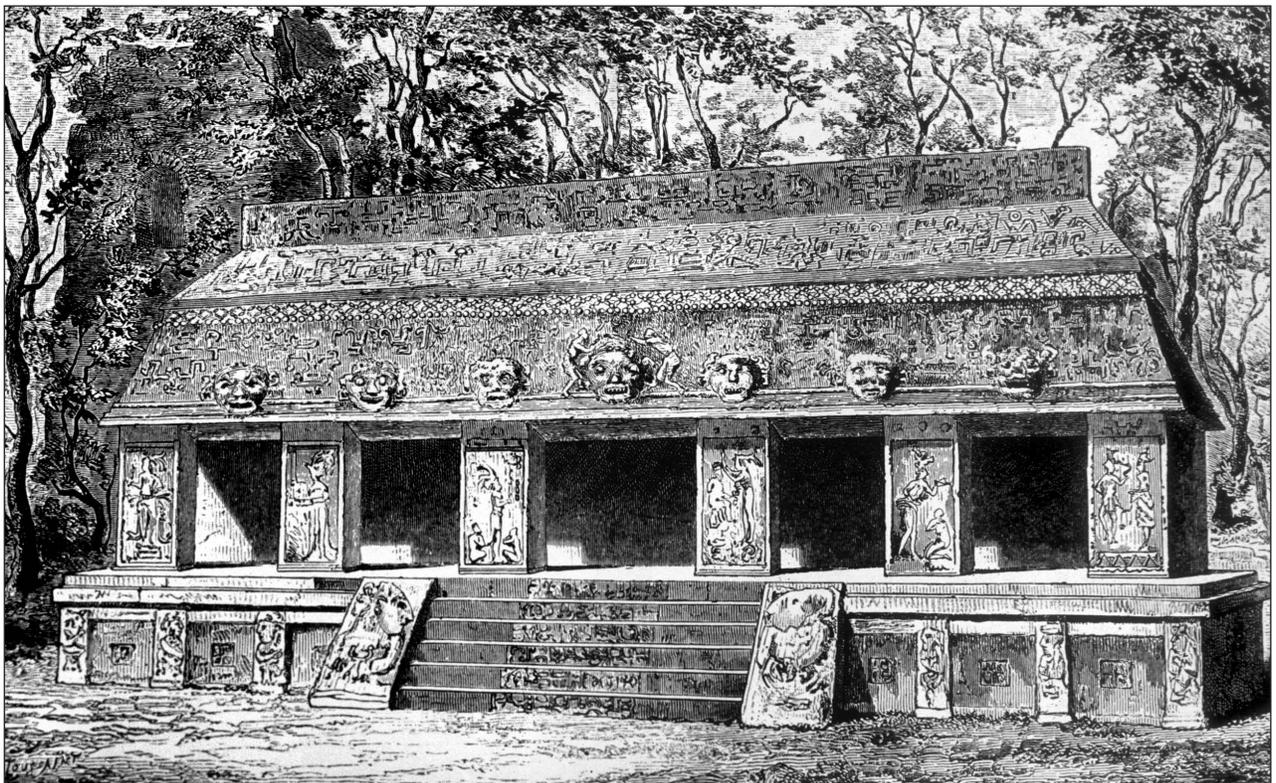


Figure 5. House C by Charnay.

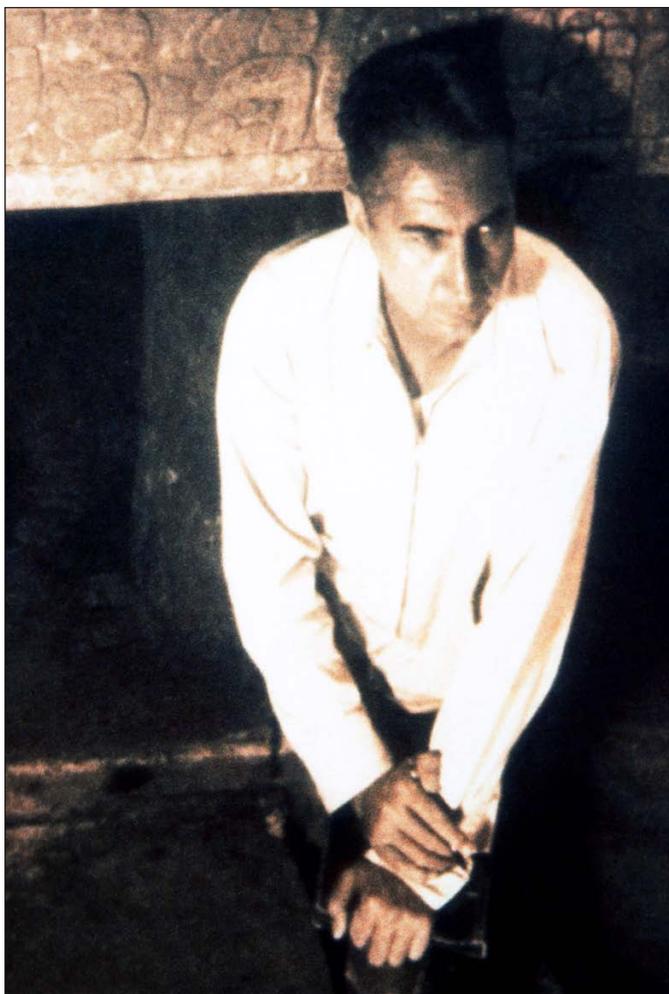


Figure 6. Alberto Ruz.

just before Maudslay. He made the first successful photographic plates. He had a huge camera with 45 x 36 cm plates which had to be coated immediately before exposure in a very dark place. This view of the eastern face of House C is one of Charnay's (Figure 5).

Charnay had seen the doors (actually the jambs) from the Temple of the Cross at the edge of the forest; these were later in a house occupied by two women in Santa Domingo de Palenque. They were then put on the front of the church of Santa Domingo de Palenque, one on each side of the entrance door. In 1842 the East Jamb was sent to the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.. Then in 1908 the Smithsonian sent the East Jamb back to Mexico City and in 1909 the West Jamb was sent back to Mexico. Désiré Charnay carved his name into the northern side of Pier C of House A. It can still be seen today deeply cut.

Alfred Percival Maudslay was the first real archaeologist to go to Palenque. This was in 1890 and 1891. He graduated from Cambridge but gave up a medical career to work in Mesoamerica. His



Figure 7. Linda Schele, Malcolm Cleary, and Alfonso Morales.

five volumes of archaeology included with *Biologia Centrali-Americana* (1889-1902) have been the "bible" for archaeologists interested in Copan, Quirigua, Palenque, and Chichen Itza. He meticulously recorded every building at the sites, discovering the Temple of the Cross at Palenque that neither Waldeck or Stephens had been aware of. His photographs are excellent as can be seen by the examples of the Tower and the Western Court of the Palace. I had the privilege afforded me by Elizabeth Carmichael and the British Museum staff of going through all of the Maudslay negatives and glass plates in the Museum twice, once when working on the "Rubbing Project" and again when working on the "Palenque Photographic Project." At that time I was given 8" x 10" copies of all of the Maudslay photographs. I was given the most wonderful treatment by everyone at the British Museum, everything ready for me, guards to protect my working area. I will never forget it.

In 1877 Teobert Maler, the Austrian who came over right after Maudslay, eventually working with the Peabody Museum, made his first visit to Palenque and



Figure 8. Night work.

then returned later. The photographs that he took were every bit as good as Maudslay's.

In 1918 Sylvanus Griswold Morley, the great Mayanist working with the Carnegie Institution of Washington spent forty field seasons tracking down all of the glyphic inscriptions he could find. His 1938 five-volume *Inscriptions of Peten* has been a "must" for all Maya archaeologists. In 1983 I attended the Morley 100th Anniversary Conference in Merida. Guests of honor were to be those still living who had worked with Morley. Edwin Shook was there, as was a workman who had been with Morley, but John Bolles, the Carnegie architect who spent a great deal of time with Morley when he was mapping Yaxchilan, Uxmal, and Chichen Itza, died the day before the conference. John was a good friend of mine. Our team took him into Calakmul and La Muñeca, where he had not been for fifty years. This was just a short time before he died.

Others who later came to Palenque were Edward H. Thompson who brought William H. Holmes in 1897; then Marshall Seville came in late 1897, and Eduard Seler in 1911. Modern archaeology was first introduced at Palenque by Frans Blom in the Tulane University

Expedition of 1925 when the first map of Palenque was made.

The most extensive excavations of this century were made by the Mexican archaeologist Alberto Ruz Lhuillier who is famous for his discovery of the Tomb of Pakal, opened for the first time in more than a millenium on June 15, 1952 (Figure 6).

Since then I have made rubbings of the Sarcophagus Cover and all four sides of the Sarcophagus, as well as the legs, plus all of the Sanctuary Tablets and Jambs and other relief tablets at the site. Over a period of 40 years (although working in the Peten jungle at the same time period) I have taken photographs as well as rubbings of every piece of art at Palenque. My photographic crew consisted of Bob Robertson, Linda Schele, John Bolles, Alfonso Morales, Gillett Griffin, and Malcolm Cleary (Figure 7).

We worked on high scaffolding, mostly at night in order to get straight-on photos of the Temple of the Inscriptions piers (Figure 8). In the tomb I had to use a Hasselblad camera to get pictures such as of the ancestors of Pakal on the sides of the Sarcophagus and the standing figures in stucco on the walls of the tomb.



Figure 9. Getting limestone.

There was always something going on at Palenque. With all of this work recording limestone monuments, it seems appropriate to record where this limestone came from and how it was taken from the mountain. This photograph shows David Morales and a crew of workmen in the mountains near Palenque finding where these huge sheets of stone came from (Figure 9). They are piled on top of each other, the top surface being perfectly smooth and the underside a little roughened. These large sheets of limestone are carefully pried apart and lifted out. Then each huge slab is bound with vines onto heavy poles. They are then carried down the mountain by five or six men per slab. Mine are the only pictures ever taken showing where the limestone comes from and how the layered slabs of limestone are pried apart and carried down the mountain to be used by the Maya for their large sculptured tablets.

For twenty years the International conferences called the "Mesa Redonda de Palenque" were sponsored by the Pre-Columbian Art Research Institute. The first Mesa Redonda was held in December 1973 at our house Na Chan-Bahlam with 45 people attending. At that time the only scholars attending were Floyd Lounsbury,

Michael Coe, Donald Robertson, Will Andrews, George Kubler, and Robert Rands. This photo shows Floyd Lounsbury standing by the hieroglyphic bench in the South Subteraneo of the Palace with Mike Coe kneeling on the left and Bob Rands on the right (Figure 10).

Soon word got around that a great conference was going on at Palenque, and students started coming from all over Mexico. All of the guards at the ruins came. The eighth Mesa Redonda, our twentieth anniversary, was held in 1993. It was the largest ever: 425 registered participants from every major university in the United States and from 16 countries. By then it had become the most important Maya conference in the world. It was then, after 20 years of our planning and supervising the Mesas Redondas that we turned the conference over to Mexico to carry on.

Certainly of no small importance as to what was going on at Palenque was the eruption of the volcano El Chichón on Saturday, March 28, 1982. The first eruption was devastating, killing everyone in the small hamlets near Pichucalco; the second eruption lasted thirty minutes, but the third eruption on Palm Sunday lasted for 45 minutes accompanied by a pyroclastic flow of



Figure 10. Mike Coe, Floyd Lounsbury, and Bob Rands.

super-heated gas, dust, and water vapor which reached a temperature of 1450 degrees Fahrenheit and rushed in flows 200 feet deep for 14 days. Because of the wind and open space between valleys, Palenque received more ash than anyplace except Pichucalco, even more than San Cristóbal. There was no rain for six weeks. But actually the ruins were beautiful all clothed in what looked like snow (Figure 11).

The streets of Palenque were full of powdery ash; it was into everything in our house. Roofs were caving in from the weight, and no one had any water. No trucks could get into Palenque with groceries so food was very scarce. Cattle were dying everywhere. It was six weeks before we had any rain; six weeks of living with all of this was not a fun experience.

Now on to the present time and our “Cross Group Project” beginning in 1996, which culminated in the complete restoration of Temple XIX and the discovery of the tomb in Temple XX. Our headquarters was Na Chan-Bahlam, the house where Bob and I lived for so many years. Here is a photo of Principal Investigator Alfonso Morales surrounded by busy workers in the project lab (Figure 12). As reported in *PARI Newsletter* 31, we

were able to take photographs of the Temple XX murals without actually entering the tomb (Figures 13–14).

And now I am pleased to be able to wrap up this little history with the exciting announcement that archeologist Martha Cuevas will be carrying forward the work we started on Temple XX. I well remember Martha from the time that Alfonso and our PARI group were working in the Cross Group. Among the many vivid memories is one of her retrieving an incensario head from the upper level on the west side of the Temple of the Cross when we were working there. Her book on the incensarios is a must-read (2007 *Los incensarios efigie de Palenque: Deidades y rituales mayas*. Mexico City: UNAM, INAH).

Under the auspices of Mexico’s National Institute of Archaeology and History (INAH), Martha’s project concerns not just Temple XX but the study and organization of all the archaeological collections recovered at Palenque. All the materials will be gathered in new INAH facilities, where a team of archaeologists and conservators will catalog and organize the collections in order to ensure their preservation and the continuity of studies of the site we all love so much.



Figure 11. Temple of the Count and the North Group covered in ash.



Figure 12. The lab.



Figure 13. Temple XX tomb. Photograph by Alfonso Morales and Pete Patrone taken through 10 cm² hole (see *PARI Newsletter* 31).



Figure 14. Figure 7, Temple XX tomb. Photograph by Alfonso Morales and Pete Patrone.