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Recording New Inscriptions of Palenque



Research Year: 1995
Culture: Maya
Chronology: Classic
Location: Chiapas, México
Site: Palenque

Table of Contents

[Abstract](#)

[Resumen](#)

[Archaeological Artifacts with Hieroglyphic Inscriptions](#)

[Tablet of the Warriors from Structure XVII](#)

[Stone sculpture from Group IV](#)

[Stucco hieroglyphs from Structure XVI](#)

[Miniature tablet from Structure XVI](#)

[Stone sculpture with hieroglyphs from Temple of the Sun](#)

[Stone sculpture from Structure XX](#)

[Stone tablet from the north side of The Palace](#)

[Jade pendant from Temple of The Skull](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

Abstract

During my stay at Palenque, I was able to make some detailed sketches of different figures. Enlarged drawings were made from the best pictures, but these cannot be

considered final versions, since other Mayanists need to critique them. Included with this report are 87 color photos and 28 copies of the drawings that should be checked and corrected by comparing them with the originals in the future. I am also including descriptions from the archaeologist, Lic. Arnoldo Gonzalez, in which explains the context of the different figures. Some of the names of the figures are only descriptive of their place of origin. As some were found in the excavation rubble, we do not know if those were the places where they were located in pre-Columbian times.

Resumen

Durante mi estadía en Palenque pude realizar algunos dibujos detallados de diferentes figuras. De las mejores imágenes se hicieron dibujos ampliados, aunque éstos no pueden considerarse versiones finales, puesto que todavía falta la crítica de otros mayistas. En este informe se han incluido 87 fotografías a color y 28 copias de los dibujos que en el futuro han de ser revisados y corregidos, comparándolos con los originales. También estoy incluyendo descripciones del arqueólogo, Lic. Arnoldo González, que explican el contexto de las diferentes figuras. Algunos de los nombres de las figuras son meramente descriptivos de su lugar de origen. Como algunas de ellas fueron encontradas en los escombros de la excavación, no sabemos si era en esos lugares donde se hallaban ubicadas en tiempos precolombinos.

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Archaeological Artifacts with Hieroglyphic Inscriptions

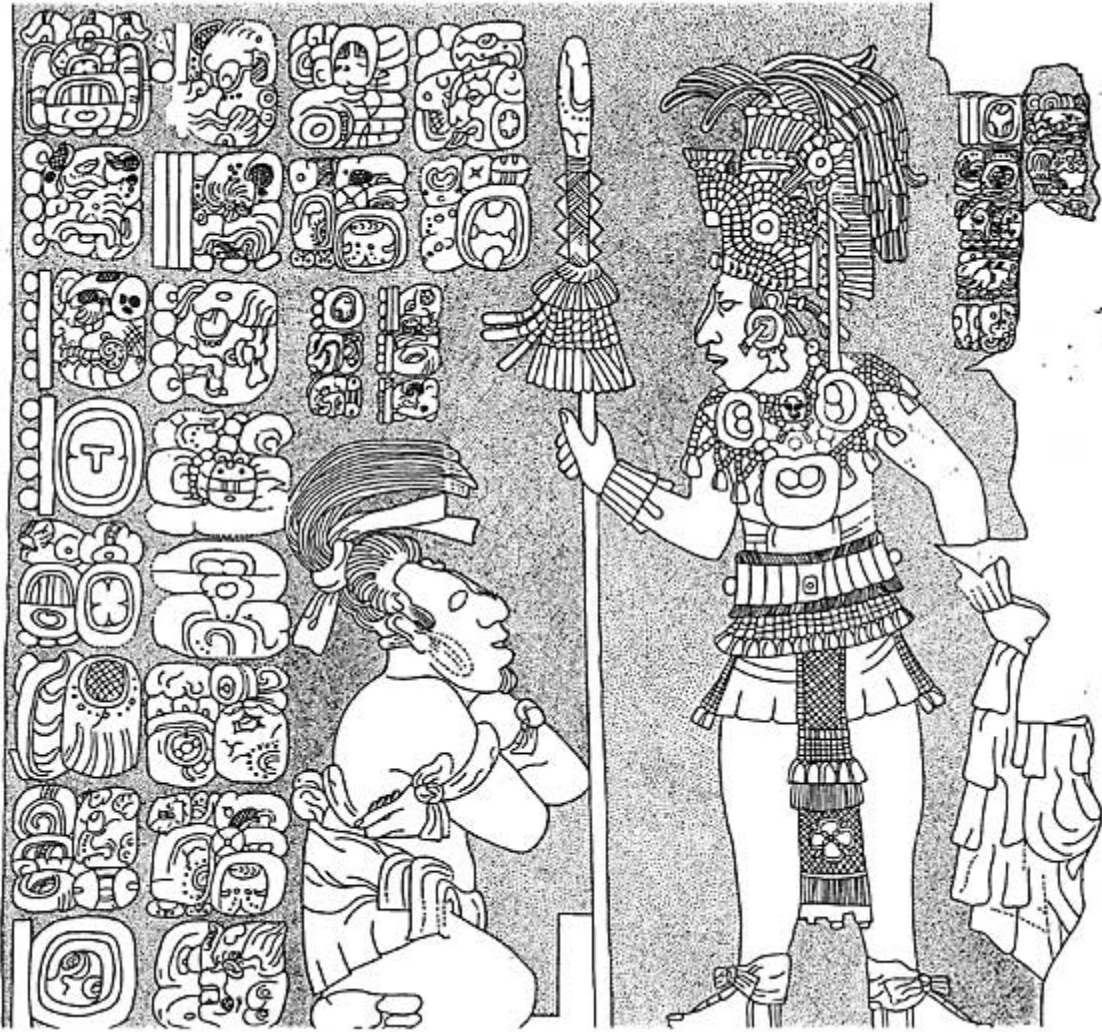
Tablet of the Warriors from Structure XVII

The Tablet of the Warriors was located in 1993 during the excavations of the Temple of the Warriors. The building is located 31 m south of the Temple of the Foliated Cross. This piece corresponds to the tablets seen in the other building of the plaza. The tablet was discovered during the exploration of the facade, and because of its disposition, it is determined it came from the building's shrine. The piece was worked on high relief over two big slabs of limestone approximately 80 m in width by 2 m in height with a diameter of 10 cm. The rescue of the tablet was extremely difficult, because it was stuck to the posterior wall with mortar. As the wall collapsed, the tablet came down with it and ended up buried in between the rubble. This is the reason why it broke into 40 pieces.

It represents a scene where a central figure is seen from the front with the head facing to the right side. The individual is richly dressed, wearing a cap representing a jaguar. The individual is also wearing counterweight earflaps, a necklace holding a small head, and a long loincloth. He also carries wristbands, ankle socks, and sandals. With the right hand he presents a rope that has a point.



Photo 12.



Drawing 28.



Photo 13.



Photo 14.



Photo 15.



Photo 16.



Photo 17.



Photo 18.



Photo 19.



Photo 20.



Photo 21.



Photo 22.

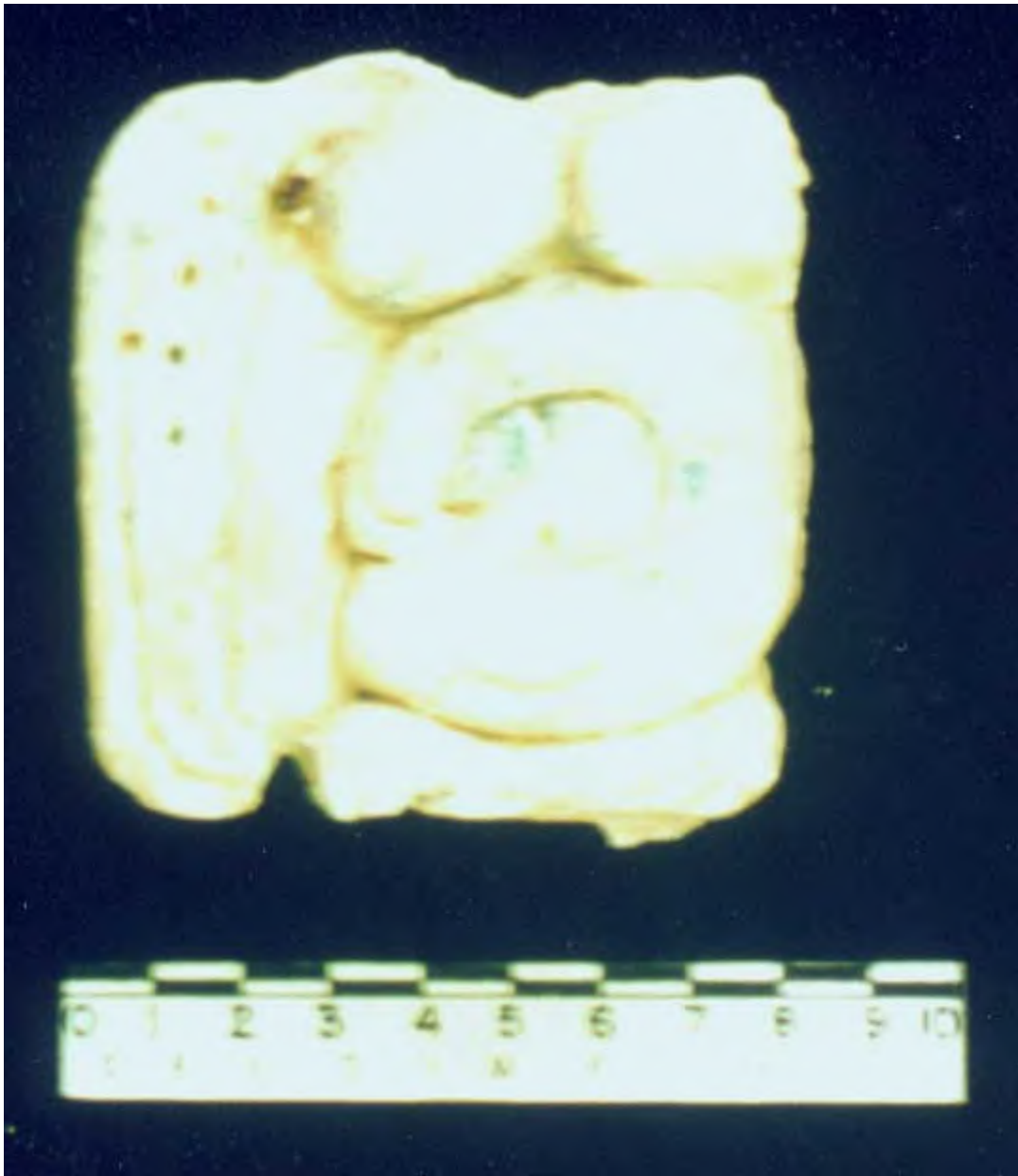


Photo 23.



Photo 24.



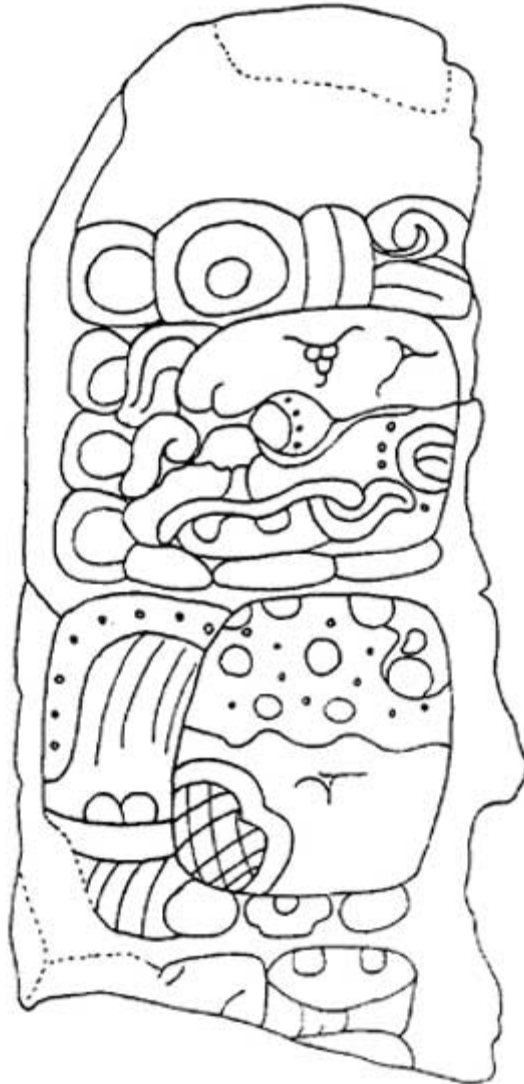
Photo 25.



Photo 26.



Photo 27.



Stone Sculpture
Temple XVII

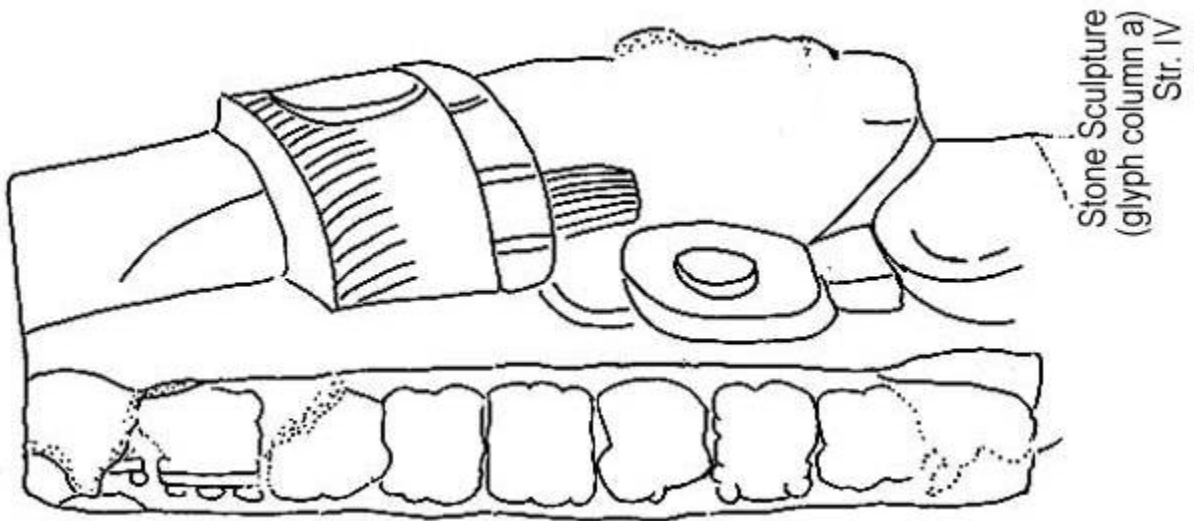
Drawing 16.

Stone sculpture from Group IV

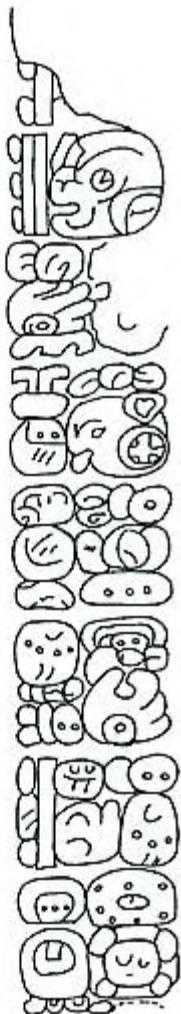
Stone portrait from Group IV was found in the southern room of the superior gallery in the building. It was found with other sculptures that lacked hieroglyphics. The building presents two levels, where the inferior consists of three galleries. The external gallery is the only one without an arched roof. In the top story, the building has two corridors that run north to south, where they possibly lead to a terrace. The location of the sculptures opens up the probability that the other sculptures or tablets can be found on the opposite extreme of the upper level, thus creating an intentional symmetry.



Photo 4.



Drawing 3.



Stone Sculpture
(glyph column a)
Str. IV

Drawing 7.

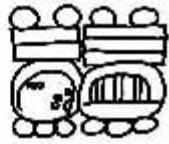


Photo 5.



Stone Sculpture
(glyph columns b, c)
Str. IV

Drawing 4.



Stone Sculpture
(glyph columns b)
Str. IV

Drawing 8.

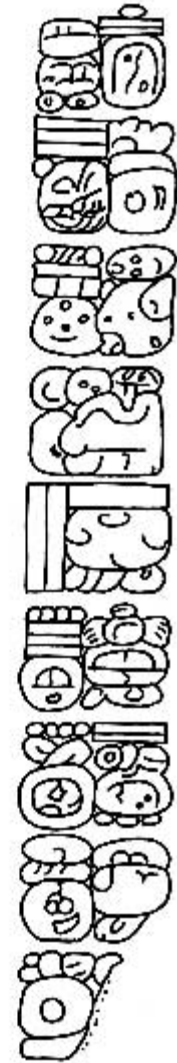


Stone Sculpture
(glyph column c)
Str. IV

Drawing 9.



Photo 6.

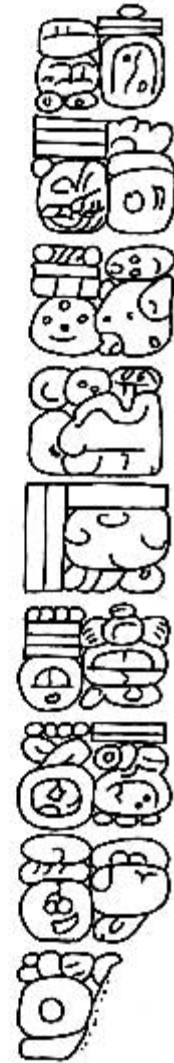


Stone Sculpture
(glyph column f)
Str. IV

Drawing 12.



Photo 7.

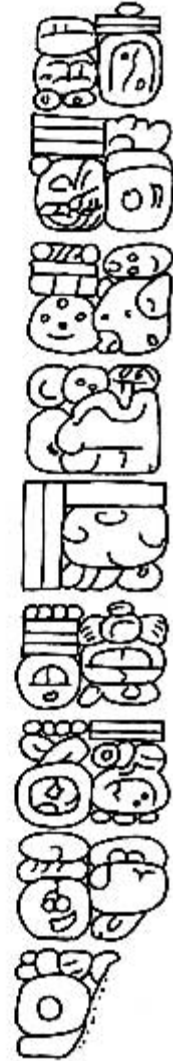


Stone Sculpture
(glyph column f)
Str. IV

Drawing 12.



Photo 8.

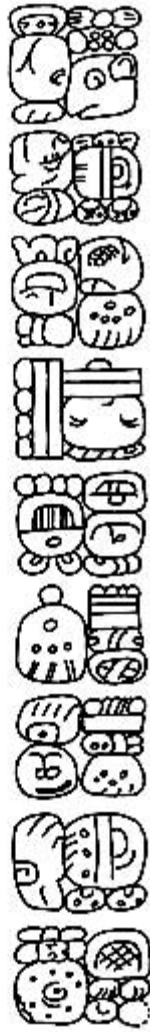


Stone Sculpture
(glyph column f)
Str. IV

Drawing 12.

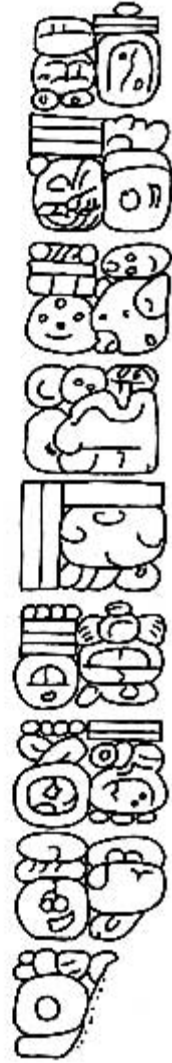


Photo 9.



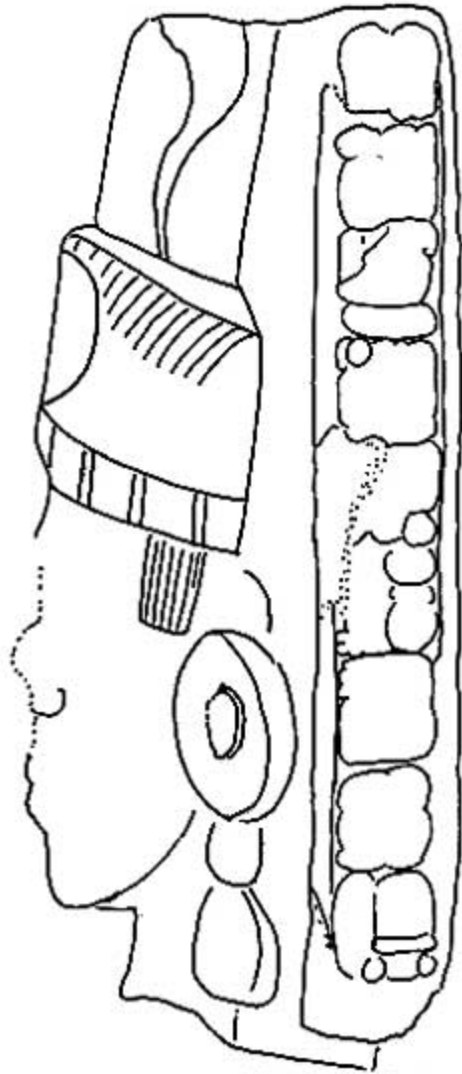
Stone Sculpture
(glyph column e)
Str. IV

Drawing 11.



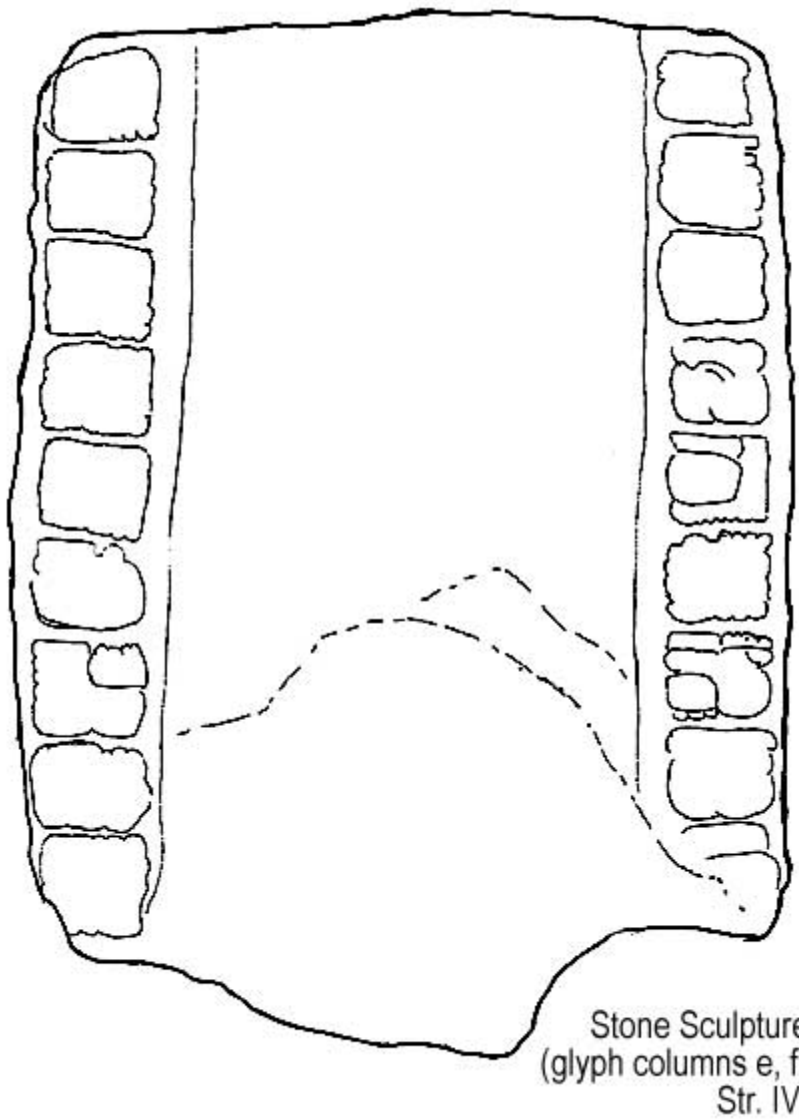
Stone Sculpture
(glyph column f)
Str. IV

Drawing 12.



Stone Sculpture
(glyph column d)
Str. IV

Drawing 5.



Drawing 6.



Stone Sculpture
(glyph column d)
Str. IV

Drawing 10.

Stucco hieroglyphs from Structure XVI

The Temple XVI is a combination of rooms in several levels built on a platform joining the base's north side to the Temple of the Cross. Our principal objective before beginning the exploration of the temple was to define the northeast corner of the base. Upon beginning cleaning details, we realized that it was only a section of the facade west of the temple. Given the characteristics of the building's architecture along with the base's function, it urged us on to initiate the work of the structure.

Allusive references of Temple XVI were found in W. Holmes (1895-97) who described the excavations of several tombs on the Temple's north side. On the other hand, it was Alfred P. Maudslay whose topographic removal in 1889 shows for the first time the location and topography of the temple. Finally, in 1923 Franz Blom leaves a small description of the structure.

To the north and at the foot of the Temple are small hills that, when stripped of their vegetation, present another entrance to a tomb, where a flight of steps can be used to descend. The excavation proved to be a loss, because the main room of the tomb was destroyed and the only way of exposing it would be by excavating the top of the hill. The mentioned hill is surrounded by retention walls and many others are found nearby with possible tombs. In reality what Blom described is not a tomb, but rather an arched corridor that connected to the third level of the second constructive stage.

The recent work carried out in the temple allowed us to determine the principal architectural characteristics. The Group XVI is a series of eight habitable buildings with a corridor and central patio to the extreme east. It is built on a natural platform on the north side of the Temple's base. Jointly, this group of floors represents a rectangular form. It measures approximately 90 m in length from east to west and 37 m in width from north to south. Its principal facade is oriented toward the north.

All the walls and ornamental facings are constructed with the same technique and material. They are stone, carved varying in size, united with mortar, and at one time covered with stucco. All the facings are wide and have preserved their height, including some that reach 2 m.

Until now we can speak of three constructive stages. During the first stage, Building 1 had a rectangular form of 20 m in length by 10 m in width. Formed by four floors of spacious interior, built on a platform that is 2.60 m tall. A staircase measuring 6.50 m in width constitutes the principal access point which is in the excavation process. This staircase leads into a terrace that communicates to a spacious room measuring 7 m in length by 3.3 m in width. This room represents a second access point.

During the cleaning of the rubble about eighty stucco hieroglyphics were found buried all over the floor. These principally decorated the wall in the room and are still found in the same area. On the west side of the room it was possible to find others with the same characteristics we designated as sector 29, and measured 7.50 m in length by 2.50 m in width. This presented two points of access. The principal being 2.50 m in width, while the smaller measured 75 cm. During the removal of rubble we ran into pavement that limits the two rooms of the terrace. Upon this pavement appeared a grayish sandstone axe that was designated Element #4.

This room on the south side of the extreme west communicates with another room having the same characteristics, providing a 2 m wide access point. The room measures 6 m long by 2.50 m in width. The wall on the west side has a small niche just like the one on the northern wall. The only difference is that the first has a small altar joined to it, and covered with stucco. This room communicates with another on the

southeast side through a 70 cm opening. This new room communicates to a corridor from the southeast separating Building 1 and Building 4.

Precisely in the east side of the small staircase we found a fragment of limestone containing Maya hieroglyphics. The fragment has been designated XVI/Element #8 "The Bundle". It is 40 cm in height by 28 cm in width by 10 cm in diameter. The piece shows five persons descending the staircase carrying a bundle. It is possible the fragment forms part of a panel distinctive of Palenque, which originally is fixed to the superior part of Building 4. The piece was found with its engraved face downward, which prevented the erosive action of water to take hold. During the initial exploration of Building 2, a considerable series of fragments were found dispersed throughout the surface's western sector. The building is a small platform, which differs characteristically to Building 1. There is an impression that the architecture relied on perishable material, since there is no evidence of the walls built with limestone. This building measures 11 m in length by 6 m in width.



Photo 28



Photo 29.



Photo 30.



Photo 31.



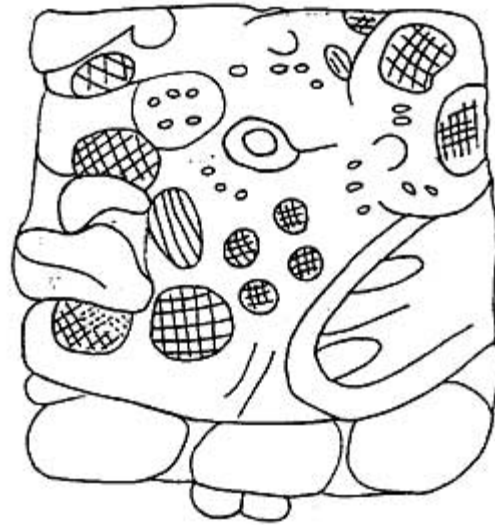
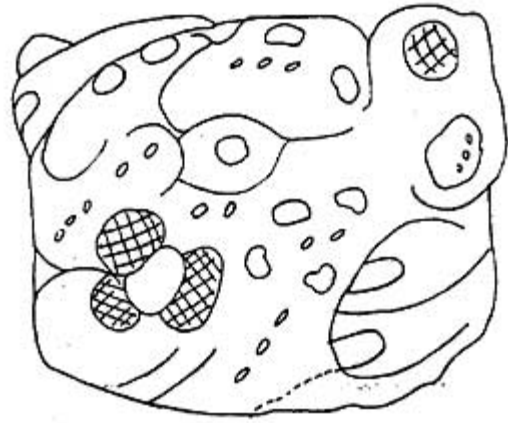
Photo 32.



Photo 33.



Photo 34.



Stucco Glyphs
Structure XVI

Drawing 26.



Photo 35.



Photo 36.



Photo 37.



Photo 38.



Photo 39.



Photo 41.



Photo 42.



Photo 43.



Photo 44.



Photo 45.



Photo 46.



Photo 47.



Photo 48.



Photo 49.



Photo 50.



Photo 51.



Photo 52.



Photo 53.



Photo 54.

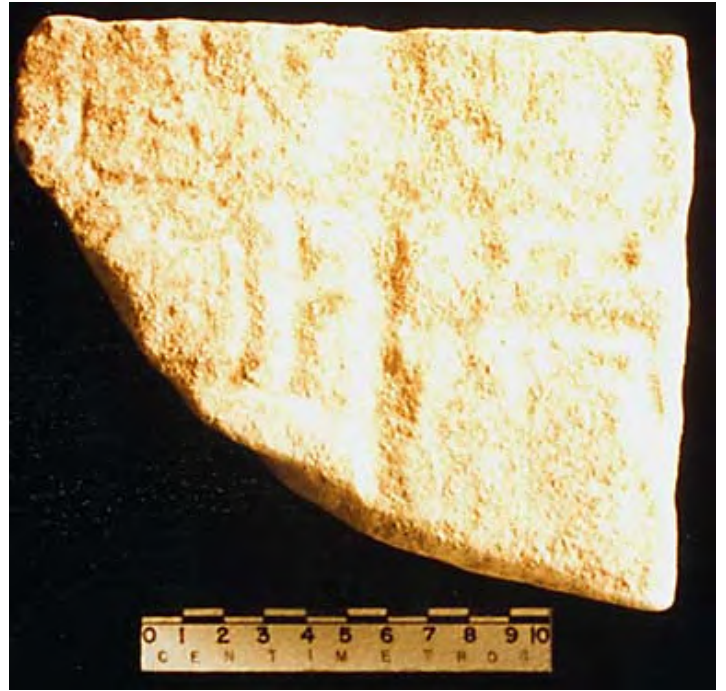


Photo 55.



Photo 56.



Photo 57.



Photo 58.

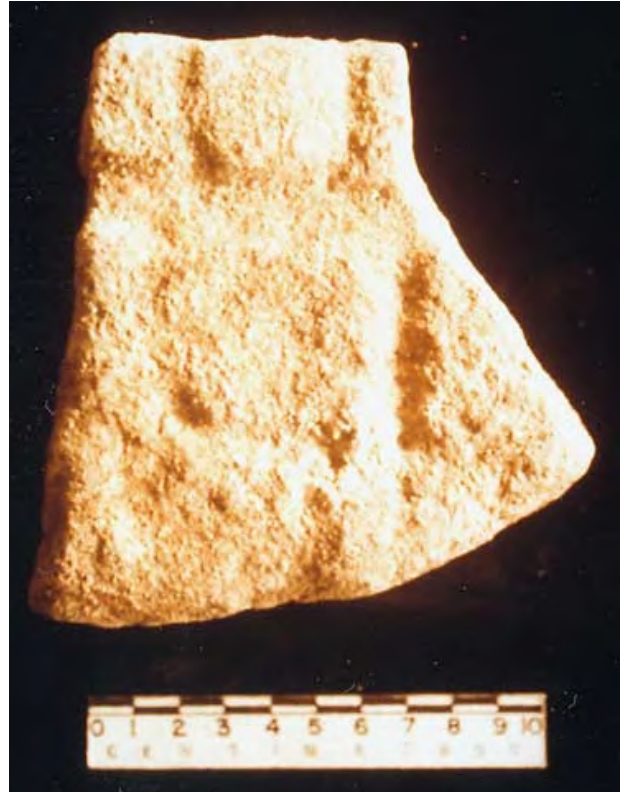


Photo 59.



Photo 60.



Photo 61.



Photo 62.



Photo 63.



Photo 64.



Photo 65.



Photo 66.



Photo 67.



Photo 68.



Photo 69.



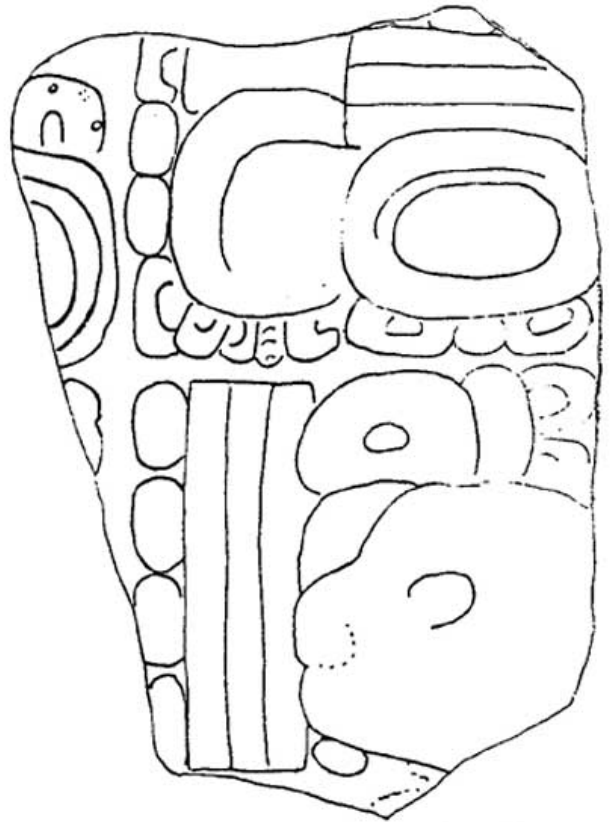
Photo 70.



Photo 71.



Photo 72.

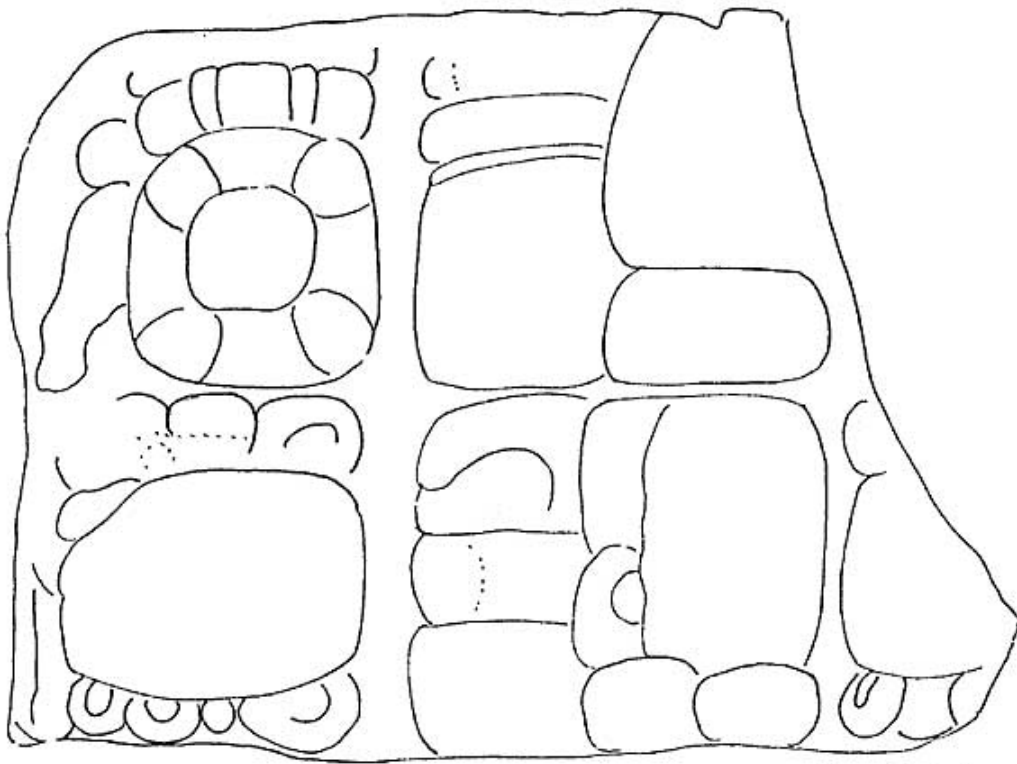


Stone Sculpture
Structure XVI

Drawing 22.



Photo 73.

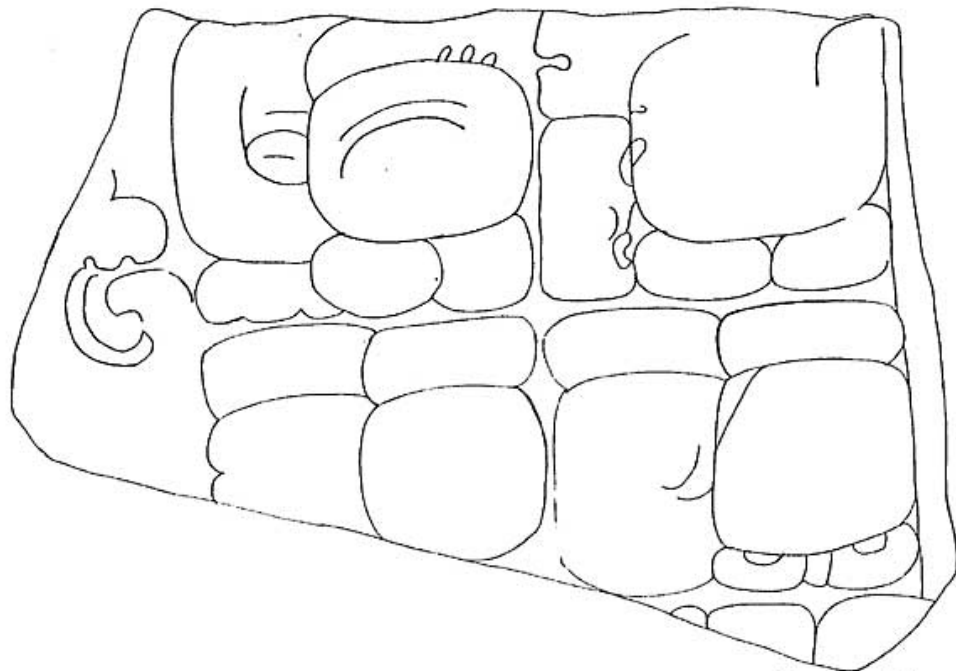


Stone Sculpture
Structure XVI

Drawing 23.



Photo 74.



Stone Sculpture
Structure XVI

Drawing 21.



Photo 75.

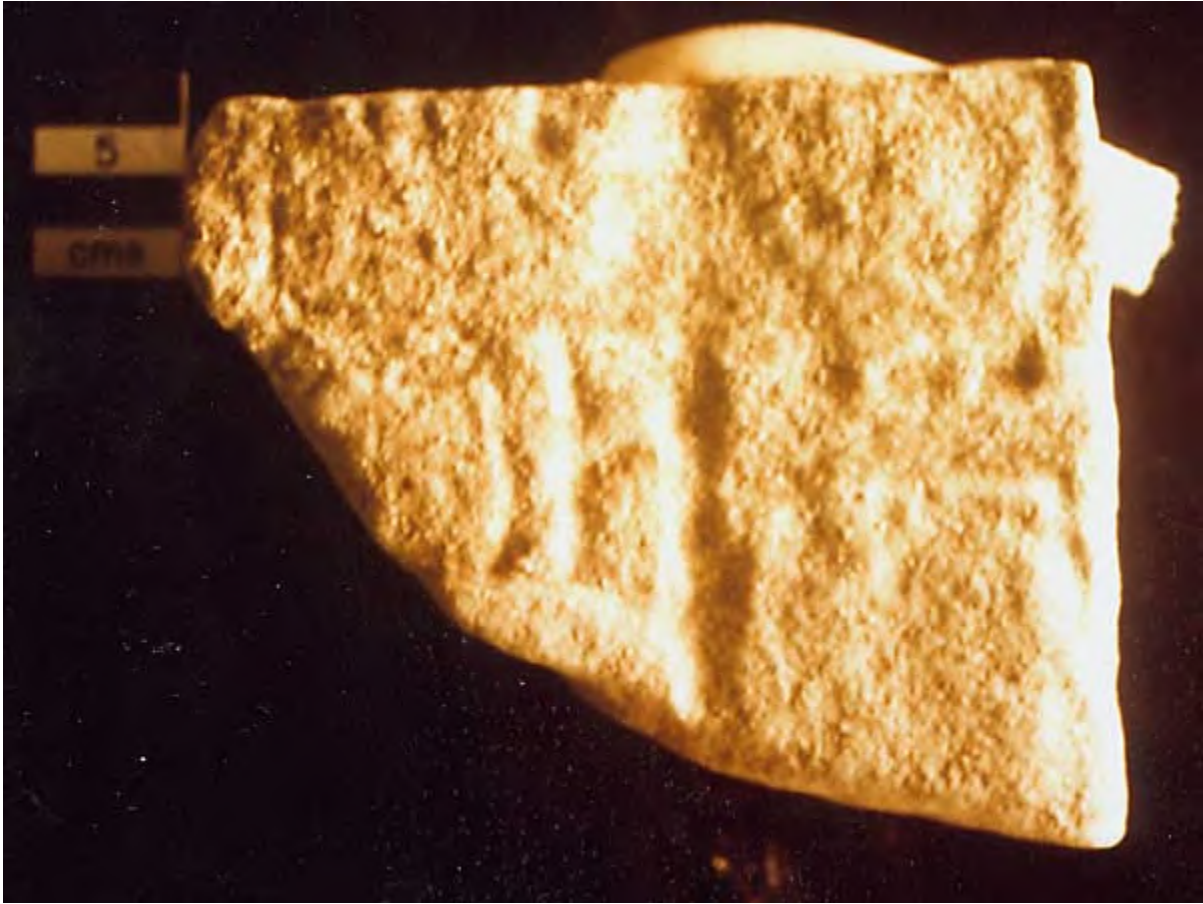


Photo 76.



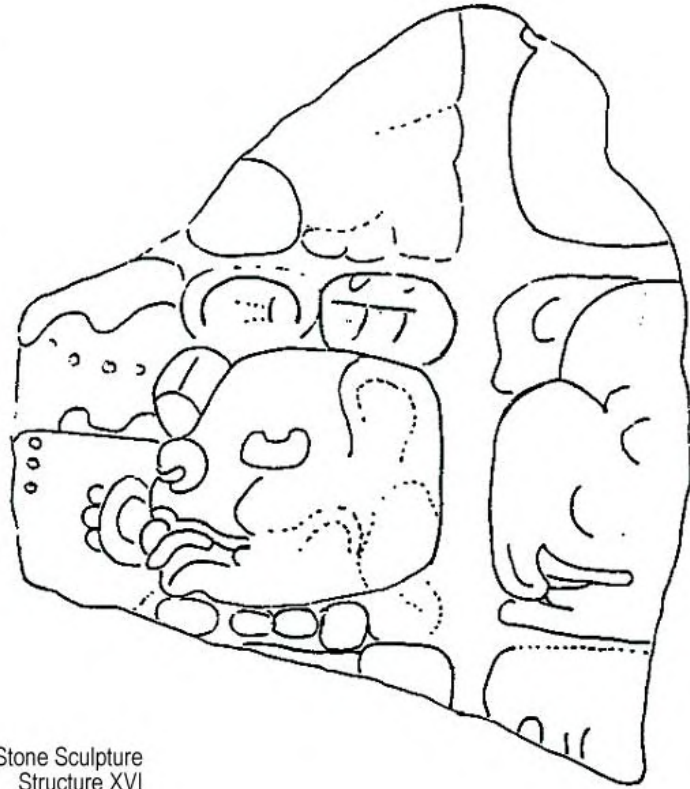
Photo 77.



Photo 78.



Photo 79.

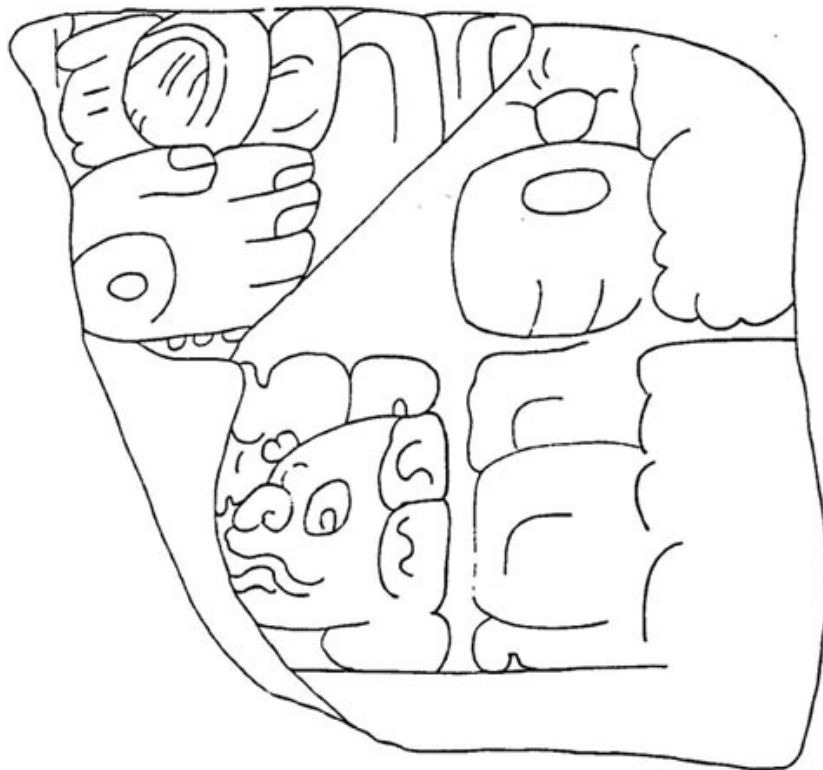


Stone Sculpture
Structure XVI

Drawing 17.



Photo 80.



Drawing 19.

Stone Sculpture
Structure XVI



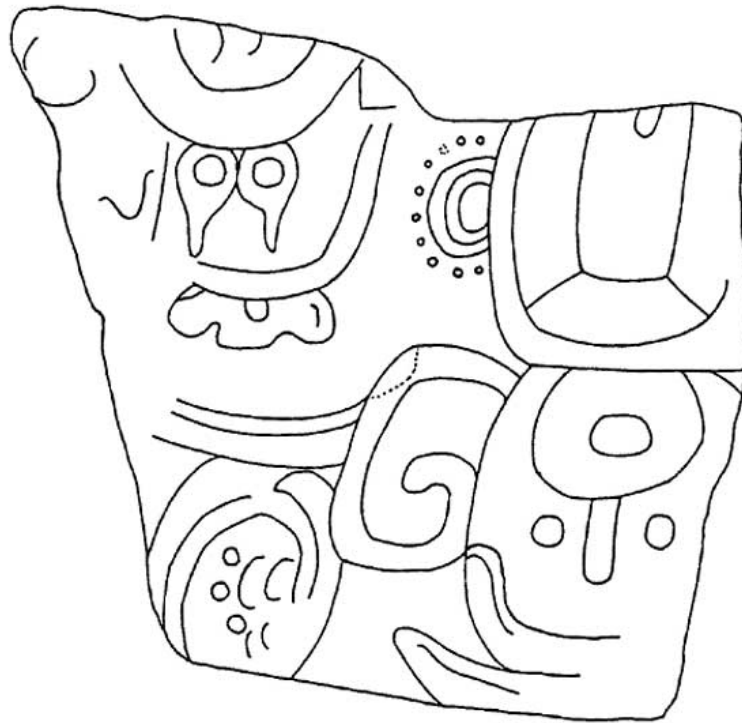
Photo 81.



Photo 82.



Photo 83.

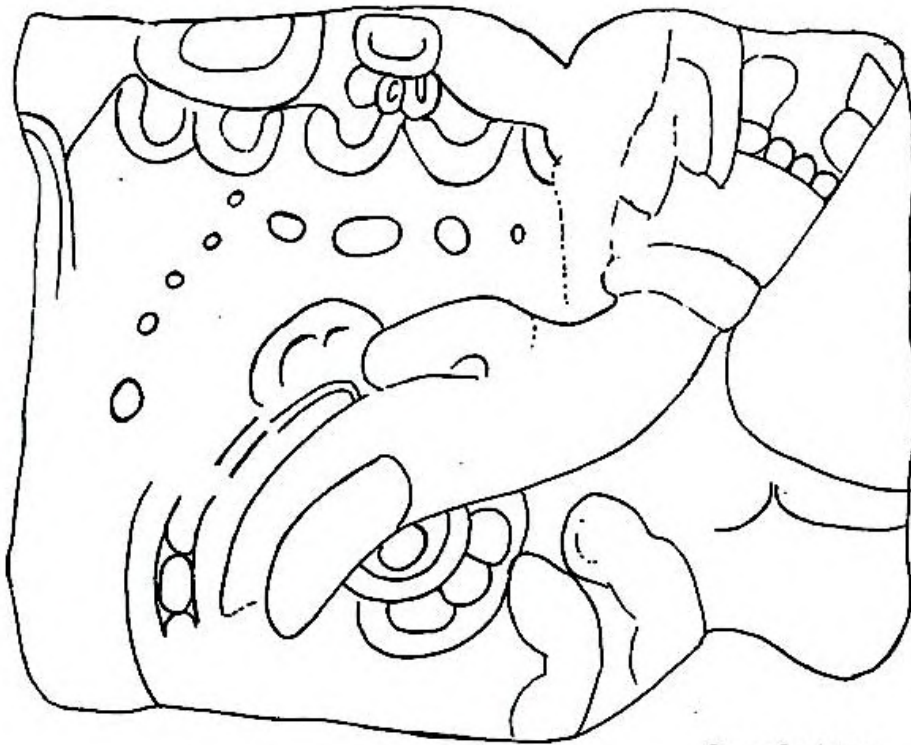


Stone Sculpture
Structure XVI

Drawing 20.



Photo 84.

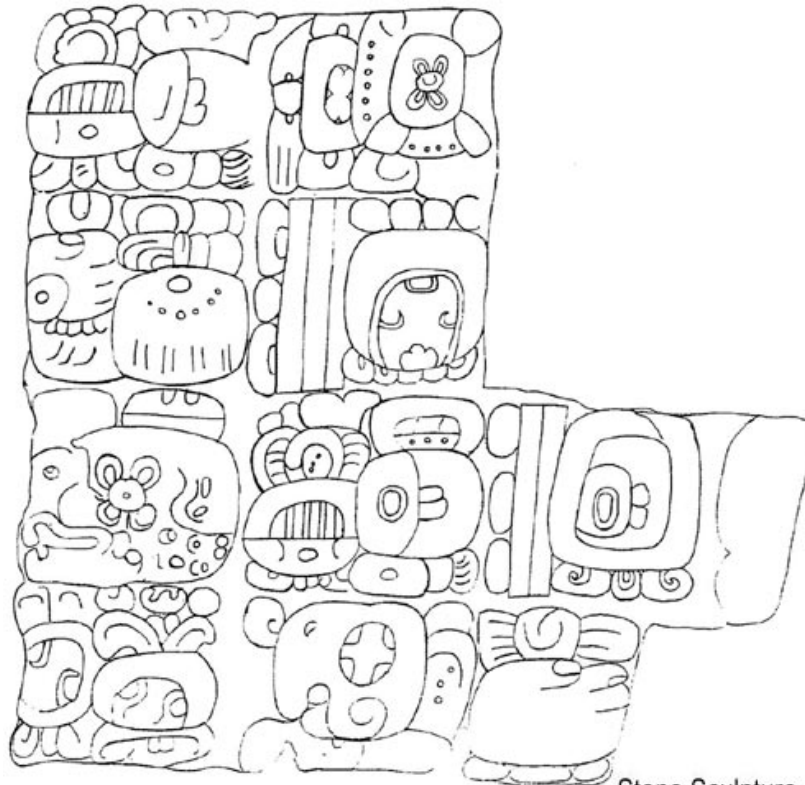


Stone Sculpture
Structure XVI

Drawing 18.



Photo 85.

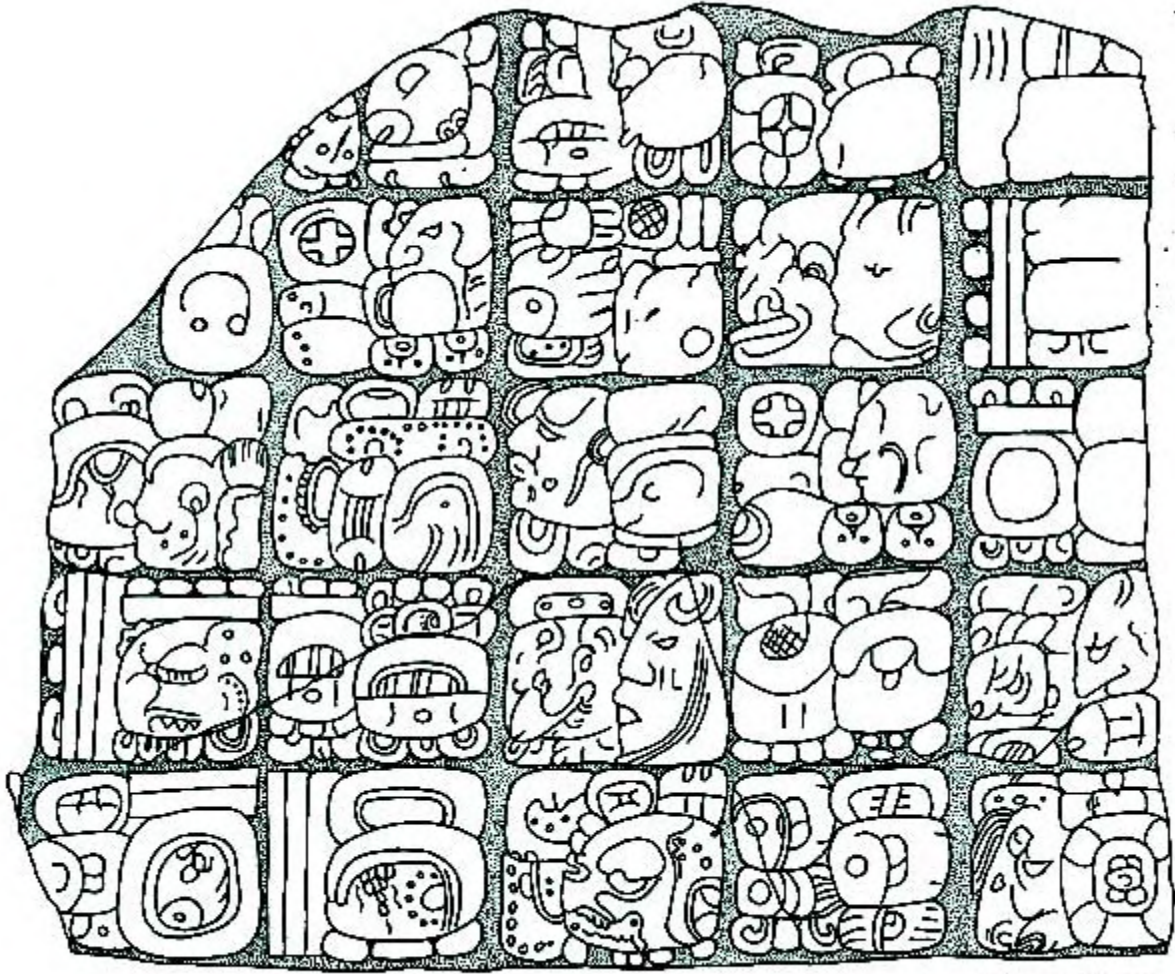


Stone Sculpture
Structure XVI

Draw 27.



Photo 86.

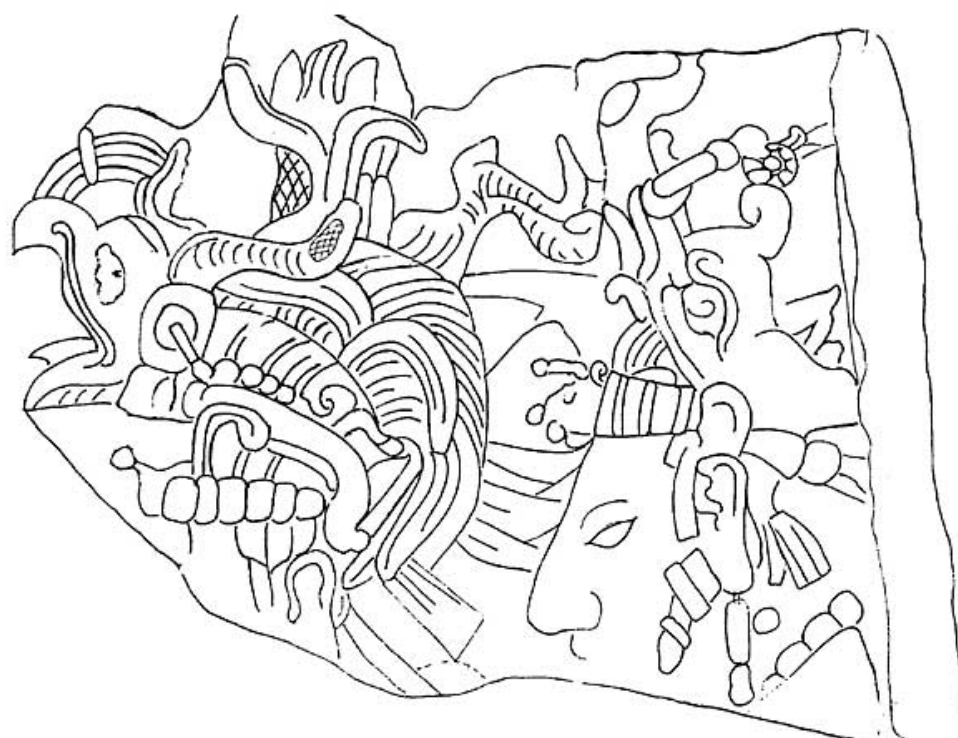


Stone Tablet
Structure XVI

Drawing 24.



Photo 87.



Stone Tablet
Structure XVI

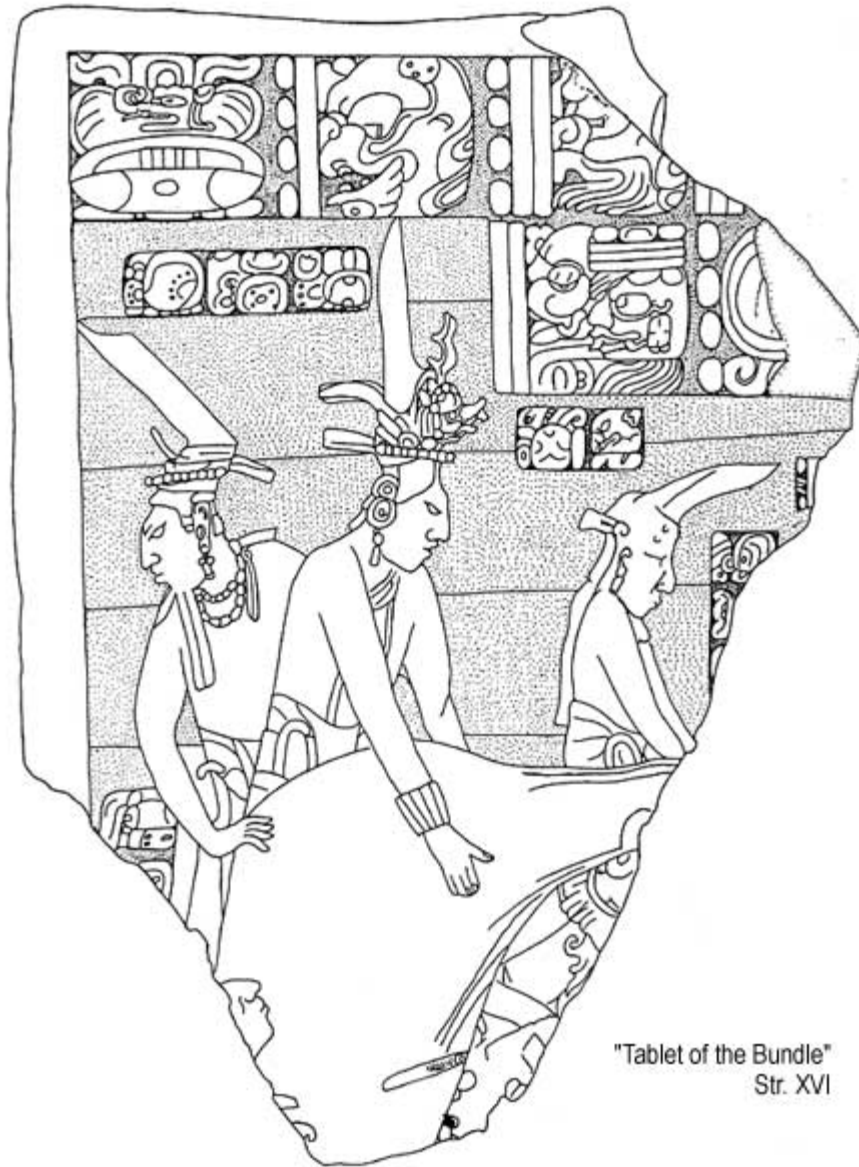
Drawing 25.

Miniature tablet from Structure XVI

This small panel is often referred to as "The Bundle" because of the large bundle seemingly being carried.



Photo 1.



"Tablet of the Bundle"
Str. XVI

Drawing 1.



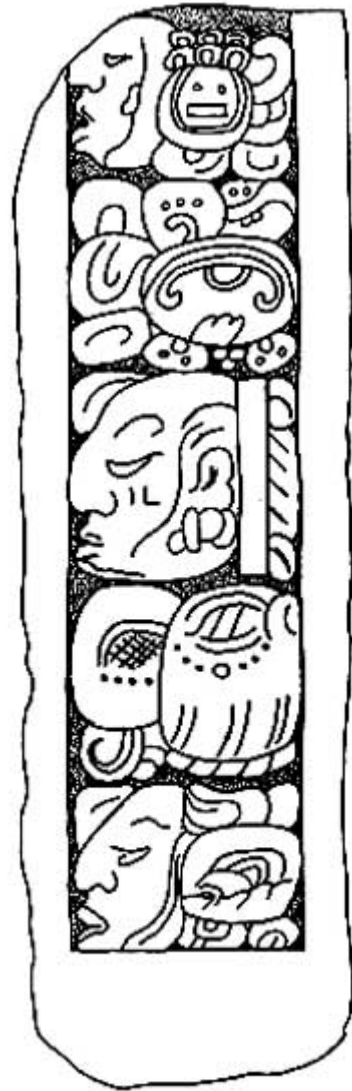
Photo 2.

Stone sculpture with hieroglyphs from Temple of the Sun

It is a monolithic fragment of limestone that presents on one of its sides an element with hieroglyphics. It was found in the rubble inside the base of the Temple of the Sun.



Photo 10



Glyph Tablet
Temple of the Sun

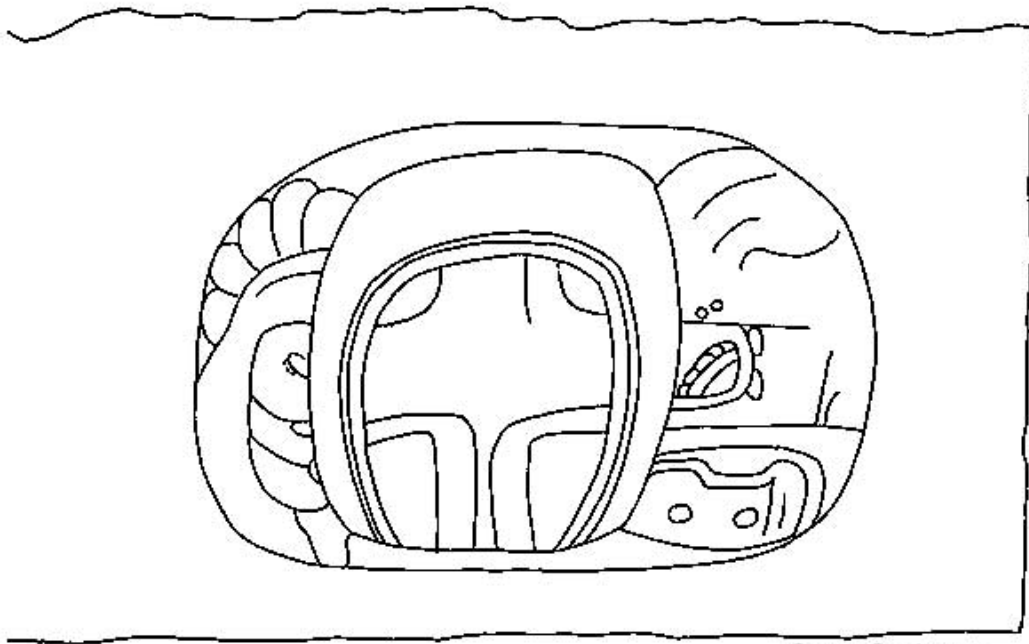
Drawing 13

Stone sculpture from Structure XX

This sculpture was found during initial excavations.



Photo 3.



Drawing 2.

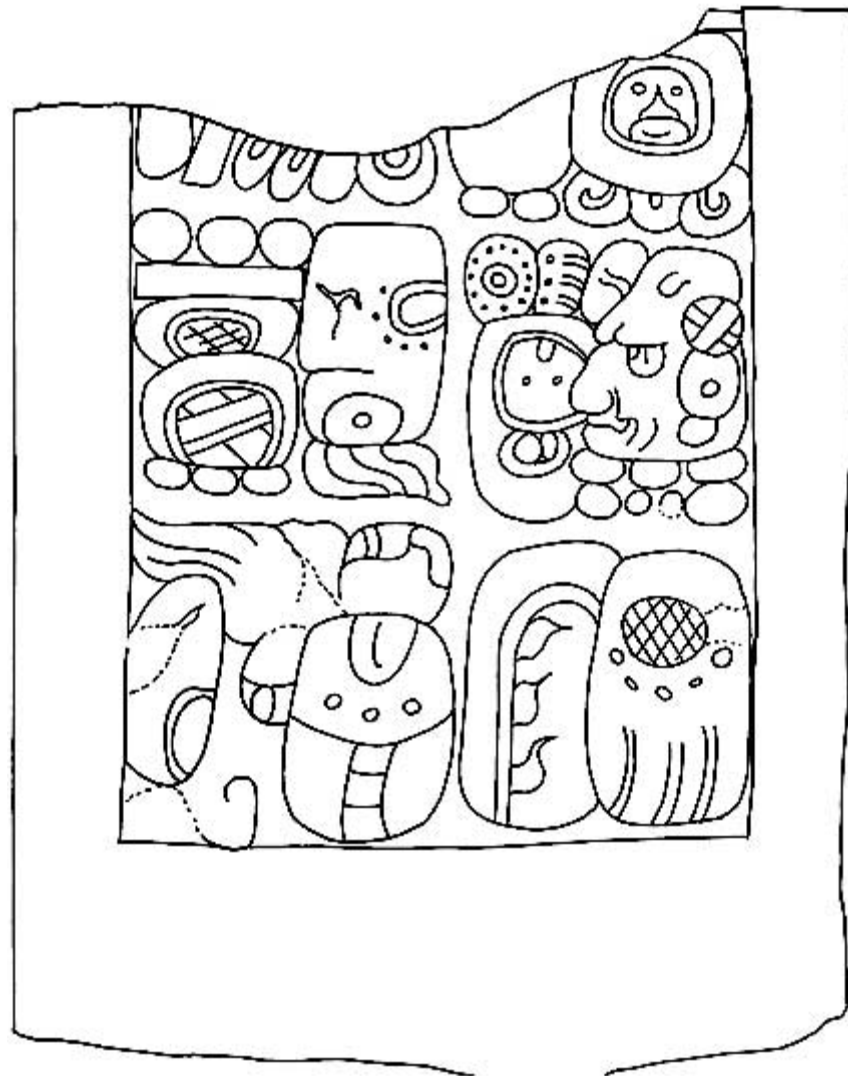
Stone Sculpture
Str. XX

Stone tablet from the north side of The Palace

Located in the second constructive stage of the staircase that provided access to the Palace's platform on the north side, it was found as it protruded from the surface.



Photo 11.

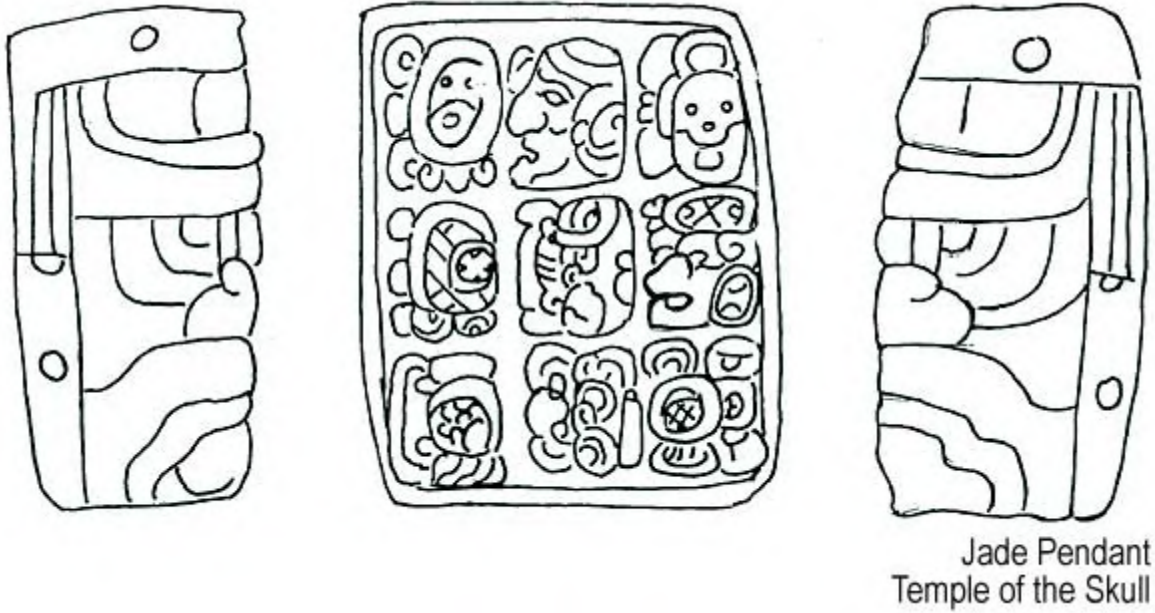


Stone Tablet
North Side Palace

Drawing 15.

Jade pendant from Temple of the Skull

The piece is part of funeral attire of more than seven hundred pieces of diverse materials including jade, bone, shell, and pearl. It was located in the interior funeral chamber during the constructive first stage of the building. The piece is a bar 8 cm tall by 5.5 cm in diameter of semi-circular form, shown in bas-relief in three columns of three hieroglyphics each in the posterior. In the frontal part is a facial representation of "C" God of Palenque.



Drawing 14.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank FAMSI for the grant given to the project of Recording and Distribution of the New Inscriptions of Palenque. This project has been an excellent test case to the interdisciplinary and international cooperation between the archaeological project at Palenque and the researchers at Austin, Texas and in general the international community of Mayanists.