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By

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**The Untold Story of Alberto Ruz and his Archaeological Excavations at Palenque, México: A Micro- and Macrohistorical Approach**

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**The Untold Story of Alberto Ruz Lhuillier and his Archaeological  
Excavations at Palenque, México: A Micro- and Macrohistorical Approach**

**by**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to the memory of two of my strongest and most important female role models – my paternal grandmother Gladys Louise Stuteville Day (Tiny) and my dear mother, Ruby Estelle Mayfield Day. I also dedicate it to my supportive and loving husband, David Martin Schele.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The staff of the Rockefeller Foundation deserves special thanks for their work in locating, copying and mailing available correspondence to me that was written between

Nelson Rockefeller, Alberto Ruz, Gordon Ekholm and Miguel Covarrubias in regard to the Palenque project.

Also, I cannot overstate how important it was to gain access to the many reports about the Palenque project found at the American Museum of Natural History Archives in New York City. The staff at the Museum was extremely helpful and allowed me to spend four days at the archives photographing over one hundred pieces of correspondence and five very large archaeological reports that Ruz sent to Gordon Ekholm.

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I would be remiss if I did not also mention the help I received from the Google Books webpage and its search engine. That resource was one of the many keys that opened the door to finding obscure references about Alberto Ruz and his early family life. Each book of interest that I found in my Google book search sessions was also physically found at the Benson Library. I believe that this happy situation was due to the library's foresight in allowing Google to digitize their collection using optical character recognition (OCR).

And last but not least, I owe a great deal to Linda Schele for acquiring from Alberto Ruz, his *Informes de Trabajo*. These are unpublished documents, otherwise only found in INAH's technical archives in México City. To have them available at home was a unique convenience. They were the source of several important pieces of information in this dissertation.

**The Untold Story of Alberto Ruz Lhuillier and his Archaeological  
Excavations at Palenque, México: A Micro- and Macrohistorical  
Approach**

Publication No. \_\_\_\_\_

Elaine Day Schele, PhD

The University of Texas at Austin, 2012

Supervisor: David Stuart

Abstract: In 1952, when Alberto Ruz Lhuillier discovered the magnificent chamber and tomb of K'inich Janaab' Pakal I, the Classic Maya king of Palenque, many scholars from around the world declared that it was one of the greatest discoveries in Mesoamerican archaeology. Although there are summary accounts describing the life of the man who discovered the tomb, there are no detailed biographies, nor are there any in-depth discussions about his ten year's work at the archaeological site of Palenque, México that took place in the late 1940's and 1950's. This study fills that information

gap. It is a “behind the scenes” narrative that includes an internal and external historiography of the archaeological project. Within that framework, a short biography of Ruz’s life before and after the work is included. Ruz and many others have written extensively about the excavations, the iconography and the epigraphy of the site, but the story contained herein has never been told, since it is derived from primary sources including personal accounts, newspaper articles, correspondence, progress reports, interviews, unpublished and translated *Informes de Trabajo*, and *Anales del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía*. The outcome of this approach is a new view of the excavations and of the man who conducted them. In addition, the study includes a consideration of the political and cultural context within which the excavations took place, thus fostering an understanding of how these issues played out in the work. Through this micro- and macrohistorical approach one may detect and perhaps understand the personal and social influences present at the time of excavation. This approach also gives insight into how these forces shaped the broader history of Maya archaeology in Mexico.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction, Literature Review and Context**

### **PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

In 1952, when Alberto Ruz Lhuillier discovered the magnificent chamber and tomb of K'inich Janaab' Pakal I,<sup>1</sup> the Classic Maya king of Palenque, many scholars from around the world declared that it was one of the greatest discoveries in Mesoamerican archaeology. Although there are edited accounts describing the life of the man who discovered the tomb, there are no detailed biographies, nor are there any in-depth discussions about the ten years of work he did at the archaeological site of Palenque, México. This study fills that gap by including a biography of his life before, during and after the excavations. It also includes a description of the work done at the site and the interactions and discussions between Ruz and his funding sources. Those interactions are woven into the story by including correspondence from two main archival sources, the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) and the archives of the Rockefeller Institute (RI). The results of this approach make a strong case for the benefits of using micro- and macrohistorical methods because a new view of the excavations and the man who conducted them emerges. In addition, the examination of the political and cultural context within which the excavations took place cultivates an understanding of how these issues played out in his work. These methods enable the scholar to detect and better grasp the personal and social influences present at the time of excavation.

### **STUDY LIMITATIONS**

There are several limitations which constrained the depth of this investigation, one of which was the existence of gaps in the Ruz correspondence during my study period. Even though I was able to gain access to all of the Ruz's correspondence in the archives of AMNH and the RI, I found few other repositories of correspondence about the excavations, even though I made inquiries in México City at the Centro de Estudios de

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<sup>1</sup> The name of the deceased within the tomb was not known until several years after the discovery.

Cultura Maya. Ruz had created that center in the 1960's and it is housed at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). I was told by several people (personal communications 2010) that Ruz's fourth and last wife, Celia Ruz Gutierrez, possesses many of his letters and field notes, but that she does not make them available to scholars.

The reason that there are Ruz correspondence and archaeological reports in the archives of the AMNH and the RI is because Ruz was receiving money from Nelson Rockefeller to help fund the excavations. AMNH is the entity that houses the Institute of Andean Research (IAR), Rockefeller's pass-through agency for the funds. Ruz corresponded with the IAR director, Alfred Kidder, and secretary, Gordon Ekholm, on a regular basis, sending progress reports and work plans to both Rockefeller and the IAR. Because Rockefeller stopped funding Ruz for the years 1952 and 1953, there are no letters or excavation reports in the archives for those years<sup>2</sup>. For some unexplained reason, there are only six pieces of correspondence for 1951, a year that was funded by Rockefeller. For the first two years, 1949 and 1950, Ruz consistently wrote his *Informe de Trabajos*<sup>3</sup> for those seasons, subsequently writing a different, more formal report for the *Anales del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía*<sup>4</sup>, the Mexican journal within which the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) publishes the reports of its archaeologists. After 1950, the text of his *Informes* and *Anales* became identical and he did not document his line item budget in either place<sup>5</sup>. Because of these gaps in information I was not able to piece together a complete picture of his budget for

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<sup>2</sup> For season 1958, Ruz did not use the \$6,000 that Rockefeller made available to him, although he still sent the *Informe* to the IAR as can be evidenced by its existence in the archives.

<sup>3</sup> These reports often called "Informes" are informal archaeological reports not meant for publication often called "Informes".

<sup>4</sup> Reference to this journal will hereinafter be abbreviated as "Anales".

<sup>5</sup> However, his junior archaeologist, César Sáenz, continued to write *Informes* for the years 1953 and 1954, but without including any funding amounts.

the ten-year project, something that I think would have been a helpful addition to the record. Instead, I was only able to make line item budget tables for two years (Tables 1 and 2), and then a general spreadsheet showing his funding sources for the entire ten years (Appendix A).

The major sources of information regarding my summaries of Ruz's archaeological work within this dissertation are the *Anales del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía*. I have also used, where available, *Informes de Trabajo*. These *Informes* are the source from which many of the photos in the "Figures" section of this dissertation are derived. I also used informal progress reports that Ruz sent to the IAR to summarize some of his work.

Although I have emphasized the need to review and understand the entire archaeological record before making assessments about the archaeologist's findings, it was beyond the scope of this dissertation to summarize all the work performed in each of the buildings at Palenque. Therefore, I generally derived my narrative summaries from the introduction and conclusion sections of his reports, with a special focus on the work done in the Temple of the Inscriptions where the famous tomb was found.

One last point that I want to make is in regard to Ruz's theories and interpretations about the ancient Maya that appear in his archaeological reports during this time period. It is important to remember that over time and throughout his career, his opinions and conclusions about many of his findings changed. Therefore Ruz's opinions, as documented in this dissertation, represent only a slice of time. I was told by the epigrapher and archaeologist, David Stuart that as a young boy, he and his dad George visited Ruz in Ruz's office in México City. After the visit, as Stuart and his father were getting ready to leave, Ruz gave the young boy some advice. He told him "Never get so old that you cannot change your mind" (personal communication 2011).

## **HOW THIS DOCUMENT IS ORGANIZED**

The remainder of Chapter 1 below includes an introduction to the site where I describe its geography, climate and geology. The next part of the chapter is a section on the Ruz legacy and a summary of some of the written misconceptions about his work at Palenque. The next section of Chapter 1 is a discourse on the existing literature and a justification for the theoretical approach used in this study. Within that section, I summarize the benefits of using microhistory and biography in the study of the history of archaeology. I then summarize the important previous biographical writings about Alberto Ruz's life and I review three of Ruz's early writings that contain some of his philosophical outlooks regarding archaeology and Maya epigraphy. The last section for Chapter 1 is a short history of the "Golden Age of Mexican Archaeology" Chapter 2 is about two important archaeologists who worked at Palenque just prior to Ruz named Miguel Ángel Fernández and Heinrich Berlin. Chapter 3 is a short treatment of Ruz's early life – his young adulthood in Cuba, his life at archaeology school, his work in Campeche and Yucatán, and his studies in Paris. Chapter 4 contains a short characterization of Ruz's family life. Chapter 5 is a summary of the agencies and people who dreamed and planned for excavating Palenque. Chapters 6 through 10 are summaries of the excavations and the interactions of those principal players. Chapter 11 describes Ruz's resignation after a political incident at Chichén Itzá and the family's move to México City. It also discusses the next phase of his life where he began a career as a teacher, writer, editor and administrator. Chapter 12 includes a summary of the Ruz legacy and my contribution toward the understanding of that legacy.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE SITE**

### **GEOGRAPHIC SETTING OF PALENQUE**

Before I begin a detailed discussion about the history of the site's archaeological work, I will describe the site's geography, geology and its general environmental settings. This Classic Maya site is located on a limestone shelf at the base of the Sierra de

Palenque. To the west is the Don Juan Mountain, which is approximately 1010 meters in elevation (Figure 1.1). Alberto Ruz in his book *The Civilization of the Ancient Maya* likens this limestone shelf to a “broad amphitheatre extending from the peak of the nearest hills to the borders of the plain” (Ruz Lhuillier 1970b:105) where the central building complex sit upon a natural esplanade bounded northward by a steep cliff. Also, to the southeast of the site and rising right behind the Sierra de Palenque is the Cerro de la Cojolita. These heavily forested hills are the northern extent of the Sierra Madre de Chiapas. These hills are a major physical barrier between the fertile Tulijá Valley and the archaeological site to the northeast; however access to the site is easily gained due to the many foot trails and paths that cross the hills. These foot paths connect local modern Maya villages in the Tulijá Valley with Palenque as well as with other smaller sites and shrines in the vicinity, a fact that was documented by Robert Rands during his regional survey (Ruz Lhuillier 1958d:270). It is likely that these same paths were used in ancient times. See Figure 1.2 for a very rough regional site map that was compiled by Rands and was included in the 1956 season report.

Ancient Palenque sits on a natural and artificial limestone escarpment<sup>6</sup> formation that had strategic advantages for ancient people, as explained by Alberto Ruz,

*The Chiefs who chose this site took into account the fact that they would be protected from behind by steep ridge of mountains, that their monuments would be visible from far away on the plain, that they would have an inexhaustible water supply provided by the many streams, that it would be close to their corn fields, surrounded by forests with plentiful hardwood trees for their buildings, vines and palms for the roofs of their huts, edible wild fruits, resin for their rites, edible animals and fur-bearing or feathered specimens for clothing and adornments* (Ruz Lhuillier 1970a:105).

Author’s translation

Spreading out to the north of Palenque are the rain-drenched coastal plain wetlands of Tabasco and Veracruz (Figure 1.3), where the land is primarily low plains and rolling hills. The site is also located close to the small modern cities of Palenque, Salto de Agua

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<sup>6</sup> An escarpment is generally considered a continuous line of cliff faces or steep hills that have developed due to erosional differences or due to faulting.

and Tumbalá. Today, this is an area inhabited by Chol speaking Maya (Morales M. 1974:127).

## **HYDROLOGY AND CLIMATE**

The regional machine that drives weather-making for the area is made up of the northeastern trade winds that come in from the Gulf of México (West and Augelli 1989). As these winds sweep across the West Indies, the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of México, they are heated and saturated with large amounts of moisture and become heavy-laden tropical air masses. Where these air masses come into contact with higher elevations, such as the foothills of the Sierra Madre de Chiapas, the moist air is forced up and cools, causing great clouds and heavy rains on the windward hill slopes. “Thus, the northeastern, or windward side of the West Indian island and the eastern side of Central American and southern México are the wettest areas of Middle America, with an average yearly rainfall between 80 and 120 inches” (West and Augelli 1989:43).

During the months of August, September, October and November, Palenque generally receives 45 percent (975 mm) of its 2,166 mm annual rainfall (SARH 1999) but the air is humid year-round. The heaviest rain falls from July to October and the dry season generally happens between April and May. The extra dry season or “la canícula”<sup>7</sup> occurs for two or three weeks in August (Morales M. 1974:126). The dry seasons are the most favorable for excavation and exploration of the site.

The ability to manage the extremely high rainfall during the rainy season was important for the ancient city’s sustainability so the people adapted by channelizing and making use of the water that percolated up from the many springs throughout the site (Figure 1.4). According to Kirk French, an archaeologist who mapped the springs in 2001, there are 56 springs throughout the site, all flowing with crystalline waters of dissolved limestone into 9 different arroyos over the area (French 2002). It is believed

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<sup>7</sup> This phrase can be interpreted as “dog days”.

that the Classic Maya residents in this city called it *Lakam Ha'* a term meaning “big” or “wide water” in several of the Mayan languages (Stuart 2006:92). Evidence for this name comes from its carved inscriptions. It was most likely a name that reflected the pride and the power of the city, as well as its spiritual nature.

The Tulijá and the Chacamax River systems provide regional drainage for the abundant rainfall, with the Tulijá River being of primary importance (Morales M. 1974). Both of these rivers are perennial. The tributaries of the Tulijá are the Michol, the Xamuljá, Yaxja, Bacum, Bascan, Misoljá and Ixteljá. The Michol River originates from several springs at the site, the most important of which is the Otolum which flows from a suspended water table located at the base of Don Juan Mountain, east of an ancient building called “The Palace”. The water from the nine arroyos comes from the numerous springs that eventually flow down into the Michol and then the Tulijá, which empties into the Grijalva River. The Chacamax River carries the water from the area northeast and east of the site and finally joins the Usumacinta River.

#### **TOPOGRAPHY AND PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES**

The best-known part of the site is where the Palace and the Temple of the Inscriptions sit (Figure 1.5). They are positioned on the flat part of the outcropping shelf, but the terrain for the majority of the site and its many unexplored buildings is very difficult due to the degree of slope and to the travertine water rocks found throughout the site. The shelf measures 1.7 kilometers east-west and 260 meters north-south (French 2002:75). The builders of the site “...were forced to do a considerable amount of reshaping of the existing ground form in order to maintain a semblance of visual order in the overall layout of the city” (Andrews 1975:168). Archaeologist Edwin Barnhart mapped over 16 linear kilometers of terracing within the site. Alberto Ruz, in his book *The Civilization of the Ancient Maya* wrote, “The construction was adapted to the uneven terrain or modified

by terracing wherever necessary”<sup>8</sup> (Ruz Lhuillier 1970a:105). But in many cases, the builders took the opportunity whenever possible to build with the lay of the land and rock outcroppings

Most of the agricultural land associated with the ancient city is believed to be found in the flat alluvial areas below the escarpment where all the runoff from the hillside urban core area would have flowed (Liendo Stuardo 1999). In the alluvial flatlands, there is evidence of ancient channelized fields (Liendo Stuardo 1999:49). Some researchers have written that they believed that the Tulijá Valley, located to the south of the site, was the economic support in ancient times due to its extremely fertile soils (Morales M. 1974:126).

## **GEOLOGY**

The site is approximately 300 feet or 92 meters above sea level. It overlooks the coastal plain region of México (a physiographic-tectonic province) which is an area that extends from the Río Grande River to the north and then along the Gulf Coast and into the Yucatán Peninsula, a distance of approximately 850 miles. Don Juan and the nearby ridges and depressions to the south are part of the Old Antillia physiographic-tectonic province. Within this province, Don Juan is a major range trend, according to West and Augelli (1989). It also has an inactive fault line that transects its northwestern end. The mountain sits in a region that contains rugged mountains, escarpments and hills and is rich with karstic limestone caves. This physiographic-tectonic province is believed by geologists to be the oldest and most complex Middle America region, and includes Chiapas as well as the islands of the Greater Antilles (West and Augelli 1989). Now separated by the Caribbean Sea, it is believed that at one time, during the Cretaceous Period of 100 million years ago, these two areas formed one land mass. To the east of this massive formation lies the Usumacinta River whose location represents the western

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<sup>8</sup> When Ruz first began to work at Palenque, he thought that many of these terraces were for defense against foreign invaders.

border of Guatemala. Also to the east is the mountain range of the Cojolita and the Guatemalan state of Petén.

### **THE RUZ LEGACY – A SUMMARY OF MY RESEARCH**

The following paragraphs provide a general summary of Alberto Ruz Lhuillier's accomplishments and his impact upon Maya archaeology. His long and noted career was launched in 1949 when he began excavating at Palenque. A more in-depth discussion of his life and career can be found in later chapters of this thesis. In 1952, he became world-famous when he discovered the sumptuous royal Maya tomb of K'inich Janaab' Pakal<sup>9</sup> at Palenque in the Temple of the Inscriptions. Even more significantly, he was the first archaeologist to find an elaborate burial chamber inside a Maya pyramid that was built for the specific purpose of containing the sacred body of a king. In that regard, it was similar to the Pyramids of Giza in Egypt. The discovery sparked a keen world-wide interest in the ancient Maya and Ruz's name became inextricably linked to the discovery, just as his teacher and mentor, Alfonso Caso's name will always be associated with Tomb 7 at Monte Albán (Ochoa 1981). In an additional twist to the Ruz' story, I believe that Ruz began to closely associate himself with the occupant of the tomb and with the site itself. Something very similar was experienced by Author Evans, the famous English archaeologist who single-handedly discovered the Minoan civilization of Crete. In a lecture made for *The Teaching Company*, Brian Fagan states "There is this curious identification with archaeologists – that they...very often [have] with their excavations – their site becomes theirs and they clasp their finds to their bosoms.... He [Evans] became, in a way, a Minoan himself" (2002).

At the end of his Palenque excavations, no one knew more about the magnificent site and the tomb than Ruz. The significant recognition that he received after the discovery of the tomb perhaps caused him to believe that none could ever know it better

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<sup>9</sup> At the time of the discovery, the name and rank of the occupant in the tomb was not known.

than he. That belief would be tested from December 14th to the 22nd in 1973, when the first Palenque Round Table was held in the small pueblo of Palenque, just down the road from the ruins. More discussion about the Palenque Round Tables is included later in this chapter.

Subsequent to the excavations at Palenque, after Ruz left INAH in 1958<sup>10</sup>, he spent many years reflecting back on the data that he found there, especially in the Temple of the Inscriptions (Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1992). In conjunction with this, one of his most recognized accomplishments was the contribution he made to our knowledge of funerary practices of the ancient Maya (Fitzsimmons 2009:2), a direct outcome of his work in the Inscriptions' tomb.

There is a popular belief that Ruz's work in the tomb, its temple, and his subsequent publications about it were his magnum opus (Coe 1999) – that his other work at the site was not as important. I believe this to be an oversimplification of the facts evidenced in the following chapters of this dissertation. (See also Appendix B for a list archaeological site reports written by Ruz and his archaeologists during Ruz's ten-years at Palenque). Unfortunately, the discovery of the royal tomb caused “the vast and impressive achievements of his conservation work” (Molina Montes 1978:7) to be overlooked by many scholars, especially those who are not familiar with Spanish, the language in which almost all of his works were written. Of the approximately 130 articles and books he published, only 10 were in English. In addition, gaining access to the entire corpus of his *Anales* and *Informes* is difficult, especially for North American scholars.

According to the archaeologist Michael Coe, there is little doubt that Ruz was “...a positive force in the advancement of Maya studies, especially with his great excavations at Palenque” (1999:208). However, Mexican archaeologists of today consider his contributions far more than just a positive force in this advancement, but a driving force

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<sup>10</sup> The circumstance of Ruz's departure from INAH is discussed in the last chapter of this dissertation.

with significant influences on their nation's efforts to raise their archaeological sciences to a higher standard. For instance, in 1981, the staff at the Centro de Estudios Mayas, which Ruz founded in 1960 (Bonifaz Nuño 1981:53), held a conference to give tribute to Ruz. A book was published of the proceedings and in a section by Marta Foncerrada de Molina she wrote

*... I can only say that the scientific rigor of the work of Dr. Ruz as an archaeologist, his inexhaustible interest in the social context and the Mayan customs, the development of Maya art and its relationship with all of Mesoamerica, and concern about the Maya of today, reveal him to be a researcher and teacher of exceptional vitality* (Foncerrada de Molina 1981:32). Author's translation

De la Garza believed that Ruz should be considered among the most prominent Maya experts in the study of the ancient Maya, along with Sylvanus Morley and Eric Thompson, not because of the discovery of the tomb but because he tried to find a deeper meaning in archaeology, aside from its technical aspects. She also addressed several of his other accomplishments subsequent to the discovery of the tomb (de la Garza 1992) that are discussed very briefly in the final chapter of this study.

In 1960, approximately two years after leaving his INAH position, Ruz became a professor at the National Autonomous University of México (UNAM) and founded two organizations that eventually merged into the Centro de Estudios Mayas. Ruz was the center's first director. In association with the center, he and his wife, Blanca edited and published the scholarly periodical *Estudios de Cultura Maya*. He used the center and the journal as a vehicle to strive for improvement at UNAM and to attract other scholars into the study of the ancient Maya (de la Garza 1981).

*"Men Make Their Own History, but They Do Not Make It As They Please"<sup>11</sup>*

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<sup>11</sup> This is a paraphrase of a passage from the philosopher, sociologist, economic historian, and revolutionary socialist, Karl Marx. The complete quote states "Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past."

The years between 1917 and the 1950's have been described as the golden period of Mexican archaeology<sup>12</sup>, a period of great accomplishments and discoveries that had a large impact on Mexican society and on México's academic institutions (Robles García 1996; Walker 2009). The period began with Manuel Gamio and José Reygadas Vertiz establishing the Mexican School of Archaeology emphasizing an "approach combining physical anthropology, ethnology, linguistics and archaeology" (Walker 2009:31). It could be argued that the Ruz' excavations in the 1950's and his discovery of the royal tomb in the heart of the pyramid, mark the end of that same era.

Ruz was a Mayanist at a time when few other Mexican archaeologists were interested in working in the Maya area, and he was the first "professional"<sup>13</sup> INAH archaeologist to work in the Maya area. This is confirmed by a quick survey of the INAH *Índice del Archivo Técnico* (Moll 1982), a document that lists every archaeological report that INAH has in its archive dated between 1597 and 1962. There are few reports written by Mexican Mayanists. "The Maya culture was not as interesting from the Mexican point-of-view, since it was on the periphery of the country and partly beyond the borders of México" (Andrén 1998:84). It was simply more convenient for Mexican archaeologists to conduct their work in those areas closest to Mexico City. Consequently, archaeology in the Maya area, in the states of Yucatán and Chiapas became dominated by American archaeologists – more specifically, those from the Carnegie Institution of Washington (Andrén 1998).

Ruz's first excavation experience was a two-season assignment with Alfonso Caso at Monte Albán. Soon afterward, Caso who was also the head of INAH, appointed him the Director of Archaeological Investigations in Campeche (García Moll 2007; Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1987), where he first worked at Maya sites such as Xicalango, Isla del

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<sup>12</sup> See earlier sections of this chapter on The Golden Age of Mexican Archaeology.

<sup>13</sup> In this case, this word refers to one who is trained by schools associated with INAH.

Carmen, Tixchel, Champotón, and Edzna. Michael Coe, referring to the many great Mexican anthropologists of the last 100 years, wrote “Maya studies had never been a Mexican forte...[they] had concentrated on the Zapotec, Mixtec, and Aztec, and left the Maya to foreign investigators” (Coe 1999). As stated before, Maya archaeology in México during this time had been led by American institutions and archaeologists (Black 1990:36). But that all changed, with Ruz’s first excavations in the Maya area on the coast of Campeche that was mentioned above. Then in 1949 Alfonso Caso appointed Ruz supervisor for the excavations at Palenque. In effect, those Palenque excavations, especially the discovery of a royal tomb, helped to direct the attention of México’s archaeologists and its government toward the study of the ancient Maya.

In addition to Ruz’s appointment to Palenque, he was given the title of the Director of Pre-Hispanic Monuments of the Southeast (1949-1958), a geographic area that included the states of Chiapas, Campeche, Quintana Roo and Yucatán. This region coincided with the extent of ancient Maya settlements in México and now anyone wanting to excavate in this territory needed Ruz’s approval. The post gave him the opportunity to meet numerous archaeologists, both Mexican and international – contacts that would serve him well when he became the editor of the publication *Estudios de Cultura Maya* in later years. Also, between the years 1947 and 1958, he excavated at Uxmal, Kabah, Sayil, Chichén-Itzá, Tulum, and in various sites in Quintana Roo. He was able to do this because during Palenque’s rainy season; it was too wet to excavate, so he worked elsewhere during that time.

#### *Summary of Ruz’s Accomplishments at Palenque*

A visit to the site today reveals an archaeological park whose restored ancient buildings were primarily the result of the work that Ruz did during his tenure (Molina Montes 1978:5).<sup>14</sup> His excavations were the most important that have ever been done at

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<sup>14</sup> According to the Mexican archaeologist José Lorenzo, “To be sure, whether an archaeological zone is attractive enough to draw tourists depends on the archaeologist’s work” (1981:201).

the site. More significantly, Ruz generated a vast amount of information about the ancient settlement by documenting and describing its architecture, ceramics, sculpture, lithics<sup>15</sup>, funerary cult, and carved monuments containing texts and chronologies. His discovery of monuments with ancient dates was essential to placing the site in its historical context. Palenque's inscriptions are some of the longest found in the Maya area and have always been a magnet for the curious and for those seeking calendar dates, but in the 20<sup>th</sup> century they began to attract the attention of epigraphic scholars such as Eric Thompson, Heinrich Berlin, David Kelley, Floyd Lounsbury and Linda Schele. The discovery of the tomb and the desire to know more about its royal occupant fanned the flames of epigraphy (D. Stuart personal communication). Efforts at deciphering Maya writing gained substantial momentum when Merle Greene Robertson and several other Mayanists began the Palenque Round Table Meetings in the 1970's in an effort to work together on decipherment<sup>16</sup>.

After the discovery of the tomb, Ruz found that his time was in great demand, both at home and internationally. At his speaking engagements and on his guided tours of the site, he seemed to delight in telling people about what he saw and felt when he opened the chamber where the tomb was housed. In a story for *The Saturday Evening Post*, co-authored by his archaeologist friend, J. Alden Mason, he described his experience

*Out of the dim shadows emerged a vision from a fairy tale, a fantastic ethereal sight from another world. It seemed a huge magic grotto carved out of ice, the walls sparkling and glistening like snow crystals. Delicate festoons of stalactites hung like tassels of a curtain and the stalagmites on the floor looked like the drippings from a great candle. The impression, in fact, was that of an abandoned chapel. Across the walls marched great stucco figures in low relief. Then my eyes sought the floor. This was almost entirely filled with a great carved stone slab, in perfect condition.*

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<sup>15</sup> However, the only lithic study for the site was a dissertation produced in 1976 by Jay Johnson. Johnson states in his introduction to that study that few lithic artifacts were found during the Ruz excavation work.

<sup>16</sup> For more detailed information about the quest to decipher the Maya writing system see Coe's book "Breaking the Maya Code."

*As I gazed in awe and astonishment, I described the marvelous sight to my colleagues, César Sáenz and Rafael Orellana, but they wouldn't believe me until they pushed me aside and had seen with their own eyes the fascinating spectacle. Ours were the first eyes that had gazed on it in more than 1000 years.*

In terms of his physical appearance, Ruz was thin, dark skinned, with very blue eyes and a French accent. One of Ruz's colleagues, physical anthropologist Arturo Romano Pacheco<sup>17</sup> was quoted as saying that Ruz was "very playful" and liked to tell "jokes of all varieties" (Bertrán 2002a), even on himself. The Maya archaeologist, Edwin M. Shook related a humorous story to Winifred Veronda, an author who wrote an account of Shook's life. It revolved around an event that took place in the 1950's at Chichén Itzá. As a representative of INAH, Ruz was required to give group tours of Maya sites when his superiors asked. Shook explained that Ruz's English was not very good and he could only speak in broken sentences.

*He'd take a group of Americans into an ancient structure and say, "This is a room." Then he'd go into another structure and say, "This is a room." Once a visiting group got to the top of the Castillo, and a guest just ahead of Ruz said, "And this is a room?" Of course everybody laughed. Ruz would tell these stories on himself, you see. He was a great fellow. (Shook and Veronda 1998)*

Later, in 1957, Ruz wrote a small book targeted for popular consumption called *La Civilización de los Antiguos Mayas*. It was first published in Cuba, translated into French and then into English. It was edited 7 different times (Ochoa 1981:42). Ruz was a great admirer of J. Eric Thompson's writing style (Coe 1999:123) and from him he learned to remove all the stilted language from his writings and make it appealing to the public. Ruz wrote clearly, although sometimes with a tendency toward the flowery, very similar to Thompson's style<sup>18</sup>. His friend Alden Mason summarized his style very well in a

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<sup>17</sup> At one time, Pacheco worked with Ruz on the Palenque excavations and later became the director of the National Museum of Anthropology from 1972 until Pacheco's death. He is also the man who took the famous color photos of the red bones of Pakal in the tomb.

<sup>18</sup> For more information on Ruz's opinion of Eric Thompson's writing style see the obituary Ruz wrote for him in *Semblanza de John Eric Thompson (1898-1975)* (Ruz 1976-77:318)

reference letter he wrote for Ruz to the Guggenheim Foundation. “He writes very well (in Spanish or French), in a more popular vein than most archaeologists, and with esthetic and artistic feeling, without varying from solid scientific fact and accepted theory” (Mason 1955). His desire to tell the world about the ancient Maya and their accomplishments led him to hold a total of 189 lectures in his lifetime, in México and all over the world (Ochoa 1981:18). He also gave dozens of guided tours to archaeological sites and to museums. His writings numbered over 130, including books, articles, essays, reviews and obituaries (Ochoa 1981). Archaeologist Thomas Lee wrote about Ruz: “His works are like a total ethnology of ancient Maya society, taking into account technology, social organization, politics, economics and religion, as well as the relationship between man and nature or human ecology.” (Lee 1992).

Ruz trained many Mexican archaeologists at Palenque, some of whom were already licensed by INAH, but a great number were still students. His list of helpers and staffers reads like a “who’s who” in Mexican archaeology. In his book *El Templo de las Inscripciones, Palenque* (Ruz Lhuillier 1973b) Ruz acknowledged those who helped him from 1949 to 1958 and they included: Lauro Zavala, Agustín Villagra, Jesús Núñez Chinchilla, Villasánchez Santos, Alejandro Mangino, César Sáenz, Rafael Orellana, Arturo Romano, Robert and Barbara Rands, Laurette Séjourné, Héctor García Manzanedo, Sergio Vargas, Eusebio Dávalos, José Servin, Luis Limón, Hipólito Sánchez, Alberto García Maldonado, Eduardo Contreras Iker Larrauri, Jorge Angulo, Bernard Golden, Víctor Segovia, Heinrich Berlin, Ponciano Salazar, Robert Gallegos, Francisco González Rul, and José Coba (Ruz Lhuillier 1973b:7). Figure 1.6 is a photo of a few of these men.

During his sixteen-year career as a university professor at UNAM, Ruz directed twenty professional theses (Ochoa 1981). His students, such as Mercedes De La Garza (de la Garza 2004) and Martha Foncerrada (Foncerrada de Molina 1981), describe a teacher who was enthusiastic and rigorous in his scientific attitude. As the chair of

Mayan Civilization in the Colegio de Historia de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, he taught classes with great expression and remarkable sensitivity. Due to his fieldwork, he could speak from experience and had a vast slide library. He encouraged independent thought, telling his students not to accept theories without question.

Ruz' friends and colleagues described him as a man of great integrity who followed the rules, perhaps to a fault (Servin Palencia 1981:9). He enjoyed writing and produced a large volume of reports about his Palenque activities, working tirelessly on each of his projects that included those at the university and at El Centro Estudios de Cultura Maya (Ochoa 1981). Yet throughout his career and while married to Blanca, he was able to balance his personal life with work (Ruz Buenfil 2010). One of his great passions, besides archaeology, was reading. Some of his favorite authors were those such as the Cuban novelist Alejo Carpentier and the Uruguayan poet Mario Benedetti (Bertrán 2002a).

The discovery of the tomb in the Temple of the Inscriptions brought world-wide attention to Palenque and one of the spinoffs was that more attention was directed toward decipherment of the glyphs, especially those on the lid of the sarcophagus. The quest to know the identity of the person in the tomb may have even spawned the first Mesa Redonda at Palenque. It was organized by Americans approximately twenty years after the Ruz' discovery, but he was not in attendance, even though he was invited (Coe 1999:207), nor was anyone from INAH or UNAM present. Michael Coe attributed this absence as a Ruz boycott and to what he thought was Ruz's dislike of foreigners and to the anti-*gringo* mood of the nation stemming from the leadership of the ruling Mexican president, Luis Echeverría Álvarez (Coe 1999:208). According to Coe, Ruz attended the second Palenque Round Table and discussions between him and some of those in attendance were very unpleasant. Exchanges became heated when Linda Schele and Peter Matthews, who had been studying the inscriptions at the site, presented information

showing that the person in the tomb was eighty-years-old at the time of death<sup>19</sup>. Ruz' physical anthropologists, Eusebio Dávalos Hurtado<sup>20</sup> and Arturo Romano Pacheco spent several days examining the bones (Tiesler and Cucina 2006:7) and performed what Ruz called a "spot" study a few minutes after the tomb was opened and had placed the age of death at 40 to 50 years (Dávalos Hurtado and Romano Pacheco 1954)<sup>21</sup>. This assessment was apparently verified by Ruz and Romano many years later (Romano Pacheco 1980, 1987; Ruz Lhuillier 1977; Tiesler and Cucina 2006:7).

Coe most likely was not aware of additional issues that may have caused Ruz's anti-*gringo* attitude. It is important to study Ruz's early life to understand from where that attitude might have originated.<sup>22</sup> His family had fought against imperialism and tyranny in their homeland of Cuba in 1869 during the "Ten Years War." After being exiled to France they continued their fight by banding together with other Cuban exiles to begin writing and publishing their case. Ruz learned by example about the importance of justice for his homeland; so when he moved to Cuba in the 1930's, and learned about the impact of American interference in Cuban affairs, he became deeply involved in the revolution to oust Gerardo Machado and to free his country from "yanqui" imperialism (Ruz Buenfil 2010). I am not proposing that Ruz was openly anti-American after becoming a naturalized Mexican – many of his archaeologist friends were yanquis, especially those

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<sup>19</sup> Merle Green Robertson (personal communication 2010) told me that after Ruz presented his paper, Moises Morales "got up and damned everything that Ruz had said. Everyone was furious at Moises. Ruz got up and left and was then mad at everyone at the Mesa Redonda. Linda finally went to México City to see him and try to smooth things over. But Ruz would not agree to the sarcophagus dates because they were from the Mesa Redonda people."

<sup>20</sup> In addition to being a long-time friend of Ruz's, Eusebio Dávalos Hurtado, the primary physical anthropologist who made the study on Pakal's bones, eventually became head of INAH and held that office for twelve years, from approximately 1956 to the time of his death in 1969. I believe that shedding any doubt on Dávalos findings would have been an insult to INAH as well as to Dávalos' legacy.

<sup>21</sup> Their osteological report can be seen in Appendix F. Additional discussion about the Mesa Redondas and the subject of the age of the occupant of the tomb is beyond the time frame and scope of this dissertation. For more information about this subject, see Coe 1999.

<sup>22</sup> See the chapter contained in this dissertation regarding Ruz's early life for more details.

who were working in Yucatán with the Carnegie Institution of Washington. However, his past experiences must have played a part in his reluctance to attend these meetings composed of mostly North Americans. Added to this were his natural territorial instincts regarding the study of Palenque and its famous tomb. How could others know more about it than he? George Stuart, in the preface of his coauthored book *Palenque: Eternal City of the Maya*, regarding Ruz's reluctance to attend the first Mesa Redonda, Stuart wrote

*Alberto later told me that he had his own good reasons for being wary and, besides, he was somewhat resentful of this group of enthusiasts suddenly descending on a place to which he had devoted his career.* (Stuart and Stuart 2008)

Any lasting animosity between Ruz and Linda Schele must have dissipated quickly because approximately one year later, he allowed Schele and Robert Rands<sup>23</sup> to visit his office at the Seminario de Cultura Maya and make Xerox copies of Ruz's *Informes* for Palenque to help them put together a book called *The Bodega of Palenque, Chiapas, México*.

*Without these Xeroxed copies, our work would necessarily have been published without much of the detail of provenience data. Alberto Ruz is a generous and careful scholar. Work done under his authority is the most consistently documented in the history of Palenque. His willingness to share the data was of tremendous importance to the final publication. He has our respect and gratitude for the quality of his work and for immense generosity* (Schele and Mathews 1979)<sup>24</sup>.

#### *Written Misconceptions and Criticisms about the Ruz Excavations*

Many hundreds of publications and words have been written about the Ruz excavations since they ended in the late 1950's. I begin this section by citing some

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<sup>23</sup> Most likely, Schele brought Robert Rands with her to the visit Ruz because Rands had worked with Ruz for many years on the Palenque project.

<sup>24</sup> I believe that this statement sincerely represented how Schele and Mathews felt about Ruz's work, but I also speculate that this statement was a way for Schele and Mathews to apologize to him for the incident at the second Palenque Round Table.

instances where misstatements were made about Ruz's project findings simply because researchers did not consult the very last of Ruz's published *Anales* before coming to conclusions about findings. For instance, Augusto Molina Montes (Molina Montes 1978:7) wrote that after Ruz explored the Palace, he was able to disprove "the existence of a sub-structural building that had been postulated by Fernández". However, I believe that Molina consulted the Ruz's 1949 report only (Ruz Lhuillier 1952c) where Ruz did indeed write that he had found Fernández' findings faulty. However as the seasons marched on, Ruz discovered that there was a substructure under the Palace, but in a different configuration than Fernández had postulated.

Another example of a misconception made by Ruz' researchers pertains to the buttresses that were put in place at the base of the Temple of the Inscriptions during ancient times. When Ruz began to remove the buttresses, it is true that the corners began to slump, but he saw no evidence that the builders put them there as a result of slumping in ancient times as was written by Schele and Mathews (Schele and Mathews 1998:97). Instead, he wrote that they were placed there to reinforce the corners because the ancient architects had a neurotic need to make sure they did not slip down and that the same need caused them to place buttresses inside the tomb chamber to secure the sarcophagus lid and tomb. Ruz finally concluded in his 1958 report that this desire to reinforce the base might have originated from past experiences when the ancient builders saw the foundations of their temples disintegrate due to the clay soil and the landslides resulting from heavy and frequent rainfall. In the absence of better construction knowledge they used an overlay and reinforcement of stonework to build something more durable.

In my literature review, I only found one written criticism of Ruz's Palenque investigations, although there might be others. Its source is from Stephen Black's dissertation entitled "Field Methods and Methodologies in Lowland Maya Archaeology", (1990:131-136). I include a discussion of it here for two reasons. First, it helps to bring in another scholar's perspective about Ruz's work, and second it will help to highlight the

need for primary sources plus the need to look at an archaeologist's entire site record before coming to conclusions. However, in order to look at the entire Ruz excavation record, it is necessary to gain access to Mexican archaeological documents, a task that is not so easily accomplished. Without the total record, gaps result; this can lead scholars to draw incorrect or misleading conclusions.

Black (1990:131-136) included a summary of the excavations of Miguel Fernández, Alberto Ruz and Jorge Acosta at Palenque and assessed the quality of their work. But as can be seen from his cited references, he did this without having access to the *Informes de Trabajo*, documents that are unpublished and for the most part are uniquely found in INAH's technical archives in México City. The only documents written by Ruz listed in Black's bibliography are from the *Anales del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía* and the book on the Temple of the Inscriptions that Ruz wrote in 1973. Black characterizes these three archaeologists' excavations as prime examples of the monumental-type archaeology that Mexican archaeologists usually emphasized in their work until very recently (Black 1990:137). I will use his critique to help summarize and illustrate several important points about the Ruz excavations that I further illustrate elsewhere in this dissertation.

#### *Goals of Ruz's Excavations*

Black's contention is that all the work done at Palenque by the three archaeologists listed above was directed toward restoration and reconstruction of the monumental architecture and that the

*"....concerns of mapping, ceramic stratigraphy, architectural history, cultural history and settlement pattern that are apparent in contemporary Carnegie and Tikal Phase projects undertaken by North American archaeologists were of minimal importance at Palenque"* (Black 1990:138).

This blanket statement is an oversimplification, especially for the Ruz work. These standard archaeological concerns were very high on Ruz's list of priorities as can be seen in the project plan that he submitted to Nelson Rockefeller and others that are summarize

in following chapters. I believe that the problems and obstacles in the implementation of his plan prevented him from being able to carry it out completely.

### *The Need of a Site Map*

Black (1990:136) states that there was no published, professionally drawn site map that displayed the entire geographic area where Ruz and his crew were working at Palenque. Black notes that in Ruz's 1954 report, Ruz stated that Contreras began a survey of the central section of the archaeological zone and the map was to be included in the next year's report. There is no evidence that this particular map was ever published in the *Anales*, at least not for the geographic area that Ruz originally described. I believe that it was instead published in 1973 as Ruz's Fig. 4 (Figure 1.7 in this dissertation) in Ruz's book about the Temple of the Inscriptions (1973b:16), although he does not cite the map's origin or source. There was at least one map published in the 1956 *Anales* showing the central precinct, but its main purpose was to explain the repair work made on the aqueduct. I speculate that the production of the central precinct map was delayed for two reasons. The first was the lack of adequately trained surveyors and cartographers in México during the 1950's, just as there was a lack of ceramicists (Ekholm 1955c). The second factor was that Ruz already had the Maudslay site map at his disposal (Figure 1.8). This map was based upon a month-long survey performed around 1890 by surveyor Hugh W. Price to create an accurate map of the site with building footprints (Stuart and Stuart 2008:80). It was old, but very accurate. Ruz mentioned using this map repeatedly while describing and directing their work in the Palace, so it is likely that they used the overall map when they worked in other parts of the site. Until the digital mapping efforts of Edwin Barnhart and his crew during the years 1997 to 2002, the Maudslay map was the most accurate ever made of Palenque (Barnhart 2001:3) (1.7).

Also of interest is a map created for Ruz in 1949 that displays the entire central precinct. It was drawn by Ruz's brother and artist, Miguel and its purpose was not scientific but rather was designed to show what areas of the site had been planted with

grass. It appears that Miguel drew it from the Maudslay map. A copy of Miguel's map (Figure 1.9) was found in one of the reports that Ruz sent to the Institute of Andean Research (IAR), an agency that was helping to fund the project. Black does not cite any files from the IAR, so he was not aware of this map.

#### *Very Little Attention to Ceramics*

Black also stated that ceramic stratigraphy and the study of regional settlement patterns was not important in the Palenque excavations. Ceramic stratigraphy had been a commonly-used technique in México since its introduction by Gamio in the early 1900's and it would have been an important means to facilitate the placing of Palenque into the chronology of México's early civilizations. One of Ruz's major directives at Palenque was to establish a chronology for the site by using ceramics and stratigraphy (Stuart and Stuart 2008:92), but by 1955, seven years into the project, little attention had been paid to ceramics, with one exception: the data that Barbara Rands had compiled for her thesis on the ceramics of the Temple of the Inscriptions and her excavation of three burials discovered in a cemetery located in residential Group IV in 1951 (Rands and Rands 1961). In a letter written by Gordon Ekholm of the IAR<sup>25</sup> we learn that the big problem was not lack of interest in ceramics, but a lack of qualified Mexican archaeologists to do the work. The letter was written to Ruz's supervisor, Ignacio Marquina after Ekholm had made a visit to Ruz at Palenque in 1955. He wrote

*The principal suggestion I have to make regarding the whole program of investigations at Palenque is that more attention be given to ceramic studies and that some special attention be given also to the general geographic situation. These kinds of studies must be done by specialists, of course, and I realize that such are not always available in México. Ruz agreed with me that we should attempt to locate persons who would be interested in making special studies of these kinds. I shall be on the lookout for adequately trained people who we might be able to send to Palenque (Ekholm 1955c).*

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<sup>25</sup> Ekholm was the man responsible for administering the Rockefeller funds earmarked for the Ruz excavations.

With the urging of Ekholm, Robert and Barbara Rands returned to Palenque the next season to begin working on the ceramics, with Robert also performing a regional survey of the smaller sites in the hinterlands. Although the outcome of some of the ceramic work, including a sequence, was established and published, Black noted correctly that the extensive and long-promised monograph was never published (Black 1990:136). Black's claim that regional settlement patterns were not considered important to those leading the excavations is curious because in Ruz's 1956 *Anales* published in 1958, there is a section called "*Reconocimientos y exploraciones estratigráficas (A cargo del Dr. Robert L. Rands)*" in which Rands described what he found at three of the major Palenque structures and ten outlying locations.

#### *Attention to Monumental Archaeology*

Another key criticism that Black levels at the Ruz excavations is that they were primarily concerned with restoring monumental architecture for the purpose of attracting tourists. It is true that Ruz was very concerned with preventing further deterioration of the large centralized monuments and expended a great deal of time and effort in consolidating them to the exclusion of the other outlying residential building groups. In fact, the only non-temple investigations during the Ruz excavations were in years 1949 and 1950, where he supervised the archaeology student Lauro José Zavala in residential Groups I, II and Murciélagos (III). Subsequently, due to events that were beyond Ruz's control, there would be little time or resources in Ruz's future to devote to this kind of investigation at Palenque after 1950.

Monumental archaeology became a much greater priority when President Miguel Alemán came to the pueblo of Palenque in 1950 to help celebrate the inauguration of the new road leading into the ruins, but also and more importantly, to commemorate the opening of one of the branches of the Ferrocarril Del Sureste that had just been completed at the pueblo of Palenque. This was a railroad line that would eventually connect Yucatán with the rest of México. The president made a visit to the site and

delivered a promise that he would increase government support, with the stipulation that the funds would only go toward the consolidation and restoration of the most dilapidated buildings, as opposed to exploration.

Subsequently Ruz wrote to his supervisors and to the IAR telling them that he had to amend his plans for the following years to emphasize restoration over exploration and “only perform explorations when it would strengthen or restore a building” (Ruz Lhuillier 1952e:30). On the other hand, Rockefeller had instructed Ruz that funds coming from his organization were to be used solely for scientific exploration. It is evident in his letters that Ruz agonized over how to please both his benefactors, INAH and Rockefeller. As can be seen above in my summary of Ruz’s 1944 article entitled “The Human Meaning of Archaeology”, he ardently believed that the restoration of Maya monumental architecture would be restitution for the past wrongs that had been perpetrated upon the modern Maya people. Even more importantly, he believed that the restoration of these grand buildings would instill pride in the modern Maya, thus increasing their self-esteem and enabling them to do great things once again.

#### *Ruz’s Primary Objective Regarding the Temple of the Inscriptions*

Another of Black’s criticisms (Black 1990:133) is that Ruz’s primary objective when he began working on the Temple of the Inscriptions was “....simply to clear the fallen rubble and restore the temple and enough of the frontal stairway to provide access”, and that the objective changed when Ruz found the inner stairway. In reality, Ruz chose to excavate this temple because it was one of the highest temples at the site (Ruz Lhuillier 1958a). The reasoning was that since it was taller than any other building, it would be more likely to have previous building construction layers under it. This task was foremost in his mind because he had been given a mandate by his supervisor Alfonso Caso as he left México City for his assignment in Palenque, to find which of its temples had earlier buildings under them (de la Garza 2004:13; Stuart and Stuart 2008:92).

Black (1990:136) also states that except for the trench that was made into the Palace, “...no excavations were purposefully conducted to reveal architectural stratigraphy, even at the Temple of the Inscription.” Black’s statement is misdirected and uninformed in regards to the Temple of the Inscriptions because this building’s architectural stratigraphy was revealed to Ruz without the need to trench directly into the pyramid. As Ruz was clearing the interior stairs that penetrated down into the heart of the pyramid, he saw no signs of earlier interior construction stages. In addition, it was easy to see that the entire structure was built up against the mountain behind it. At the end of Ruz’s excavations in 1958, he concluded, without a doubt, that the entire edifice was built in three phases and that these phases did not span several eras of time, but instead were successive phases of the same construction (Ruz Lhuillier 1962b). Thus, Ruz did conduct investigations that “purposefully” revealed the architectural stratigraphy of the Temple of the Inscriptions.

After Ruz found the stairway, and ultimately the magnificent tomb at its base, there is no question that the event changed all his excavation plans. For the subsequent duration of the work at Palenque he was locked into a course of monumental reconstruction of the temple – a reconstruction that according to Black “...befit the context of such an important discovery” (1990:133). But Ruz’s mindset of restoring the site’s monumental archaeology was not solely done for reasons of tourism, as Black proposes. In addition to his restoration of the Inscriptions Temple, Ruz continued to supervise investigations and reconstructions in almost all the buildings of the central area.

#### *The Palace Tower*

Black (1990:134) quotes Schávelzon (1990:156), when he writes that the reconstruction of the Palace Tower went too far in its “conjectural masonry roof”. What Schávelzon actually stated was that he believed that the tower’s restoration was faithfully based upon the information that Ruz had gathered. But on the other hand, he believed the roof reconstruction was “hypothetical” and that most likely a masonry roof could not have been sustained without the concrete that Ruz put into the structure. He thought it

likely that “the roof, if there was one, was originally made of wood and straw, in any case, wooden beams supporting a flat roof” (Schávelzon 1990:156). In Ruz’s 1952 *Anales* article about 1951 season he stated clearly that they explored the structure and then cleaned out much of the rubble from the roof that had fallen onto the floor of the third level. The word “rubble” indicates that what Ruz saw on the floor was stonework; therefore the roof must have been made of stone. Supporting that premise are copies, found in the Linda Schele library, of some of the drawings Ruz’s crew made of the tower. In 1949, a drawing of a profile of the top of the tower was made and it clearly shows that the tower was made of stone (Figure 1.10). In addition, Ruz saw evidence throughout the site that the ancient builders of Palenque had a preoccupation with lightening the load of heavy building structures such as this and he cited the Palace Tower and its roof as evidence. (1952e:56-57).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### MICROHISTORY AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

My research approach is based upon methods regarding the history of archaeology, more specifically within the specialization of “microhistory” which focuses upon one particular archaeological site and one particular archaeologist. I prefer this approach because, as Marc-Antoine Kaeser writes in the book *Archives, Ancestors, Practices: Archaeology in the Light of its History*, edited by Nathan Schlanger, Jarl Nordbladh,

*Writing history at the micro scale of a single scientist makes it possible to encompass all the social, political, intellectual, cultural and religious factors which interact in the construction of archaeological knowledge, to grasp the changing relations shared by the factors and also to underscore the dynamics which sustain such relations* (Kaeser 2008:9).

During my investigations, I relied heavily upon the procedures found in three studies – each published as a result of separate conferences where the subject of the history of archaeology was discussed. Those three books are *Rediscovering our Past:*

*Essays on the History of American Archaeology* (Reyman 1992); *Tracing Archaeology's Past* (Christenson 1989c); and *Archives, Ancestors, Practices Archaeology in the Light of its History* (Schlanger and Nordbladh 2008a). In their introduction, Nathan Schlanger and Jarl Norbladh emphasize the plurality of the word “histories”, acknowledging that their approach is what they call “reflexive relativism” (2008a:1). They write that this view of history is different from the “historiographic habits” that were popular 15 to 20 years ago when most writings about the history of archaeology emphasized the evolution of archaeological theory and practice toward the “real” truth. Hinsley (1989) states that most scholars who write about archaeological history, emphasize how the field has evolved “an upward trajectory toward a more accurate, cumulative knowledge” (Hinsley 1989:80), as if the discipline were growing and changing into something better<sup>26</sup>.

Schlanger and Norbladh (2008b:3) also state that the articles in their edited book rely heavily upon “grey literature” and calls archives “treasure troves” that can reveal previously overlooked discrepancies. When these discrepancies come to light, our picture of history can be transformed into the entirely unexpected. Reyman (1992) states that the authors in his book all agree that there are great benefits to the use of unpublished data such as letters, diaries, field notes and that the authors reported that such was data essential in conducting historical archaeology. Perhaps even more unorthodox, newspapers and interviews can also add valuable insight. He believes that most archaeological data remains unpublished, even at well-known sites such as Pueblo Bonito (1992:16), so the rewards of pursuing this kind of data are worth the effort.

Christenson (1989b:x) tells us that the overlapping themes for the articles in his book are the following: 1) the purpose and value of archaeology, including its misuse; 2) the contextual history within which archaeology takes place; and 3) the problems of investigating, documenting and communicating the history of archaeology. The most common forms of archaeological histories are obituaries, commemorations, or

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<sup>26</sup> Prime examples of situations where the field of archaeology did not progress along a path of perpetual improvement are those where the state government used it to advance genocide.

discussions of past works that are from a theoretical or intellectual viewpoint or that are used to support a particular point in an argument. Obituaries or dedications are meant to be positive, so they do not usually divulge conflicts, controversy, or personal things that happen in an individual's life. He (1989b:1) writes that the histories that are relevant to his edited book are those that locate current archaeology in a historical context and that discuss the beginnings and changes of archaeological ideas through time. He calls this "critical historiography" and states that its existence is evidence of a healthy period in the field of the archaeology.

Historiographers also investigate the intellectual climate and its changes during the era within which the excavation took place (Givens 1992:52). These changes can be seen through the archaeologist's reactions to his/her work and the changes that happen due to these responses (interactive response). In regard to the history of Maya archaeology, Jason Yaeger and Greg Borgstede (2004:260) state that the practice of historically reviewing and looking back at Mesoamerican archaeology has been going on from its beginning, but placing into its intellectual climate and understanding the impact of that climate are very new themes<sup>27</sup>.

Wilk (1985) underscores how the latest fad or fashion can impact what archaeologists study. He believes that there is a hidden dialogue stemming from politics and political change – that archaeology always draws from current events. He contends that there is an unconscious or hidden tendency for archaeologists to see things from the perspective of the modern world and from events that happen in the world, but that it gets more difficult to detect these trends as we get closer to the present (Wilk 1985:318). I agree with him and believe that this is a normal and phenomenon that cannot be avoided, but being aware of it might help to ameliorate the effects. Some of the factors that Chávez (1992) lists are major historical events that happened during the time that the data is acquired; information about the excavation's financial resources; how it was shaped by

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<sup>27</sup> They believe that these writings began to show up at the same time as the positivist philosophy emerged in the late 19th century (1989:106).

social, political, economic and religious organizations; and how the work might have contributed to archaeology in a specific country (Chávez 1992:36). Reyman (1992) lists internal and external cultural, as well as biological factors such as race or sex that can influence how data is interpreted. Christenson believes “that by looking at the institutional framework within which archaeology is done, one gains a clearer understanding of why research took the direction that it did” (1989c:138). He defines this as the sociological approach that underscores the dynamics of what happens when archaeologists associate with each other. According to Schávelzon, “We fail to examine national, institutional or personal struggles and controversies except when they have to do with different paradigms or interpretations supported by scientists” (Schávelzon 1989:110). Christenson tells us that there are two aspects of context: 1) the political and social environment where archaeology happens and 2) the era within which the history of archaeology is written. According to Hinsley, the history of archaeology “is the story of the storytellers, seen in variety of time, place, method, motive, and both institutional and personal power” (Hinsley 1989:80)

In addition to these external influences, there are also internal factors that stem from the individual scientist. Yet, Hinsley (1989:81) does not think that it is possible or even advisable to make a distinction between the internal and external factors because in reality there is constant flow between academic cause and effect. For instance there is a relationship between historical milieu and the intellectual development of a research field (Chávez 1992). However, it is possible to distinguish between internal and external forces by expressing the idea that internal factors are primarily those relating to the individual researcher and his/her, personality, personal history, academic training, etc. External factors are the interaction that the individual has with the rest of the world. Chapman’s paper focuses on the influence of institutions upon the individual (Chapman 1989). He writes that the first homes for archaeologists were museums because museums paid them for their work. Therefore museums had a substantial influence on their work and today they are usually a good source for archival information. He also examines

professional and amateur organizations, universities, government agencies, journals, friendships and informal meetings. Chapman writes, “We often, especially in biographies, treat archaeologists as if they were independent agents working in intellectual or social vacuums” (Chapman 2006:152).

Kaesler (2008:9) writes that the use of microhistory allows us to understand the internal logic of our individual subject, a logic that might not make sense to us today. This kind of study allows us to take social, political, intellectual, cultural and religious factors into consideration and study how they influenced the building of archaeological knowledge. In Givens’ article “The Role of Biography in Writing the History of Archaeology”, he writes that archaeology’s past is entwined with people and institutions.

*They relate to each other through methodological, theoretical, and socio-political undercurrents. Out of the relationship between the archaeologist and the institution came the successes and failures that lead archaeology to develop and mature through time. Members of the archaeological community have long found the relationships between archaeological personalities and institutions fascinating in their own right. However, these relationships have affected the origins and development of archaeological science (Givens 1992:51).*

Despite the logic of this assertion, scholars still neglect biographical sources when writing about the history of archaeology (1992:51). He lists three essential datasets for writing biographies (1992:56). They include the following subjects 1) background and growth; 2) professional relationships between people and institutions; and 3) his/her role in the expansion of knowledge. Biographers need to include the archaeologist’s contribution to the field and the effect of his/her innovations on the understanding of excavation and archaeology. Givens (1992:59) recommends creating a life outline and chronology to help organize all the data, but he also cautions that in the process of researching one particular personality authors need to maintain enough distance from their subject to retain objectivity.

In his study of the history and development of Peruvian archaeology, Sergio J. Chávez (1992:36), studied 59 antiquarians and archaeologists, their training, concerns, nationalities, professions, financing, professional contacts and opinions on archaeological

concepts. He organized the data by periods and looked at historical events during each period. He concluded that "...a rigorous consideration of diverse factors and the proper assessment of relationships between the historical milieu and intellectual developments and organized within a period framework..." (Chávez 1992:48) allows a much better understanding of the development of a discipline than simply studying intellectual progression of a single variable.

In one of Christenson's chapters "The Past is Still Alive", he asserts that as historians we must study and know relevant personal characteristics, friendships and relationships of the person under study. These items will reveal things such as their "biases and jealousy, vanity and modesty, friendship and hate – all dimensions of the human personality" (Christenson 1989a:164). Some of this behavior is sensitive and it takes skill to compose appropriate text to describe it. To make the biography real, it is necessary to write about the good, the bad and the ugly, as well as the angels and heroes.

Sometimes writing about the past in such a frank manner can create enemies, especially if the people involved are still alive. Christenson uses the example of the hard feelings caused by the publication of Taylor's 1948 *A Study of Archaeology*. It is difficult to write about recent history, a situation that Christenson (1989c:166) calls "the problem of immediacy", but as time goes on, it becomes more acceptable to reveal details about a deceased person. He believes that the reason that we want to publish and discuss personal information is because it reveals how individuals helped steer archaeology in a particular course. He discusses four ways in which historians have dealt with "immediacy". One method is to write only about the good things that happened – the "goody-goody" history (Christenson 1989c:167). Another way to cope with it is to emphasize the ideas that the scholar presented in published papers, books and reports. That kind of information is easily found, but it does not penetrate into deeper issues of motivation and attitude. Another way to deal with immediacy is to change identifying characteristics of some of the people so that they are not associated with the event. The last method Christenson discusses is the use of the general statistics to prevent the

disclosure of information where specific variables are collected and added together in various ways to come to a conclusion, such as was the case in the research discussed above by Chávez (1992)

I will use the next few paragraphs to present two case studies that have used similar approaches to those described above. The first is a study of the history of Chaco Canyon. Archaeologists have studied this site for more than 100 years, thus it is an ideal site to trace the history of archaeology. In his 1989 paper about its history, Reyman (1989) lists all the different studies completed for Chaco and the scholars involved. He argues that work at Chaco Canyon influenced investigations at other sites due its innovations in dendrochronology, geological history, climatological studies, cross-dating of sites, Mexican interactions, masonry, ceramics studies, archaeo-astronomy, etc. There are many publications about the site, but Reyman notes that the unpublished reports are equally important.

As of 1989, the published history of Chaco Canyon was incomplete and sometimes erroneous because most previous investigators were not aware of the unpublished data about the site. Reyman related several reasons why people did not use these informal documents. One is that the reports were scattered throughout several institutions and individuals, with no central catalog. Another is that sometimes, the material was misfiled, mislabeled or disorganized. Too often, previous investigators presumed that what they were reading in the published record was a complete and factual representation of data collected at the site. They also omitted primary sources when they tried to dig deeper into the record. The last point Reyman makes is one of economy – publishing all of the data collected is an expensive effort and that “no archaeologist publishes all the data” (Reyman 1989:44). There are cost and space constraints set out by publishers that authors must follow, so often it is not the fault of the archaeologist that the raw data is not readily available. Because of this, the historian must examine unpublished materials. In the case of Chaco Canyon, archival research was essential, since Reyman’s (Reyman 1989:42) investigation corrected “errors of fact and interpretation”.

In his 1988 dissertation, “*One Grand History*” *A critical Review of Flagstaff Archaeology, 1851 to 1988*, Christian Downum (1988) proposed that the critical review of archaeological history will yield significant insights about the processes and products of the excavation. He believed that out of this critical analysis comes an understanding of intellectual disagreements, historical evolution and trends in archaeology. This understanding either validates or negates specific reenactments and conclusions about ancient behavior at a given archaeological site. He sliced the site’s history into divisions that corresponded to the intellectual transitions in archaeology of the period (Downum 1988).

Downum states that all archaeologists who excavate must rely upon the accumulated archaeological knowledge of the past, but they also leave behind material evidence of their own. If that material evidence can be accessed, archaeologists who come along later can perform a critical analysis of the claims that their predecessors have made about the past. This is what he calls the “secondary archaeological record” (Downum 1988:17). He explains that “archaeologists leave at least three records of their own: 1) a history of the activities of the individuals who gathered and evaluated the evidence; 2) a reflection of those individuals’ personal convictions and proclivities; and 3) an indirect image of contemporary social and scientific milieu, as reflected in archaeological practices and interpretations” (Downum 1988:15).

The archaeological history of Flagstaff includes nearly 150 years of observation, 70 years of which included intensive research where volumes of data and evidence were pieced together to write the story of what prehistoric events and processes took place there (Downum 1988:14). Also, within this time period, changes and developments were happening in the field of archaeology that influenced work not only at Flagstaff, but also throughout the southwest and nationally.

The five main goals for Downum’s dissertation were: 1) To outline the intellectual development of Flagstaff archaeology; 2) To explain how the training and personalities of the most prominent archaeologists influenced the manner in which they implemented

field strategies, interpretations and conclusions; 3) To assess the impact of contemporaneous archaeological theories and developments that influenced the manner in which the archaeologists evaluated their data during this time; 4) To present an analysis of how all three of the above shaped “the current perception of Flagstaff prehistory” (Downum 1988:18); and 5) To show how this historical reassessment reveals “significant weaknesses” in their methods and conclusions, thus leading to suggestions for future research at Flagstaff.

As noted earlier, I have applied the ideas and methods discussed above to my historical assessment of the excavations of Palenque, México during tenure of the Mexican archaeologist, Alberto Ruz. Some of the articles and books written by others about Palenque investigations and excavations derive from information that was published by Ruz in a Mexican periodical called *Anales del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía*. Other sources are from articles or books that were written by Alberto Ruz between 1949 and 1969. All these represent over 47 works on Palenque, eleven of which were published in the *Anales*. They are primarily written in Spanish, although at least ten are either in English and/or French. Published in both paper and digital format, the *Anales* (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia 2002) were not widely available in the United States until 2007, when Roberto García Moll published them in a book called *Palenque 1947-1958*. Numerous authors, both Mexican and foreign, have also written about the Ruz’ years at Palenque. These writings contain information based partly upon Ruz’s published reports. The most recent book about the subject was written by David Stuart and George Stuart (2008) called *Palenque: Eternal City of the Maya*. It includes a brief description of the Ruz excavations in Chapter 4.

#### **PREVIOUS BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNTS OF ALBERTO RUZ LHULLIER**

Two Spanish language biographies have been written about Alberto Ruz and both were released by organizations under the direction of the Mexican government. Published in 1981, the first of these resulted from a meeting in honor and memory of Ruz at the Centro de Estudios Mayas at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM),

three months after Ruz's death. Entitled *Homenaje a Alberto Ruz Lhuillier 1906-1979*, (Bonifaz Nuño 1981) the book contains a series of very glowing essays about Ruz by some of his closest friends and colleagues. The other short biography about Ruz was written and edited by Ana Luisa Izquierdo. It is 50-page account of the life of Ruz and his archaeological excavations, with the remaining 174 pages devoted to the republication of several of his articles and a bibliography of his major publications.

Three other important, but short biographical pieces have been written about Ruz, two of which were also published by official Mexican agencies. The first one is an article released by the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) in 2004 and was written by one of Ruz's former students named Mercedes de la Garza. She called it "Alberto Ruz Lhuillier, Su Legado Científico y Humanista" and included a small amount of personal information about him and the remainder is about his academic philosophy and viewpoints on the ancient Maya, as seen in his writings, as well as Ruz as a teacher and professor. The other short biography was written by García Moll and is included in his introduction to the book *Palenque 1947-1958* (1985). He also included a summary of all Ruz's excavation seasons at Palenque. The third is a letter written by Ruz's eldest son, Alberto Ruz Buenfil (1991), very soon after his father's death. The letter is a moving account that describes his childhood memories with his father and their troubled but loving relationship as Buenfil moved into his young adult years (Appendix C).

These biographical accounts were very helpful and gave me invaluable academic leads. Yet, in order to unravel both the internal and external history of the excavations, it was necessary to find other less formal sources, for instance narratives from some of Ruz's unpublished *Informes de Trabajo*<sup>28</sup> and correspondence from archives, interviews and newspapers. I was able to access his unpublished *Informes* written by him and the

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<sup>28</sup> This title is used for informal reports that were required by INAH and were submitted to the central archaeological report repository in México City.

archaeologists who worked for him at Palenque between the years 1949 and 1958<sup>29</sup>. I also relied heavily upon correspondence recovered from the archives of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Those archives are dated from the years 1949 to 1958, with a gap from 1951-1953. I also used letters from the archives of the Rockefeller Foundation that were dated between 1947 and 1966. Finally, I spent three hours interviewing the eldest son of Ruz, Alberto Ruz Buenfil, hereinafter called Alberto III. All of this information was placed in a timeline spreadsheet where I listed the date, initiator of the correspondence, its recipient, a summary of the letter content and its general theme. In order to discover additional hard-to-find biographical material I used *Google Book* to search and discover obscure references where Alberto Ruz and others were mentioned.

#### **RUZ'S PHILOSOPHIES AND BELIEFS REFLECTED IN SELECTED EARLY PUBLICATIONS**

Archaeologists are trained in the empirical sciences and seek to accurately uncover and interpret the physical remains of past cultures. But the most notable of archaeologists understand that recovering an accurate picture of an ancient people transcends the material finds and enters the realm of human imagination that is governed by invention and analogy and this is when theories begin to emerge. We can be cognizant of many of Ruz's ideas and theories through analyzing three articles he wrote early in his career between 1944 and 1956. I chose these papers because they give an insight into three topics that motivated him and that had a major impact on his career: restitution for the indigenous Maya, monumental archaeology<sup>30</sup> and the Maya epigraphy.

#### *The Human Meaning of Archaeology (Sentido Humano De La Arqueología)*

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<sup>29</sup> However, I do not have copies of *Informes* that Ruz wrote for the years 1951, 1952 and 1953. They were not in the library of Linda Schele nor were they found in the archives of the AMNH. To view a list of all the *Informes* and *Anales* for the Palenque-Ruz years see Appendix B.

<sup>30</sup> In this context, this term can be defined as the investigation, restoration and conservation of large ancient monuments, as opposed to household archaeology which tends to study the everyday life of the ancient people.

In 1944 while working as the director of archaeological investigations in Campeche, Ruz wrote “Sentido Humano De La Arqueología” and published it in *El Reproductor Campechano*. This is a general circulation periodical that became one of his favorite forums at that time in his career (Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1987:53). He began the article by stating that reconstructing the past was a human impulse similar to the one that causes human beings to want to know the future. This urge to know is something that separates humans from the animal kingdom or the “beast”. He believed that this urge was simply the biological instinct to survive, to preserve ourselves and future generations. He posited that humanity has an innate desire to extend our fleeting and precarious lives into something that gets extended outward. Hearing our ancestors tell stories about the past is not just a joyful experience, but an extension of “the limits of our lives by living retrospectively in all the centuries of life, prolonging our lives for eternity”.

Thus, from his point of view, history is one of the human races’ basic needs; and archaeology is the surest way to discover this history, especially if there are no written records. He strongly believed that it would be possible to use written and oral ethnographic accounts, to piece the past together, even though the modern indigenous people only have snippets of their memories that come from oral storytelling traditions.

He put forth the idea that, by studying physical remains such as sculptures, paintings, pottery, household items, jewelry, etc. it is possible to reconstruct some of prehistory; but whatever that history, it is not at the level of the individual person but at that the level of material things that sometimes can lead to the spiritual history of the early people of the Americas. When we read these words today, they have the ring of irony because the discovery-story for which Ruz is most remembered is that of an individual person – one of the greatest kings of the Maya Classic Period – who occupied the sumptuous tomb Ruz discovered in 1952.

He went on to make the point that archaeology is not just “research and speculation” but “reconstruction and restitution”. He believed that if the archaeologist is only limited

to finding material remains, developing theories, and drawing conclusions, he may meet his scientific obligation, but his work is without context and a sense of humanness. He compares it to the amateur detective who solves the case through logic and theory, but ignores the fate of the victimizer and the victim. If the archaeologist reconstructs a ruin, we can better visual the ruin's original appearance and the dead city can spring to life again. He eloquently goes further and ties reconstruction in with the possible reconciliation of deeds perpetrated upon the ancient and living Maya.

*By rescuing from oblivion and death, the treasures of a lost civilization, we restore the memory of those who created them, maintained them and gave them worth – memories that later generations have ignored or vilified. By rebuilding a Maya temple, for example, with the balance of its lines, the richness of its decoration, the wisdom contained in its inscriptions, we perform an act of justice and reverence to a great people by removing the stigma imposed on them by a different civilization that is neither better or worse than those that are deposed. And in cases where this race, so worthy of respect, has not died out in spite of the crimes and tortures of conquest; has endured subjugation, material and moral humiliation; has suffered brutalization of spirit and fanaticism; has been forced into ignorance; has suffered hunger and misery – when a race like this is still able to live, fight, think, believe, love, laugh and dance, then the act of putting before their eyes the greatness of their ancestors restores their rightful heritage and the legacy of their cultural property, and everything their ancestors were able to create and accumulate over many generations in terms of scientific, technical, artistic and philosophical knowledge. But above all, we restore their faith in themselves, their glorious lineage, and their creative forces so that in the future they will know how to build with the same serenity, strength, perseverance and wisdom of those that built the thousands of Mayab cities (Ruz Lhuillier 1944). Author's translation*

*Maya Archaeology: Its Trajectory and Goal (Arqueología Maya: Trayectoria Y Meta)*

This article was published one year later in the *Cuadernos Americanos*, a journal that targets intellectuals and culture lovers (Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1987:59). It summarizes his view of the status of Maya archaeology to date and its future directions. He begins the piece by explaining the history of archaeology and how it was no longer a hobby for those who have nothing better to do. He explained the advances in Mesoamerican archaeology up until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

It is of interest to see the names of those that he considered important pioneers in Maya research for the previous 30 years. He listed those such as Andrews, Barrera Vázquez<sup>31</sup>, Blom, Brainerd, Fernández, Gann, Joyce, Kidder, Lizardi Ramos, Lothrop, Means, Merwin, Morley, Morris, Parker, Pollock, Ricketson, Ruppert, Satterthwaite, A.L. Smith, R.E. Smith, Spinden, Thompson, Tozzer, Vaillant and Wauchope. It is important to note that only two on this list are Mexicans, an indication that Maya archaeology was the purview of the North Americans until Ruz began his work in the Maya area.

He also observed that for this same era most of the work centered upon the reading and finding of calendar glyphs for the purpose of obtaining chronology, so much so that when one heard the words "Maya archeology" it was synonymous with the study of the Maya calendar and the finding of hieroglyphic monuments. His list of persons important in the study of the calendar included Pío Pérez Carrillo y Ancona, Orozco y Berra, del Paso y Troncoso, Seler, Goodman, Bowditch, Spinden, Martínez Hernández, Morley, Teeple, Escalona Ramos and Thompson. He pointed out that in retrospect, by dedicating so much time to the calendar, other kinds of important research was excluded and even after all that effort, the results were small. Only one-third of the glyphs had been deciphered and they included just the calendar glyphs and the astronomical signs relating to the cycles of the moon. He added that the remaining un-deciphered glyphs that are not chronological are most likely pertaining to

*....a historic event, the birth or death of an illustrious personage, a major victory, the completion of a significant work of art, just as we do today when we erect a monument or a building that bears a plaque engraved with the facts that commemorate and perpetuate it (Ruz Lhuillier 1945). Author's translation*

This statement runs counter to the ideas of Ruz's close friend and colleague, Eric Thompson, who believed that there were no historical events recorded in Maya hieroglyphs (Coe 1999:176). Perhaps to placate his friend and colleague, he then

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<sup>31</sup> As a point of interest, this man was the husband of Ruz's second wife, Silvia Rendón.

contradicted himself in the text by stating that the hieroglyphs that are still waiting to be translated do not seem to have a historical content.

He makes an interesting observation by stating that those inscriptions with date positioned in the far distant future are most likely relating to things that are not of human affairs or they might be about astronomical observations, a subject that was a favorite of this ancient culture. He observed that sometimes date glyphs express a time before the site was established and then they continue on to a time when the use of the glyphs might have disappeared so he concluded that the date glyphs may have only a limited value. We now know that Maya glyph dates, combined with the historical text of an inscription, can reveal information about the actions of godly entities and, more importantly, about the lives and accomplishments of their leaders.

Next, he optimistically referred to a new direction in Maya archaeology – one that does not emphasize the glyphs but instead examines the physical remains of this great Mesoamerican culture, such as their construction techniques, ceramics, and painting. Archaeologists were slowly piecing together the puzzle of ancient history through the uses of stratigraphy, and with diffusion theories, a development that he saw as very productive.

One of his last topics related to a theory espoused by another friend and colleague, Sylvanus Morley. Morley had proposed that there was a Maya “Old Empire” and “New Empire”, similar to what was found in Egypt. The Maya “Old Empire” supposedly developed in the highlands of Chiapas and Guatemala, the Petén, and the Usumacinta valley and ended in the ninth century (Figure 1.11). Then a “New Empire” evolved after the Maya people moved to Yucatán and began a Maya-Toltec Renaissance. Ruz believed that this theory, professed by the “brilliant Dr. Morley” must be revised. Armed with new data about the glyphs, stratigraphy, architecture, and artistic styles, Ruz and others were now seeing another picture of the development and evolution of the Maya civilization.

He disclosed that he had recently excavated in Campeche and at Edzna and what he found there reinforced his view that there was an “ancient occupation of the Yucatán peninsula and its continued participation in the development of high Mesoamerican culture since its inception in México”; therefore Morley must be incorrect about the Old and New Maya Empire theory. At Edzna, Ruz had found evidence of several features that were identical to those found in what had been characterized as the oldest part of the Maya area.<sup>32</sup> He cited several examples. For instance he found two roofing techniques at the site - techniques that at one time were thought to only exist in separate regions: the corbelled vault (Old Kingdom South) and the vault made of stones specially cut so that they made an overlapped pitched roof (New Empire Yucatán). Also he challenged the “hypothetical evolution” of the ball court where it was thought that it changed over time from one of sloping walls like those found in the Maya lowlands to that of the vertical type with rings embedded in the walls such as at Chichén Itzá. The latter type was supposedly due to changes made by the Toltecs.

Another very interesting observation he made in the article is that he believed that the final Maya civilization collapse was perhaps “attributed to an imbalance between a growing population and a limited ability to increase agricultural production, and then there was the exposure to disasters caused by unstoppable weather or pestilence.”

*Ruz’s review of an academic paper called “A Brief Summary of the Ancient Maya Hieroglyphic Writing in the Soviet Union” by Yuri Knorosov (Ruz Lhuillier 1956a)*

Knorosov presented this paper at the 10th International Congress of Historical Science in Rome in 1955 (Knorosov 1955). Ruz began his review of it by describing Yuri Knorosov as a learned young man in his twenties of very high academic credentials. He told the story of how Knorosov became interested in the Maya scripts through his

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<sup>32</sup> As Wyllys Andrews IV states in his book review of Ruz’s book about the Campeche coast, a document that originally was written as a Master’s thesis, Ruz found that the sites of Tixchel and Xicalango to be of the “formative period” (Andrews 1971:424)

teacher<sup>33</sup> who showed him the work of Paul Schellhas<sup>34</sup> and told him that Schellhas believed that it was impossible to decipher the Maya glyphs. Knorosov perceived this contention as a challenge and went to work on the task. Ruz described Knorosov as “a studious young man, full of enthusiasm and faith, putting his heart and soul into his research.” The young man’s dissertation was on the subject of Maya writing and he had published several articles which were immediately met with criticism from people such as Soustelle<sup>35</sup>, Thompson and Lizardi Ramos<sup>36</sup>. Ruz rightly thought that some of the comments went far beyond academic criticism and into the realm of personal insults.

Ruz explains that it was Knorosov’s view that the ancient Maya culture could not be studied without understanding their writing system. Knorosov believed that little progress had been made on the decipherment since the time of Bishop De Landa, when the bishop wrote down the calendar signs and their meanings. Knorosov posited that most of the glyphs were phonetic and he divided them into groups that he categorized in various ways, creating a table with many different signs and classifications such as those that were phonetic and others ideographic. Ruz was of the opinion that this young man’s effort deserved a “serious critical examination” by epigraphers and linguists, and that

*Maya hieroglyphic writing is nether totally phonetic or completely ideographic, but the two paths will eventually converge toward decipherment. On one hand the identification of ideograms, in which it is true that not much progress has been made (yet we should not underestimate the contributions of Schellhas, Tozzer, Forstemann, Bowditch, Teeple, Seler, Morley, Spinden, Thompson, and others) but on the other hand the phonics course has progressed even less and has led to not infrequently absurd theories during the course of the century (Ruz Lhuillier 1956a:77). (Author’s translation*

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<sup>33</sup> Michael Coe (1999) stats that this teacher’s name was Sergei Aleksandrovich Tokarev.

<sup>34</sup> Schellhas was a Maya epigrapher who in 1897 developed a classification of Maya deities that he found in the codices and then documented their associated glyphs (Coe 1999:121).

<sup>35</sup> He was a French ethnologist who was interested in ancient México.

<sup>36</sup> Lizardi was a Mexican archaeologist who had a keen interest in the ancient Maya and their writing system.

Ruz did not concur with Knorosov's confident belief that Knorosov had figured out the meaning of most of the glyphs and that now epigraphers will soon "have at our disposal all the extensive 'historic' texts of the ancient Maya" (Ruz Lhuillier 1956a). He pointed out that Knorosov had only offered a decipherment of a few words from the codices whereas there are thousands of glyphs on stone monuments waiting to be deciphered. At the end of the review, Ruz finally states that instead of historical events the "...texts seem rather to be almost entirely about chronology, astronomy, divination and ritual (Ruz Lhuillier 1956a:78)."

Remarkably, Ruz then offered a very generous and magnanimous attitude toward this young upstart. He remarked that this is a young eager scholar thousands of miles away from the Maya territory who wants to help decipher the glyphs – he "should not be ignored but encouraged" for his efforts. He wrote that Knorosov's jubilation is a result of the faith that he has in science. With an almost fatherly attitude, Ruz wrote that if a Mexican Institution invited Knorosov to come to México to study the glyphs – where they first originated and where they were used for centuries – he hoped that Knorosov would find an atmosphere of calm scientific collaboration. Thus more would be gained by scientific collaboration and human relations than by calling him "fool."<sup>37</sup>

#### **MICRO CONTEXT - THE GOLDEN AGE OF MEXICAN ARCHAEOLOGY**

One of my guiding principles while conducting this study was to understand Ruz, the man, and the excavations he performed at Palenque within the historical framework of his profession. Therefore, this section is a short description of the political, cultural, and historical factors that influenced Mexican archaeology before and during Ruz's work at Palenque. Even though North American archaeology had a substantial impact upon the archaeology of its neighbor to the south, a discussion of the diffusion of ideas will only be minimally addressed within these pages. Archaeologists, both International and

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<sup>37</sup> I believe that this reference to "fool" might have stemmed from comments made by some of the epigraphers that Ruz lists earlier in the review, but I do not truly know its source.

Mexican who worked in México during this period included people such as Franz Boas, Alfonso Caso, Ignacio Bernal, Jorge R. Acosta, Manuel Gamio, José Reygadas Vertiz, José García Payon, Ignacio Marquina, Eduardo Noguera, Florencia Muller, Sylvanus Morley, Ponciano Salazar, César Sáenz, Eulalia Guzmán, Juan Valenzuela, Albert Ruz, Eduardo Seler, Eric Thompson, and Alfred Tozzer.

There is an almost unanimous consensus among historians of archaeology that the years between 1917 and the early 1950's were special times for Mexican archaeology (Robles García 1996:42; Walker 2009:31). It was during this epoch that a genre called "The Mexican School of Archaeology"<sup>38</sup> began to form (Robles García 1996). Great strides in the development of México's national programs were made, at first under the leadership of Manuel Gamio, who espoused four important principals: 1) that anthropology and archaeology are related; 2) stratigraphy can answer chronological questions; 3) that there should be government policies that protect México's heritage, especially the archaeological heritage of its pre-Columbian monumental architecture; and 4) that it was necessary to include many disciplines in the study of ancient cultures (Robles García 1996). Since its inception, and still today, the Mexican Archaeological School not only offers classes in archaeology, it also instructs students in related disciplines such as physical anthropology, ethnology, and linguistics (Walker 2009:31), a practice that is a direct result of the early influence of Franz Boas<sup>39</sup>.

Manuel Gamio, was a student of Boas at Columbia University and became México's first properly trained archaeologist (Bernal 1980:164), but in addition to his excellent schooling he also had political and administrative finesse (Robles García 1996). He managed to work his way up into the higher levels of the Mexican government and

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<sup>38</sup> Vázquez describes this as "a nationalist tradition of practicing and thinking about archaeology" (Vázquez Leon 1994:70).

<sup>39</sup> Boas was a much acclaimed German-American anthropologist and pioneer of modern anthropology (McVicker 1989:145).

eventually created and then became the head of the Department of Anthropology (García Moll 2007) where he was one of the first advocates for Mexican *indigenismo* (McGuire 1993:105). He also began a “distinctive Mexican industry” (Brading 1988:78) – the craft of reconstructing ancient monumental architecture.

A major goal of Gamio’s new department was to find the origins of the Mexican populous and uncover the monuments that their ancestors left behind. His belief was that when those monuments were restored and presented to the public, they would foster pride and nationalism through ethnic identification (Robles García 1996; Walker 2009). In this manner, Gamio was attempting to “incorporate Indian communities into the national society of modern México” (Brading 1988:76). By using archaeology for “practical” political outcomes, he was moving away from the scientific canons of Eduard Seler, the first director of México’s International School of Anthropology and Ethnology<sup>40</sup> and moving toward monumental archaeology<sup>41</sup> (Vázquez Leon 1994:80). However, within his theoretical framework, Gamio did not separate scientific archaeological research from the conservation of monuments<sup>42</sup>. “His famous comprehensive research in the valley of Teotihuacan (1917-1922) reflects this applied, monumental and historicist conception of archaeology” (Vázquez Leon 1994:81).

In addition, Gamio wanted to incorporate the indigenous population into the Mexican mainstream in order “to transform a backward country into a modern nation able to defend itself from foreign hegemony” (Brading 1988:77). On the other hand, it is

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<sup>40</sup> Known simply as “The International School”, it was founded in 1911 and was created with the help of the governments of México, Prussia, France and the United States. Also, support came from the universities of Columbia, Harvard, and Pennsylvania. Some of its founders were people such as Franz Boas, Alfred Tozzer, and Eduardo Seler (Robles García 1996).

<sup>41</sup> As written earlier, I am defining this term as the investigation, restoration and conservation of large ancient monuments, as opposed to household archaeology which tends to study the everyday life of the ancient people.

<sup>42</sup> According to Vázquez Leon (1994:80), even today, INAH archaeologists cast archaeological research in the mold of conservation. In order to continue to apply stratigraphic research, Gamio encouraged its use in the excavation of PreHispanic monuments so that their original structural make-up could be discerned and then restored later.

important to remember that the Mexican Revolution that had just ended in 1917 was an uprising supported by peasants, so there was good reason for the new government to integrate them into the national consciousness and increase their assumed ethnic pride by studying the monuments of their ancestors (Lorenzo 1981:199; Trigger 2006:276). Because of this agenda, México's archaeology began a strong cultural-historicist<sup>43</sup> vein driven by the desire to understand and provide México with a past for which they could be proud and about which they could tell the world. Thus, it necessitated the building of public museums and the designation of archaeological sites and zones for the purpose of educating and entertaining the population and foreign tourists (Trigger 2006)<sup>44</sup>. That same cultural-historicist tradition is still prevalent in Mexican archaeology today according to Vázquez León (1994), even though the approach has many limitations. Paramount among those limitation is the fact that archeology is not an accurate source of data regarding a total understanding of past culture (Trigger 2006 :312). "Ethnicity is only one of many factors that shape the patterning of material culture; hence, archaeological cultures are not a privileged source of information about ethnicity but phenomena to be explained in many different ways" (Trigger 2006 :312). Numerous anthropologists and archaeologists have abandoned this approach, but according to Vázquez León it is still attractive to Mexican archaeologists. He contends that this is because "it is the perfect theory for the exhibiting and [sic] public function of monumental archaeology. At high administrative levels of INAH, it is common to hear the assertion that the State monopoly over the archaeological patrimony 'privileges the work of the archaeologists'" (Vázquez Leon 1994:85).

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<sup>43</sup> This is a type of archaeology that emphasizes the chronological arrangement of a cultural ethnicity of the past (Kipfer 2000:142).

<sup>44</sup> However, it is important to note that most of the restoration activity at this time was taking place in the Valley of México and dealt with the Aztec culture, not the Maya, who live in regions far from México City.

Gamio's successor to the post of the Department of Anthropology<sup>45</sup> was Alfonso Caso, who had been educated as a lawyer. With Caso's knowledge of the workings of Mexican law, in 1939 he combined several related government departments into the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) (Robles García 1996)<sup>46</sup>. He then placed himself at its head as the first director. The law creating INAH also mandated that all of México's archaeological remains be considered public property; therefore it was the property of the whole nation (García-Barcena 2007).

In addition to his legal legacy, Caso made outstanding contributions to archaeology in the 18 seasons that he worked at Monte Albán, a record that helped to raise México's archaeology to the level of a science (Robles García 1996). Beginning in 1949, Caso became a pioneer in "both Oaxaca's archaeology and studies of the Mixtec codices" (Joyce 2010:9). One of the young apprentices working alongside Caso was Alberto Ruz, a man that would one day direct his own large-scale excavations at Palenque, México.

In order to ensure that INAH had enough trained personnel, the National School of Anthropology and History<sup>47</sup> was established in 1942 (Ladron de Guevara 2007:26) which combined several other departments at the Universidad Mexicana to form a program that emphasized field areas such as social anthropology, ethnology, linguistics and physical anthropology. It was also during this era that the specialty of archaeological reconstruction and restoration began and was implemented all over Universidad Nacional de México (Robles García 1996). It is significant to this thesis that Alberto Ruz became the school's first graduate in 1942 and then in 1945 he graduated with his Masters from

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<sup>45</sup> This was renamed the "Department of PreHispanic Monuments" the English Translation of "Departamento de Monumentos Prehispánicos".

<sup>46</sup> It is perhaps due to Caso's efforts that México, out of all the Latin American countries, has been the most successful at developing a national archaeology (Trigger 2006:276).

<sup>47</sup> ENAH is the acronym in Spanish

ENAH, thus earning the distinction of being the first Mexican with the official professional title of "archaeologist"<sup>48</sup> (Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1992:33). During that era, the goals of those restorations were “to show México the origins of its own people” – perhaps a justifiable and noble cause, depending upon your perspective. However, that kind of extensive restoration is more likely to be used to attract the tourist trade thereby fostering economic development, a purpose that is almost uniformly frowned upon by scholars today, since it is not always based upon science (Robles García 1996). In addition, there is criticism that most of the restoration work is performed on the largest monuments, thus emphasizing the elite as opposed to the ancient commoner (Walker 2009:33). Through ENAH “the teaching of anthropology became education in the government interest and the profession of archaeology became a status profession” (Vázquez Leon 1994:83). Thus, graduates of that program can say without a doubt that “...their archaeology is *the* archaeology” of the nation (Vázquez Leon 1994:83).

Another of Caso’s strong qualities was his ability to teach; and according to the Mexican archaeologist Ignacio Bernal, he was the best archaeology teacher that México ever had (Bernal 1980). Caso had been taught by the German archaeologist, Seler, of the International School. That school closed in 1920, but one of its achievements was that Mexican archaeologists were being instructed on how to use stratigraphic methods – a technique that forever revolutionized the manner in which data was collected and analyzed. This was the first step toward understanding the chronology of the New World’s early civilizations and the effort to place each one in the evolutionary sequence (Bernal 1980:161).

Caso and his apprentice Ignacio Bernal, who later became one of his successors at INAH, both “continued to investigate the great ruins of the highlands with a historical perspective that emphasized the place of these ruins in the heritage of a Mexican national state” (McGuire 1993:107). There is an irony and a contrast here between the science of

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<sup>48</sup> This accomplishment will be discussed more in a later chapter.

stratigraphic excavation introduced by the International school and the approach practiced by Gamio and his predecessors that emphasized the reconstruction of the grand ancient monument<sup>49</sup>. The restoration techniques used at the sites of Teotihuacán, Monte Albán and Chichén Itzá, and implemented by Gamio, Caso and Sylvanus Morley respectively, would all become the examples to follow and “...provided a template for how the Maya and other indigenous groups were to be officially portrayed to the public” (Walker 2009:33)

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<sup>49</sup> The excavation and restoration of a temple in México does not usually involve stratigraphy unless one is peeling back the layers of ancient buildings, one on top of the other. Finding monumental stratigraphy usually involves trenching or digging a hole into the heart of a building, gaining vast amounts of scientific information, but in the process destroying the structure. Putting the building back together in its original form requires meticulous notes, much time and large amounts of resources.

## **Chapter 2: Those Who Came Before - Miguel Ángel Fernández and Heinrich Berlin**

During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Palenque's unique buildings and carved panels attracted many explorers and curiosity-seekers. Prior to the Ruz excavations, the site had been visited by explorers and travelers who produced numerous reports, photographs and artistic reproductions of the site and its monuments<sup>1</sup>. These explorations are too numerous to list in this essay; however in the interest of historical context, I will discuss two very important Palenque archaeologists who preceded Ruz and whose work should be acknowledged. Miguel Ángel Fernández and Heinrich (Enrique) Berlin's contributions to the site's history were substantial since they conducted the first systematic excavations at Palenque. Berlin, worked under Fernández and later, in 1956, he would also work for Ruz at Palenque when they excavated Temple XVIIIa. Ruz was able to use Fernández and Berlin's site reports to aid in his work as can be seen from the many references Ruz makes to them.

In addition to giving an overview of their work, I will also describe some of the challenges that they had in gaining access to the site, challenges that were still present when Ruz was site archaeologist. In the following paragraphs, I will discuss some of Fernández and Berlin's accomplishments, but first I wish to inform the reader about Fernández' life before Palenque.

### *A Trained and Gifted Artist*

Before becoming an archaeologist, Fernández had been a trained and gifted artist who eventually found his way into archaeology through contact with Manuel Gamio – the only Mexican archaeologist at that time who had gained an advanced professional degree in anthropology from a foreign university (Gamio and Armstrong-Fumero 2010:1). Several years later, Gamio created and headed the Dirección de Arqueología at the Ministry of Agriculture and Development (Bernal 1980; Kaplan 1993:113).

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<sup>1</sup> See Stuart and Stuart (2008) for a detailed description of the activities and discoveries of these explorers.

Gamio first met Fernández in 1921 when Gamio was in Yucatán planning the excavation work at Chichén Itzá (Schávelzon 1986:85). He took Fernández to Chichén Itzá and Jaina, introducing him to archaeology and to the ancient Maya (Schávelzon 1986:85). Subsequently, Fernández was unofficially hired by Gamio's Department of Anthropology as an artistic "re-constructor" (García Moll 1985:83). His first assignment was to excavate, reconstruct, draw and make plaster casts of Chichén Itzá's ball court and its relief carvings. He also made several other drawings of buildings and friezes at Chichén (Figure 2.1). Those, along with other archaeological and artistic sketches were published in 1951 in a large format book by Ignacio Marquina called *Arquitectura Prehispánica*. Fernández also placed copies of his drawings in the *Informes de Temporada* that he wrote for Gamio. Some of these Chichén Itzá illustrations included drawings of the ball court frieze; the Temple of the Jaguars and the interior reliefs in its basement; and the *alfardas* on the stairs of the North Temple (Marquina 1990). From 1922 to 1926, Fernández lived in the ruins, helping the Carnegie Institution carry out the work started by Morley in 1924 (Schávelzon 1986:87). This was also when Fernández restored the south building of the ball court.

#### *First Visit to Palenque*

Fernández first visited Palenque in September 1933. He accompanied three other Mexicans – an engineer named Alberto Escalona Ramos, archaeologist Luis Rosado Vega, the Director of the Archaeological Museum of Yucatán, and artist Carlos Camera (García Moll 1988; Molina Montes 1978:4; Rosado Vega 1933:300). The trip was called a "research expedition" and Rosado Vega wrote a story about it for the *Science Newsletter* in 1933. One year later, Fernández was assigned to Palenque as supervisor for the 1934 season (Cuevas García 2004:32), and he continued to supervise the work each season until 1945 at the time of his death. At first, he worked without the help of other archaeologists, however, Heinrich Berlin, Roque Cevallos Novelo and others began

assisting him in 1940 (Molina Montes 1978:6). After reviewing the site reports, I believe that Berlin was his most productive collaborator.

### *Hardships*

Fernández accomplished much while at Palenque, but there were factors beyond his control that worked against him, the most significant of which were the lack of good communication, poor access into the site, and after 1939, his poor health. The problems with communication and accessibility created huge obstacles for the shipping of supplies and personnel into and out of Palenque. This situation made it hard to construct the infrastructure needed to feed and house workers. Fernández described how the bad access road into the site complicated the transfer of materials from Emilio Zapata, a nearby town. Molina quotes him: "there is only one ox-cart which normally charges \$35 a ton for transport to Palenque, but for the government he demands \$600; take it or leave it" (Molina Montes 1978:5)<sup>2</sup>. Molina interviewed Berlin who started working there in 1940, and he told Molina that in order to get supplies at the beginning of the season, the team would fly from México City to Villahermosa to buy them. The supplies were then sent on a slow paddle-steamer called "Carmen" to Zapata; meanwhile the team would fly from Villahermosa to Zapata and wait there until the materials arrived several days later. When the supplies arrived, the archaeologists would load them onto a team of mules and then mount their horses so that they could lead the procession into the site. Berlin stated that the trail into the site was very indistinct and they followed the telegraph lines in order to keep from getting lost (1978:5).

In December 1941 Eulalia Guzmán Barrón, the director of the Archivos Técnicos at INAH's Department of Prehispanic monuments, was commissioned by Alfonso Caso,

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<sup>2</sup> According to a personal communication from Alfonso Morales, an archaeologist who is very familiar with the history of the site, the cement and almost everything that Fernandez used at Palenque came by boat from Veracruz. From there it went to Palizada, Tabasco, then on to the town of Emiliano Zapata (also known as Montecristo de Guerrero, Chiapas) where it was loaded on to ox carts for the long trip into Palenque.

the director of INAH, to make a site visit to Palenque (García Moll 1985:337-338). Her task was to assess the magnitude of the problems that had been encountered by Fernández during his work there and to make suggestions that might alleviate some of them. One of the descriptions in her report is quite vivid. She wrote this passage regarding the trail: "when it rained, sometimes the horses would sink up to above their knees and you can understand the effort that it took for the rider when this occurred - Palenque cannot be reached in even a day, since the traveler is stuck, struggling to remove the animals from the mud"(García Moll 1985:339-348). She complained about everything from the lack of plumbing at the *campamento* to the lack of progress in the conservation of the ruins, where "the pyramidal platforms are but steep mounds of rubble affording only a difficult and dangerous access...where most of the lintels are still missing and the facades have cavernous gaps over all doorways" (Molina Montes 1978:7). She also made thirty-one recommendations that ranged from better maintenance practices; improving transportation access; better camp kitchen facilities and furnishings, and suggestions to help tourists when they visit (García Moll 1985:339-348; Guzmán Barrón 1985:459-462).

Even though the place was primitive, there is evidence that Fernández took it all in stride and was well suited for the work. Schávelzon (1986:90) writes that it was well-known that Fernández preferred to use a stone carved bed in lieu of a hammock at Palenque. When he was there, he either lived in a wattle hut, or simply inside the Palace, just as so many Palenque explorers had done in the past. Molina (1978:4) quotes Fernández in saying that "the hut where I am living is very uncomfortable but I'll have to get along with it, maybe next year I'll be able to build myself a masonry room."

Unfortunately for Ruz and for anyone who desires to know the details of Fernández' findings, his documentation preference was through drawing rather than writing. When Fernández' died in 1945, he took much of what he knew about the site to his grave. In the introduction to an article about Fernández' drawings of the glyph blocks recovered from Temple VIII, Berlin described Fernández very well. He wrote that "during his ten years'

of work at Palenque from 1935 to 1945, the late Miguel Ángel Fernández, artist rather than notebook-filling archaeologist, used his pencil primarily for drawing new finds" (Berlin and Fernández 1954:39)<sup>3</sup>. On a more positive note, I should mention that his drawings were extremely precise. It was Fernández' belief that before restoring a building, the rubble should be cleared out so that its dimensions can be accurately measured. Only then should it be reconstructed with pad and paper. By clearing out the debris, the archaeologist can see the building's original form. This practice was not a popular one with his colleagues because it took longer than the more common method of creating a "hypothetical reconstruction" (Schávelzon 1986:86).

### *His Archaeological Reports*

García Moll (1985:84) wrote that Fernández' archaeological reports on file at the INAH Archivos Técnicos in México City, tend to be superficial and some parts are not well organized because they are repetitious from year to year. The only section that seemed to be complete was the one about the work on the Temple of the Sun (García Moll 1985:84). His reports, as García Moll states (1985:8) and as Cuevas expresses "do not show a refined and clear internal structure" (Cuevas García 2004:61). She posits that the texts would have been more professional and less spontaneous if he had prepared them for publication. Molina (1978) suggests that Fernández' poor health – manifested with malaria-like symptoms – and the hardships that he endured at Palenque may have caused some of the deficiencies in his conservation and excavation. Even though it must have been a challenge for Ruz to make sense of these reports, I found no evidence that he was dissatisfied with their lack of details.

### *Temple of the Sun*

In general, Fernández' focused his first season on the Temple of the Sun, one of three buildings in the Group of the Cross. He spent most of his efforts consolidating the

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<sup>3</sup> See Figure 2.2 for an example of Fernández' drawings.

temple and its roof-comb. At the end of the season, the reconstruction was almost complete and looked very much like it did in 1978 (Molina Montes 1978:5). He also cleaned and consolidated what was left of the molded stuccos in the roof comb and drew a reconstruction of them, but in 1978 Molina reported that these drawings were not found in the INAH technical files in México City (1978:5).

The original wooden lintels that the ancient people of Palenque had installed in all the doorways were missing from the buildings at this time (Molina Montes 1978:5). To replace them, Fernández installed lintels in the Temple of the Sun made of chicozapote wood to ensure the stability of the doors<sup>4</sup> (Figure 2.3). This type of wood is known to have been used by the ancient Maya in most of their buildings to stabilize and support their doorways (Spinden 1975:115). The wood derives from the sapodilla tree and is also known as sapodilla, sapote, and zapote<sup>5</sup>. It is a tree native to Central American with fruit that is brown and furry.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to reconstruction, Fernández also made many explorations. In an English-language article published in “*Dyn*” in 1943 he wrote about the offerings that he found in all three of the Cross Group temples, emphasizing those from the Temple of the Sun. He explained that in order to find them, he dug a trench on a transverse axis (from East to West) into the Temple of the Sun all the way through the sanctuary. It was in the foundation that he encountered three offerings (Fernández 1943:55).

His excellent artifact drawings can be seen in García Mall’s 1985 edited volume on pages 187-189. One of the offerings contained a stucco head and he uses his imagination, saying that

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<sup>4</sup>Later, during Ruz’s tenure at Palenque, all these wooden lintels were replaced with concrete ones to make the replacement permanent.

<sup>5</sup> A word from the Nahuatl, tzapotl, (Ebert 2007)

<sup>6</sup> In addition to its tasty fruit, the tree yields a valuable hardwood and its sap is the source of chicle.

*...it is not far-fetched to suppose that they [the ancient Maya] might have taken away the primitive offerings in order to put theirs in the place of these; for I did the same thing, leaving in place of the head, a glass flask hermetically sealed with cement, containing the date of my expedition together with data on the present world war, written in Chinese ink on heavy paper, and also placed there various pieces of money of the present-day coinage; finally refilling the hole up to the level of the floor" (Fernández 1943:55). Author's translation*

To my knowledge, this "time capsule" is one of the few documented cases where a New World archaeologist performed such an action. Thereafter, he then proudly informed the reader that the Temple of the Sun at Palenque is now "perfectly consolidated" and that if the ancient priests were here today, they could feel comfortable in conducting their ceremonies in the temple once again (Fernández 1943:58). While performing these investigations, he also noticed that there were eighteen layers of plaster on the inside of the temple and twenty on the outside. Based on this, Fernández estimated that the temple had been "occupied" for two-hundred years at a rate of one layer every ten years (Cuevas García 2004:73).

#### *Temple of the Cross Offerings*

During his explorations, Fernández found a very unusual cache offering configuration inside the sanctuary of the Temple of the Cross, and this discovery would later help Ruz understand what kinds of offering patterns and compositions to look for when he started his work in 1949. Fernández was able to locate twenty offerings that were positioned directly in front of the Temple of the Cross sanctuary - ten to the east and ten to the west. They were arranged in a configuration that he tentatively proposed were in the shape of the Little and Big Dipper star constellations. It was his opinion that they were contemporary with the ones he found in the Temple of the Sun because the objects inside each cache were similar<sup>7</sup>. Fernández described the procedure for the deposition of the offerings into the floor: "they broke the original soil in circular shape, widening the

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<sup>7</sup> In fact, Fernández was correct in that these three buildings were all dedicated on the same day, January 10, 692 (Stuart & Stuart 2008:193)

hole in an irregular manner, then plastered the hole into a pot-shape [...] then immediately placed their offerings into it, plastered it with red stucco soil so as not to notice its placement " (Cuevas García 2004:75-76). That same year, Fernández cleared the rubble from the rear interior of the Temple of the Foliated Cross and found the fragments of two tablets that originally were infixed into the sanctuary's back wall. He also found two offerings in the floor (Cuevas García 2004:77).

### *The 1940 Season and Heinrich (Enrique) Berlin*

As written above, Heinrich Berlin's work at Palenque was also important to Ruz's successful tenure at the site. Berlin was originally from Germany and had moved to México in 1935, only five-years prior to working at Palenque (Stuart and Stuart 2008:91). He made this move during the administration of the liberal Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940), a populist/socialist leader who opened México's doors to people from all over the world seeking asylum from war torn places such as Nicaragua, Cuba and Russia, and from Spain's civil war<sup>8</sup>. He also welcomed Jews who were fleeing persecution in Germany (Schreiber 2008:ix). Berlin attended the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras in the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) from 1935 to 1939. From 1940 to 1945 he did his fieldwork in Palenque under Fernández and graduated with a master's degree from UNAM in 1942. He received a doctorate in anthropology in 1947 from that same university. His special area of interest was Maya archaeology and colonial history, but his most important future contributions would be in the field of epigraphy (García Moll 1985:265). In 1943, he published a paper called "Notes on Glyph C of the Lunar Series at Palenque", the first of many papers regarding Maya hieroglyphic writing. George Stuart writes:

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<sup>8</sup> Randall H. McGuire (1993:106) states that this policy of Cárdenas' was influenced by Diego Rivera who had "become a Marxist while studying in France, and in the 1930's he influenced the socialist president of México...to grant asylum to republican refugees from the Spanish Civil War and later to Leon Trotsky."

*In the beginning, these dealt with chronological matters (Berlin 1943), and included important identifications such as the rare head variant of the number 11 (Berlin 1944). By the 1950's, he had begun to concentrate increasingly on the non-calendrical content of Maya writing. In 1958, this effort resulted in a key breakthrough (Stuart 1992:38).*

That breakthrough was the identification of what Berlin called “emblem glyphs”, glyphs that appeared to refer either to specific city-states or to their ancestral lineages (Stuart 1992:38). I speculate that the epigraphic work he did at Palenque set him on the road to discoveries such as this.

#### *The Glyphic Jigsaw Puzzles of Temple XVIII and Olvidado*

There were at least two important buildings at Palenque whose fallen glyph panels had become jumbled jigsaw puzzles and Berlin investigated the glyphs found in both. These panels were located in Temple XVIII and Olvidado Temple. I call them “jigsaw puzzles” because the stucco that held the glyphs onto the wall had crumbled over the many years, causing them to fall. They were found on the floor of each temple, their original order lost.

The story about the Temple XVIII stuccos begins with Frans Blom. He was sent to Palenque in 1923 to explore the site, and was the first person to document the stucco inscriptions on the back wall in Temple XVIII. When he was there, the wall only had a few remaining stucco glyphs clinging to it, with the majority lying on the floor. Thankfully, Blom had the foresight to make a sketch of what was left of it. His drawings were characteristically very poor – and this one was no exception – but this sketch gave epigraphers an outline showing how the tablet was arranged. The drawing is found in the book *Tribes and Temples* (Blom and LaFarge 1926: Fig 135). Blom had found thirty-two stucco glyphs on the floor. Recalling what Blom had found there, Fernández thought that there were probably more, so in 1942 Berlin was chosen to clean and excavate the temple (Berlin 1944). He found ninety more glyphs, but some were too decayed by erosion to be salvaged. He was unable to excavate the room due to lack of personnel and the

approaching rains, so he could not uncover all of the glyph blocks. He wrote that he knew “a few hieroglyphs probably remain buried” (Berlin and Fernández 1954:16). Ruz knew that it was important to revisit this temple (Cuevas García 2004:70) and he and Sáenz would excavate it in 1954.<sup>9</sup>

Also during the 1934 season, Berlin worked at Temple Olvidado, a building located about a kilometer west of the Palace (Figure 2.4). It was a fairly well-preserved building with vaulted ceilings. As noted above, this building also had several stucco glyphs lying on its floor and Berlin wrote about the temple and then analyzed the fallen calendar-glyphs in a 1942 paper (Berlin). This publication was the start of his distinguished career in epigraphy (Mathews and Robertson 1985:7; Stuart and Stuart 2008:92).

Fernández’ accomplishments during his ten years of work in Palenque included restoring many of the “houses” in the Palace and its Tower; the finding of drains and the men’s toilet in the Palace (See Figure 2.5); the discovery of the Tablet of the 96 Glyphs, the Creation Tablet, the Tablet of the Scribe, the Tablet of the Orator<sup>10</sup>, and consolidating and restoring the roof crests for the Temples of the Cross and Foliated Cross and restoring the base of the Temple of the Sun (Stuart and Stuart 2008:92). He recorded these monuments by drawing some of them or having his technicians draw them (Cuevas García 2004:62). But of all the structural work that he did at the site, the work he did on the Temple of the Sun was probably his most lasting legacy.

Several years earlier, during the 1939 season, Fernández had contracted what was described as “yellow fever” and his health was never the same afterward. Details are confusing and sketchy regarding the exact nature of his ill health, since yellow fever is not usually a chronic disease. What we do know is that during the 1944 and 1945 season

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<sup>9</sup> View the section regarding the 1954 excavations within this document for more details.

<sup>10</sup> All four of these monuments were found in the Palace Building.

his health grew progressively worse. García Moll reported that in 1944 Fernández started working in the Temple of the Cross again, but then had to stop (García Moll 1985:85). The next season, from May until June of 1945, Fernández tried once again to work in that same temple (García Moll 1985:85), however he was too sick. His friend and colleague, Berlin wrote that he placed Fernández upon his horse and sent him out of the site (Stuart and Stuart 2008:92) and on November 28, 1945 he died in México City (García Moll 1985:83). In his 1945 obituary about Fernández published in *Boletín de Antropología Americana*, Berlin wrote that there are many bright analysts and patient accountants of potsherds in the field of archaeology “but the happy marriage between artist and archaeologist in one man will not be repeated so easily” (Berlin 1945:78). He goes on to write that it was Fernández’ keen artistic eye that enabled him “to recognize with a single glance, the artistic ensembles [of the ancient Maya], whereas the typical archaeologist would only see part of the whole” (Berlin 1945:78). Berlin also highlighted Fernández’ “friendliness and camaraderie that was a delight to his younger colleagues” (Berlin 1945:79).

Fernández hardships were many and his resources scarce, but for Alberto Ruz, the archaeologist who would succeed him, circumstances and good fortune would bring ten successful years of restoration, consolidation and site improvement.

### **Chapter 3: Alberto Ruz Lhuillier's Life before Palenque**

#### **EARLY LIFE**

I begin this chapter with a summary of Alberto Ruz Lhuillier's life before the Palenque excavations. The story originates with information about his grandfather, José Francisco de Ruz Amores, who was born in Havana on November 20, 1930 (Appendix D is a list of the descendants of Jose José Francisco de Ruz Amores). He married Micaela Mas in 1896 (Estrade 2001:324). As Mexican scholars have written, Alberto Ruz Lhuillier descended from a wealthy family that owned land and slaves, and grew sugarcane and coffee in Cuba in the 1800's (García Moll 2007:9; Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1987). His grandfather, José Francisco Ruz A. was part of the Cuban founding and landed gentry in the area of Santiago de Cuba, the town where the family lived. In addition, he distinguished himself as a doctor in Havana and as vice president of the Academy of Medicine and founder of the Academy of Sciences (1961). He was also reported to be a poet and had translated the works of the French poet, Giacomo Leopardi (Estrade 2001:332), presumably into Spanish. Alberto Ruz L.'s son, Alberto Ruz Buenfil, henceforth referred to as "Alberto III" confirms that this story is one that he heard directly from his father many times (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Francisco Alberto Ruz y Mas, the son of José and Micaela was born on July 17, 1863 in Cuba (Estrade 2001:409).

Five years later, on October 10, 1868, Cuba's "Ten Years' War" began. It was otherwise known as Cuba's first war for independence. This "First Revolutionary War" started when Carlos Manuel de Céspedes and thirty-seven other landowners declared Cuba's independence from Spain (Franklin 1997:5). The following year, 1869, is reported to be the year that the Ruz family left for France (Estrade 2001:409). According to several sources, José Francisco Ruz A. was the first Cuban landowner to free his slaves when the abolition of slavery was announced (de la Garza 2004:9; Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1987:11; Ruz Buenfil 2010) and after he did this, there was such a backlash from his peers who were influential slave owners that he and his entire family fled to New

York City and then to Paris for their own safety (Estrade 2001:331-332; Ruz Buenfil 2010). Perhaps the turmoil associated with Cuba's first war of independence also played a role in this decision. When the family left Cuba, Francisco Alberto Ruz M. was approximately six years of age; the family eventually settled in Paris.

In the city of Paris, they lived on Wagram Avenue, Paris 17 which was located in "Cubanolandia", a neighborhood of Cuban exiles. It was there that they awaited and received news of the Cuban insurrection of 1895, the country's second revolutionary war (Estrade 2001:409). Ruz Amores was a staunch supporter of Cuban independence and wrote articles in opposition to colonialism in the newspaper *La República Cubana* under the pseudonym of "Cubanacan". When he became an adult, Francisco Alberto Ruz M. studied dentistry and became a dental surgeon. Both he and his father José were active in the Cuban community, denouncing the "abuses of Spanish colonialism" (Estrade 2001:410). Francisco became distinguished as one of the most active proponents of the Cuban revolution (Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1987:11; 1992:33; Le Riverend 1979:166). He became an important force against Cuban colonialism through his writings, thus helping the second revolution take place. He published under the pseudonym of "Egmont y Sangrado" and wrote thirty articles for the *La République Cuban* (Estrade 2001:410). Eventually he married a French woman named Louisa Lhuillier (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Francisco had four children, two girls and two boys. Alberto was the oldest and he was born in Paris, France on January 27, 1906. His brothers and sisters, also born in France, were named Susanne, Lily and Miguel. Their grandfather, José Francisco de Ruz, died on June 9, 1904, two years before Alberto's birth. (Estrade 2001:332), so Alberto and the other children never knew him. The family still owned land that they inherited from José Francisco in Cuba, but they feared that it was lost (Ruz Buenfil 2010).

In 1920 Francisco entered the Consular Service and was appointed to the Consul of Cuba in the cities of Liverpool, Marseilles and Paris (Estrade 2001:410). From 1922 - 1923, his son, Alberto Ruz L. attended the Ecole Commerciale de Paris (Hilton

1945:108-109). In 1930, Francisco began to receive a retirement pension from Cuba because of the "services he rendered to Cuba in the Press from 1895 to 1898" (Estrade 2001:411).

### *Cuba's Transition from Colonialism to Neocolonialism*

Even though the family left the country behind, Cuba and its history would one day play an important part in the life of Alberto Ruz Lhuillier. During the mid 1800's, Cuba was still under the colonial rule of Spain, but the United States continued to be an important influence in its affairs due to its proximity. "Throughout the history of the United States Cuba has occupied a place of peculiar, if unrecognized importance in our foreign affairs. No other country has so continuously concerned our Department of State" (Guggenheim 1970:2). Even as far back as the time of Thomas Jefferson, Cuba was seen as a very desirable territorial acquisition (Guggenheim 1970:2). Such desires were based in part on the island's potential and future importance to economic trade and its proximity to Florida. On the other hand, President Madison viewed Cuba as a potential "fulcrum" from which others could do harm to US commerce and security (Guggenheim 1970:2). During this time, Spain, had imposed trade restrictions on Cuba, thus causing substantial hard feelings between the US and Spain and planting the seeds of the Spanish American War in 1898.

That war began due to U.S. disputes with Spain regarding Cuba and its "independence." Although in the U.S., it is called "The Spanish American War" the people of Cuba call it the "U.S. intervention in Cuba's War of Independence" (Franklin 1997:9). The war only lasted only ten weeks, and on December 10, 1898, Spain and the US signed the Treaty of Paris. One of its outcomes was that the U.S. gained control of Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Guam. "Although the treaty officially grants Cuba independence, the U.S. flag - not the Cuban flag - is raised over Havana" (Franklin 1997:9). The United States installed a government headed by General John R. Brooke, Cuba's first US military governor. Over the next sixty years, the United States would

exercise control over Cuba and its people, including militarily, legislatively and economically (Franklin 1997). The years between 1895 and 1921 were those years in which U.S. neocolonialism became solidified and was greatly resented by the Cuban people (Guerra 2005:3).

### *Ruz in Cuba*

In the year 1925 or 1926, at around age eighteen or nineteen, Alberto Ruz L. moved from Paris to Cuba (García Moll 2007:9; Izquierdo y de la Cueva 2005:3; Ruz Buenfil 2010). According to the surviving widow of Ruz's last marriage, Celia Gutiérrez Ruz (Bertrán 2002a), he had to learn to speak Spanish after his arrival, since his native tongue was French. His son, Alberto III relates that one of the major reasons for the move across the ocean was to reclaim the family property in Santiago de Cuba. Albert Ruz L. was able to recover property situated in the city limits, but they lost the rural land. While completing this task, Ruz fell in love with Cuba, its music and its Latin American-Caribbean spirit. He decided to stay (Ruz Buenfil 2010) and enrolled in the University of Havana.

### *Antecedents to the Student Movement of the 1930's*

Ruz arrived in Cuba at a time of political upheaval that would last for at least thirty more years. General Gerardo Machado Morales had become president in May 1925. He had the support of the US government and Cuba's very large sugar empire upon which Cuba's economy so heavily depended (Argentero 2003:105), and over time he became an increasingly oppressive dictator. Four years later, in 1929, the stock market crashed. In addition to this crisis, the U.S. Congress passed the Hawley-Smoot Act of 1930 that increased tariffs on Cuba's sugar imports, causing the price of sugar to fall rapidly and decreasing the value of what Cuba exported (Estrada 2007:171). Unemployment in Cuba went up, profits went down, and government workers received pay cuts. Since the entire world was in economic chaos, Cuban tourism also decreased. Cuba's casinos and

extravagant new hotels were empty, and the Pan American seaplanes no longer made regular trips into Havana (Estrada 2007:171).

On top of all this trouble were the student protests against the Machado administration, and among those protesting was Alberto Ruz L., as will be discussed below. Over time the student protests became increasingly aggressive. Since the 1920's, Cuba has had a tradition of student involvement in politics (Suchlicki 1968:350). In their efforts to try to find solutions to Cuba's multiple problems, the students tapped into the rhetoric and ideals that came from the Córdoba Reform Movement of 1918 in Argentina as well as from the Mexican and Russian Revolutions to generate many of their ideas about reform and revolution (Suchlicki 1968:350). By the middle of 1927, a Directorio Estudiantil Universitario, known as the DEU (University Student Directorate) had formed, and one of its major platforms was opposition to the Machado regime (Franklin 1997:12). Generally, they voiced the opinion that Machado was selling their country to the United States, and they wanted to liberate Cuba from a puppet dictator and from Yankee neocolonialism (Randall 1974:109; Suchlicki 1968:351). They demonstrated in front of the university and criticized Machado and his continued attempts to usurp more power. Machado then expelled most of the members of the Directorio from the University (Suchlicki 1968). In September 1930, the Directorio again demonstrated; the police tried to break up the demonstration and in doing so killed the Directorio leader, Rafael Trejo, causing even greater anti-Machado sentiment. In response, Machado closed the university and many high schools. After the death of Trejo, "...the Cubans viewed the courageous student generation that battled Machado's police with admiration and respect" (Suchlicki 1968:357).

Even the more affluent sectors of the population looked to this younger generation to help get rid of the despotic Machado regime, which was becoming increasingly oppressive. Since students could not attend classes, they continued to plot and demonstrate against Machado and urban violence in Cuban politics became

commonplace for the first time (Suchlicki 1968:357). Between the years 1929 and 1935, a young leader named Antonio Guiteras Holmes would emerge and transform himself into what some consider the “Che Guevara” of that era (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Halperin has written that Guiteras was the forerunner of Fidel Castro, who in the 1950’s would eventually implement many components of Guiteras’ platform of reform (Halperin 1972:8-9). In 1935, in a story written after Guiteras’ violent death at the hands of the Machado military, *Time* magazine described him as a “romantic figure” who was “a little 28-year-old pharmacist with cross-eyes and freckles and his hair parted in the middle, with a childish, open smile and a vocabulary of violent radicalism” (Time Magazine May 20, 1935).

In the early 1930’s Antonio Guiteras focused his activities on collecting weapons to be used in the coming insurrection that he hoped would lead toward the ousting of Gerardo Machado. During this time, he would hone his skills as a political and revolutionary leader (Rosales García 2004). Guiteras and his immediate family would become an important part of Alberto Ruz’s life in Cuba after he formed a romantic relationship Antonio’s sister Calixta and eventually married her.

Despite all the student turmoil, Ruz managed to attend school at the Escuela de Ingenieros Agrónomos y Químicos Azucareros (School of Agronomy and Sugar Engineering) from 1933 to 1934 at the University of Havana (de León Orozco 1981:51; Hilton 1945:108-109). As written in its brochure, the school’s purpose was to give young people the technical expertise needed to be competent managers of rural properties, able to implement and practice modern methods and procedures on agricultural and industrial crops (Universidad de La Habana 1939:1). There must have been a time in Ruz’s life when he had a desire to work in this area of specialization, but that would change.

Like so many other young people in Cuban universities at that time, Ruz became involved in the political protests against the dictatorship of General Machado. There are no documents that indicate whether Ruz became an activist before or after he met

Antonio, Calixta and their mother María Terese Holmes. More specifically, there is no published record that would indicate when Ruz first met Antonio's sister and his future wife, Calixta Guiteras Holmes, but his association with her and with her family would change his life dramatically.

Calixta Guiteras Holmes was born February 10, 1905 in Philadelphia to a family of Cuban-Catalans who were exiled in the United States. Her father's name was Calixto Guiteras y Gener. He was an engineer, but he later became a professor of romance languages at Girard College in Philadelphia (Ignacio Taibo II 2008:17). Her mother, María Terese was born in North America and descended from a family of Scottish-Irish immigrants of great spiritual fortitude (Guiteras Holmes 1960:5; 1984:15). Calixta's friends called her "Cali" (Guiteras Holmes 1984:15). Her brother, Antonio (Tony) was born November 22, 1906, also in Pennsylvania (Guiteras Holmes 1960). They had a younger sister named Margaret. They were an economically comfortable family and their mother was well-educated, possessing very progressive ideas about the world. She had deep convictions and "strong feelings of independence forged by reading about far-off Ireland, the homeland of her ancestors" (Rosales García 2004). She told the children stories about their uncle, John Walsh, who was an important fighter for the independence of Ireland (Rosales García 2004). Their father Calixto Guiteras loved his homeland and instilled this love and admiration for Cuba and its heroes in his children<sup>1</sup>. One of those heroes, José Julián Martí Pérez, would eventually become closely linked with the inception and development of the Cuban Republic (Font and Quiroz 2006:2). However he was more than a war hero - he was also a gifted poet and writer.

*José Martí's essays established sentiment for Cuban independence from Spain, while his poetry inspired the Modernismo movement, a Spanish-American literary style that creates an exotic blend of visual symbolism to convey passion,*

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<sup>1</sup> Another hero whose deeds were shared with the children was José Ramón Guiteras, a relative who also died for the freedom of Cuba in the First War of Independence (Rosales García 2004)

*harmony, and rhythm. Thus he is called alternatively the Father of Cuban Independence and Father of Modernismo* (Martínez Wood 2007:138).

In May of 1895, Martí died in Cuba while fighting the Spanish in the Second Revolutionary War. His two most important causes were the abolition of racism and the obstruction of American imperialism.

In 1913, the Guiteras-Holmes family moved from Pennsylvania to Matanzas, Cuba in order to improve the health of the father. Both she and her brother Antonio became students at the University of Havana. Antonio entered in 1924 (Ignacio Taibo II 2008:25) to study in the Department of Pharmacy and Medicine (Guiteras Holmes 1984:15; Tabares del Real 1973:128). Calixta entered the Facultad de Filosofía y Ciencias in 1928 or 1929 (Ignacio Taibo II 2008:47). Antonio was expelled from the university in 1927 due to his anti-Machado activities (Randall 1974:106). After the expulsion, he went into politics and revolutionary activities full-time.

On June 22, 1927 their father, Calixto Guiteras died. This turn of events meant that Antonio was now the head of the family. In January or February of 1929, the Guiteras-Holmes family decided to move from Pinar del Río to Havana so that Calixta could continue to study for her degree in Filosofía y Letras and so that Antonio would have better opportunities for finding a job. Calixta stated that they rented a house at Calle B, No. 3, at the corner of 3rd and Vedado (Tabares del Real 1973:82). She and Antonio had joined other students and continued to serve in the struggle against Machado by being in the Directorio Estudiantil Universitario (Tabares del Real 1973:128). In 1930 Calixta earned her Ph.D. from the University of Havana (Guiteras Holmes 1984:15). The exact date of the marriage between Ruz and Calixta is not known, however written evidence suggests that they were married no later than 1932. Ruz also joined the revolutionary struggle against Machado, alongside his peers and his wife's family. When Ruz wrote an article for the magazine *Mundo Infantil*,<sup>2</sup> denouncing the misery of children in the

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<sup>2</sup> I have searched for this publication without success.

neighborhood of the Yaguas in Havana he was jailed (de la Garza 2004:9; Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1987:11). Izquierdo writes “The days of imprisonment invigorated his spiritual strength and gave him the secret to an indomitable soul” (1992:33).

Lorenzo Ochoa, one of Ruz’s biographers affectionately writes that after his incarceration, Ruz was no longer “the petty-minded young Parisian, bohemian aspiring tango dancer from Marseilles, who came to Cuba in 1926” (Ochoa 1981:395). Subsequently, over the next few years, Ruz and Calixta were jailed several times both in the El Castillo del Príncipe and El Morro (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Each time, they were incarcerated with political prisoners instead of the “common” ones, so they were in jail with people of similar ideas and attitudes. Thus, the revolutionaries were able to continue planning the revolution from the “inside”. Ruz became very close to this cadre of people according to Alberto III (2010). It was during this time that his father changed his political orientation toward the Cuban Communist Party and away from Socialist ideals that Antonio had advocated (Ruz Buenfil 2010), although he continued the struggle for independence, alongside Calixta and Antonio.

The insurgent activities of Terese’s children must have been very hard on her. Calixta told Tabares del Real, one of Antonio’s biographers:

*Toni's<sup>3</sup> exploits in the East, and the modest activities of mine, led to the police making life miserable for our mother, what with the forced inspections, searches and interrogations. So, in late 1932 or early 1933, Mom left the Third and B house, packed up and moved to Matanzas to live with Dad's family* (Tabares del Real 1973:129). Author’s translation

Because of Calixta’s brother’s activities, Ruz and his wife, Calixta were watched closely by the Machado regime (Ruz Buenfil 2010), especially since all three frequently roomed together (Tabares del Real 1973). Calixta served time on several occasions at the women's prison in Guanabacoa as well as in others. She told Tabares del Real:

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<sup>3</sup> Tabares del Real spells Antonio’s nickname as “Toni” however his sister spells it “Tony”.

*I participated in a plan to execute the dictator, was arrested and they gathered evidence against me. Toni, who had been underground in eastern Cuba came to Havana and spoke with the witnesses and he persuaded them not accuse me. Although the witnesses did not testify against me, I was sentenced to eight years in prison. Along with 13 other women, I was transferred to the jail in Nueva Gerona, Isla de Pinos (Tabares del Real 1973:123). Author's translation*

On September 12, 1932 Calixta was released from the prison because she had “a bad lung” and was exiled to France for over one year (Randall 1974:110). She left for France with her husband<sup>4</sup>, Alberto Ruz (Guiteras Holmes 1984:15) and they did not return to Cuba until September 1933 (Tabares del Real 1973:129). This visit to his original homeland was the first time that Ruz had been back in France for more than five or six years (Ruz Buenfil 2010).

#### *Exiled in France*

Calixta and Ruz were not the only Cubans who went to France during this time. The closing of the University of Havana in 1930, the economic crises, and the harassment of the Machado dictatorship caused many people, including activists to leave the country for Paris.

*In 1932, some three hundred Cubans - the majority of whom were professionals - sought refuge in France, forming a nucleus around a Cuban exile named María Teresa Freyre de Andrade, whose three brothers were assassinated by the machadista police (Herrera 2007:38).*

It was around this time in Paris that Ruz met Julio le Riverend, a meeting which began a fifty-year friendship. Le Riverend would eventually attend school in México City, just as Ruz did, and study anthropology (Le Riverend 1979:167). In 1979, Le Riverend wrote an obituary for Ruz which was published in *Revista de la Biblioteca Nacional José Martí*. After Le Riverend returned to Cuba, he stated that he received

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<sup>4</sup> Even though I found no legal documents that would indicate that Ruz and Calixta were married, Calixta uses the word “husband” in her book.

letters from Ruz. It appears that even at this stage of Ruz's life, he was interested in anthropology. Le Riverend wrote,

*From far away, he wrote me with detailed information on the topic of the "noble savage"; incidentally he had a particular interest in the ancient historiography of eighteenth-century México. Furthermore, he stated that despite the cold and hunger, he purchased books for me that I received and that I now preserve as an imperishable testimony of his friendship (Le Riverend 1979:168). Author's translation*

Ruz returned to Cuba in 1933 (Le Riverend 1979:167) along with Calixta (Tabares del Real 1973:128). The Cuba that Ruz and Calixta were returning to was in a state of revolution. They were in a boat in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean coming home to Cuba when they heard about Fulgencio Batista's coup, otherwise known as the "Sergeants Coup" (Randall 1974:110), which occurred September 5, 1933 (Franklin 1997:13). When Calixta landed, she did not go back to school immediately, but helped her brother who had been appointed Minister of the Interior by the new administration. As she told Margaret Randall in an interview many years later, she worked with her brother "in every way I could" (1974:110), since her brother was continuing to wage his battle against what he saw as U.S. imperialism (Randall 1974).

There were several important events that led up to the "Sergeant's Coup". In July and August of 1933, there had been a general strike that spread throughout the country and then in August, a revolt of Machado's army against him (Suchlicki 1968). That same month, alarmed at the unfolding events, President Roosevelt sent Sumner Welles, the Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, to Cuba as a special envoy. President Gerardo Machado's government was divided and unstable. Welles' mission was to negotiate a settlement between Machado and the unhappy leaders of the revolution. Under the umbrella of the Platt Amendment, a law passed by the United States Congress in 1901 that allowed United States intervention in Cuban affairs, Welles was able to convince Machado to step down and leave the country (Suchlicki 1968:362). Welles installed Carlos Miguel de Céspedes who tried to restore the country to normalcy.

The students saw the Céspedes administration as a puppet of the United States and the Student Directorate opposed him. They also saw him as someone who would slow down the revolution for change (Suchlicki 1968:363).

On September 4, 1933, Sergeant Batista, leading an unhappy group of military members as well as students from the Directorio, conspired to overthrow the Céspedes administration and put into place a *Pentarch* or Executive Committee that would temporarily lead the nation (Suchlicki 1968:364). It was made up of two university professors, a journalist, a banker, and a lawyer. This event marked the day that opened the door for military rule in Cuba. It was the beginning of "...Batista's emergence as the arbiter of Cuba's destiny for years to come" (Suchlicki 1968:364). The Roosevelt administration panicked over the coup and sent 49 warships to Cuba and Key West and did not grant recognition to the five-person rule (Franklin 1997:13; Suchlicki 1968:364).

In addition to being the Secretary of the Interior of the Pentarquía, Antonio Guiteras Holmes was appointed the "governor of Oriente, the province where he was the indisputable leader of the revolutionary forces" (Suchlicki 1968:364). His appointment was a turning point in Cuba's history because at this juncture, the students and the military had teamed up to rule Cuba. However, for many reasons the Pentarquía was unable to maintain its rule (Suchlicki 1968:364) and it fell apart. It was replaced by a government run by Ramón Grau San Martín and Antonio Guiteras Holmes. Dr. Grau San Martín, a doctor and professor of physiology at the University of Havana, became the president of Cuba by acclamation and appointed his cabinet, with Guiteras continuing as Secretary of the Interior (Thomas 1998:650). They began a program of social reform, although they would not be in power long enough to implement it adequately.

The U.S. was opposed to the regime, but it was not the strongest opposition. That came from the Communists as well as from other organized groups and army officers who had lost their jobs in the coup. The government also had unhappy internal factions that made it even more unstable and this opposition was led by student leaders and even

by Antonio Guiteras Holmes himself, who wanted to push the government's social reform even further. He was considered "the real brains behind Grau" (Suchlicki 1968:367). He was liberal, strong and incorruptible, and had much public support, and was popularly known as "the man with only one suit" (*el hombre de un solo traje*). The new government was known as the "Grau-Guiteras coalition" (Thomas 1998:650) and the "Government of One-Hundred Days".

On September 12, 1933, at the age of 26, Guiteras began his duties as Interior Secretary, which eventually would include leadership of the army and navy, and of public works and communications (Tabares del Real 1973:225). He moved into the Hotel Pasaje in downtown Havana soon after taking office and his mother, María T. Holmes moved in with him. It was one or two weeks later that Calixta Guiteras and her husband Alberto Ruz returned from France (Tabares del Real 1973:225).

During the month of September 1933, Ruz was appointed head of the Department of Municipal Affairs by his brother-in-law, Guiteras (Hilton 1945:108-109). According to Alberto III (2010), one of his father's titles was Head of Culture in the Bellas Artes area. "He was never part of the military side of the revolution, always on the cultural side" (Ruz Buenfil 2010).

In November 1933, Antonio Guiteras met Dalia Rodríguez, a student at Secondary School in Havana and a member of the Student Left Wing group. They eventually moved into an apartment together in a building called López Serrano, at 13 and L. Here they stayed until January or February of 1934, along with María Theresa, Calixta Guiteras and Alberto Ruz. The whole family, including María Terese, a housewife, worked toward the revolutionary process, regardless of whether they were on the payroll of a government agency (Tabares del Real 1973:336). Records show that Calixta taught at the Instituto de Matanzas at one time, but had to resign due to its distance from home. After this, she went to work for her brother, the Interior Secretary full-time, doing whatever tasks he assigned her. Alberto Ruz was busy working as an administrator in the Grau-Guiteras

government. Dalia also helped Antonio, fulfilling the tasks given to her by her partner and María Terese did what she could to help (Tabares del Real 1973:335-336). This living arrangement would be the last time that the family would be together because after the fall of the Grau-Guiteras regime, Antonio Guiteras would plunge himself into secrecy and primarily live underground until May 8, 1935 (Tabares del Real 1973:335-336).

In December of 1933, it looked as though the Grau administration was going to collapse and Batista began making plans to take over the government (Suchlicki 1968:368). On January 14, 1934 Batista, a colonel at the time, forced Grau to resign; he then installed a president of his own choosing. The strange coalition between the students and the military was coming to an end. It had lasted four months. After Grau's overthrow, student sentiments escalated into even greater frustration and hopelessness. "Some abandoned their early idealism to find comfort in professional and business ventures. Others departed for foreign lands never to return to their tragic island" (Suchlicki 1968:368).

After the fall of the "Government of a Hundred Days" on January 15, 1934, Antonio failed to receive the salary for the position he had under President Grau and Alberto Ruz was now unemployed. When Antonio left the Secretary of the Interior position, he was in great poverty. The family could no longer afford to live in the López Serrano apartment building, and they moved to more modest accommodations at 38 Jovellar Street on the second floor (Tabares del Real 1973:427). María Terese, Alberto Ruz, his wife<sup>5</sup> Calixta and Dalia Rodriguez took up residence there, but Antonio – trying to escape the persecution of the government – was only there from time to time when he could manage to visit the family. They lived modestly. María Terese received her late husband's pension of \$60.00 a month and that was their only steady income. Calixta was studying, and Dalia, Antonio's partner, was stalked and watched by the authorities. She was

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<sup>5</sup> I have no document or evidence that Ruz and Calixta were married, but Ruz Buenfil said that his father called her his "first wife".

arrested on several occasions, so she could not work regularly, and Alberto Ruz confronted a situation similar to that of Dalia (Tabares del Real 1973:424). However, the next year, in 1934, Ruz was able to finally get work as a teacher. One of the places he taught was at the *Instituto de Segunda Enseñanza*, Matanzas (de León Orozco 1981:52; Hilton 1945:108-109).

### *The End for Antonio*

As stated previously, it was during this time that Antonio Guiteras went into hiding. He miraculously managed to organize a paramilitary group with numbers as high as six hundred (Halperin 1972:10). According to *Time Magazine* (Time Magazine May 20, 1935), Batista was hunting him down due to three alleged crimes: “1) the shooting of a treacherous colleague, 2) the kidnapping of a rich Cuban idler for the fabulous ransom of \$300,000, and 3) the engineering of the unsuccessful general strike of two months ago”. The \$300,000 that his “*Joven Cuba*” organization<sup>6</sup> extorted was intended for a planned invasion originating from México into Cuba. Their vision was to eventually ignite a Cuban revolt of the people, but neither the invasion nor the internal revolt took place (Halperin 1972:10).

Those plans came to an end when Guiteras and several of his conspirators died in a gun battle with Batista’s army on May 8, 1935 at the abandoned Spanish Fort Morrill in the Valley of Matanzas. He was waiting there for a boat that was to take him and his companions across to México where he would seek asylum and continue making plans for an invasion of Cuba (Halperin 1972:10). Ruz and Calixta, who were in prison at the time of the shooting (Ignacio Taibo II 2008:419), were subsequently given two choices by the Batista government - death or exile. They decided to leave Cuba and seek a new life in México (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Terese went with them; that was in 1935.

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<sup>6</sup> This group, created by Guiteras was one of many violent factions formed in Cuba at this time (Thomas 1971:695). It was party with extremely nationalistic and socialistic tendencies.

They arrived during the administration of the liberal Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940), who is considered the most populist/socialist president ever to have held that office (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Among other actions, he nationalized the oil industry and the railroad. He opened México's borders to many revolutionaries from all over the world, welcoming people from Nicaragua, Cuba, and Russia. He admitted those from Spain who were escaping the Spanish Civil War, as well as Jews wanting to leave Germany (Schreiber 2008:1).

Word spread that México City was the best place to go and many of these people came to live in the borough of Coyoacán, a long-time magnet for the artistic and creative (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Although I have found no evidence that he lived there in that neighborhood, Alberto Ruz was part of an exiled group of cultural intellectuals and artists (Ruz Buenfil 2010), as evidenced by his membership in the Liga de Escritores y Artistas Revolucionarios (LEAR). It was organized by Leopold Méndez, David Siqueiros, Diego Rivera, Pablo O'Higgins, Juan de la Cabada and Luis Arenal in 1933 (Caplow 2007:93). They saw themselves as advocates for the working class and as fighters against fascism in México and world-wide. Interestingly, LEAR was closely associated with the Mexican Communist Party, although it did not require its members to be communist. The magazine *Frente a Frente* was the main voice of LEAR. It was published from 1934 to 1938 and was used to criticize the status quo in Mexican art (Barrera 1999:176). As LEAR grew and evolved, it eventually included the vast majority of the avant-garde of México City and Alberto Ruz's name appears on its membership list (Barrera 1999:176; Caplow 2007:93). Well-known artists such as Diego Rivera, Bretón, Tina Modotti, Miguel Covarrubias, Alfredo Zalca, and Frida Kahlo were all members of this league. This is also the time when Ruz joined the Mexican Communist Party (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Later, Miguel Covarrubias, whom Ruz may have met at a LEAR gathering, would become an important force in securing the funding for Ruz's excavations at Palenque during the 1950's.

Even though Ruz had entered México as a Cuban refugee, his accent was French. While Ruz was in jail in Cuba, a fellow inmate drew a cartoon of him and labeled it "the Frenchie", an indication of how he was perceived by others at that time in Cuba (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Even though Ruz was considered French in Cuba, in México he was considered Cuban and French, so he was always a foreigner in some form or fashion. Perhaps this motivated him to try even harder at everything he attempted, hoping to fit in and be accepted. Alberto III states that "there was always some certain amount of nationalistic, chauvinistic jealousy toward my father. Some of it was political and his nationality was an easy target of criticism" (Ruz Buenfil 2010). On September 3, 1940, Ruz became a nationalized Mexican (Bertrán 2002a; García Moll 2007) and from that time forward strongly identified himself as Mexican (Servin Palencia 1981:10).

### **RUZ AT THE ESCUELA NACIONAL**

The association he had with many artists, historians, intellectuals and writers was Ruz's introduction to México's history and it deepened his interest in México's ancient art (Ruz Buenfil 2010). In order to support himself during this time, Ruz worked as a teacher. From 1936 to 1940 he taught secondary and preparatory education in México City<sup>7</sup> (de León Orozco 1981:52; Hilton 1945:108-109). Ruz traveled throughout México and found that he was fascinated with its antiquities and its monumental architecture. César Sáenz, a man who, in addition to being a classmate, would eventually work for Ruz during the 1950's in the Palenque excavations, remembered that Ruz also taught French courses<sup>8</sup> at the School of Anthropology. Sáenz stated that while Ruz was teaching at the school, he became interested in enrolling as a student of archeology (Gallegos 1997:17). In 1938, he enrolled in the Departamento de Antropología de la Escuela Nacional de Ciencias Biológicas del Politécnico, which had only been formed one year earlier in 1937

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<sup>7</sup> According to Ana Luisa Izquierdo, Ruz had been licensed as a teacher in France (personal communication 2011).

<sup>8</sup> In *Who's Who in Latin America Part 1: México*, published in 1945 Ruz is listed as having held a teaching position at the Escuela Nacional de Antropología since 1939 (pages 108-109).

(de León Orozco 1981:50). "When the new school was created, he decided that this was the place to be because then if he wanted to know the roots of this culture, this was it" (Ruz Buenfil 2010).

Two months after he enrolled, all the anthropology students were moved to the Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia (ENAH), where the best qualified anthropology professors were teaching. Among these were Alfonso Caso, Enrique Juan Palacios, Ignacio Marquina and Daniel Rubín de la Borbolla (Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1987, 1992). The creation of this school meant that "No longer would a few Europeans and Americans - and they were valuable investigators - dictate to the world what was known of distant México" (Le Riverend 1979:167). Trained Mexican archaeologists would now be able to advance the understanding of México's past. The school received the attention of the North Americans as evidenced by a \$20,000 education grant given to INAH (The Rockefeller Foundation 1940:58). These funds were to be spread over a three-year period of time and were to be used for recruiting and educating archaeologist and anthropologists. The 1940 annual report states "Under the direction of Dr. Alfonso Caso, and with the aid of visiting scholars and fellows from North and Central America, this Institute is conducting a promising program of teaching and research in archaeology, anthropology, ethnology, and history" (The Rockefeller Foundation 1940:58). Both Ruz and Sáenz, among others were recipients of these funds (Gallegos Ruiz 1997:17)

In 1937, approximately two years after arriving in México, Calixta and Ruz decided to separate (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Very soon after entering ENAH in 1938, he married Silvia Rendón. There does not seem to be a published record regarding how long this marriage lasted, although Alberto III stated that "it didn't last very long" (2010). Many years later, Silvia would become a prominent Maya anthropologist and then marry the Mayanist, Alfredo Barrera Vásquez, a Mexican historian, linguist and anthropologist. Together they wrote *El Libro de los Libros de Chilam Balam* (Barrera Vásquez and Rendón 1948).

When Calixta emigrated to México from Cuba, it was with the idea that she would one day return to Cuba “when the uprising came” (Randall 1974:112). After she and Ruz arrived in México, she got a job teaching English, since she was fluent in both English and Spanish. In 1939 she entered the Department of Anthropology at ENAH and was part of the second generation of anthropology students to graduate from that school (Castro and Jimeno 2005; Guiteras Holmes 1984:15; Randall 1974). Ruz, Calixta and Silvia were all in the school of anthropology, so they were classmates. In other words, “he was studying with his wife and his ex-wife” (Ruz Buenfil 2010).

Upon graduating from ENAH, Calixta conducted fieldwork in Chiapas, México where she interviewed residents of the Maya village of San Pedro Chenalho. During this time, she stayed at the home of archeologist Frans Blom and his wife, Gertrude Duby (Ruz Buenfil 2010) in Casa Na Bolom in San Cristóbal de las Casas. Using this research, she wrote *Perils of the Soul* (1961), which became the most prominent Maya anthropology book of that period. According to a review by Evon Z. Vogt, “she was able to collect the richest data on belief systems that have so far been published on the Tzotzil-Tzeltal communities of Highland Chiapas” (Vogt 1962:649).

Calixta stayed in México for 27 years. She and Ruz remained friends for both their lifetimes. Even after Ruz had established a family in Yucatán with two children, both Ruz and his wife Blanca Buenfil Blengio welcomed Calixta into their home as a family member (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Calixta returned to Cuba permanently in 1960 (Randall 1974:112). When Alberto III and his partner Gerda Hasnberg Torres visited Cuba for a little over one year in 1967, Calixta hosted them in her home during their entire visit (Ruz Buenfil 2010).

In 1940, Ruz joined the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH). He would serve ten years as the Southeast Director of Prehispanic Monuments (Izquierdo 1992). He was characterized by Michael Coe as being “among the brightest of the younger generation of Mexican archaeologists” (1999:194). One of his classmates, César

Sáenz informed Gallegos (1997) that during his enrollment at this school, Ruz had been distinguished by his “dedication”. By 1942, the school had officially become known as “The National School of Anthropology and History” (ENAH). It is still functioning today and is governed by the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH). It offers degrees in social anthropology, ethnology, physical anthropology, linguistics and archaeology and it has been the flagship of Mexican archaeology schools (García-Barcena 2007:26). Ruz graduated with his first degree in anthropology from ENAH in 1942 (Hilton 1945:108-109).

Even though Ruz would eventually become a world-renowned Mayanist, it appears that at one time he had plans to study a different culture. In a letter written to J. Alden Mason (1942), the curator of the University of Pennsylvania Museum, Ruz explained that he had just finished his archaeological studies and his internship and was in the process of writing his professional thesis, *Horizontes Estratigráficos en La Quemada, Chalchihuites y al Zape*.<sup>9</sup> He asked Mason for sources of written information for these locations because Mason had worked in Northern México.

#### CAMPECHE AND YUCATÁN

In 1943, Ruz began archaeological work on the coast as Director of Archaeological Investigations in Campeche – his first position as an INAH employee (Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1992:34). He was based in the city of Campeche. This was his first contact with archaeological material from the ancient Maya culture. From March to May of 1943, he explored Edzna, another Maya site in the region, with the help of Raúl Pavón Abreu, the director of the site museum. He and Pavón became very good friends and through Pavón he met the governor of Campeche, Héctor Pérez Martínez (Ruz Buenfil 2010). He met his future wife, Blanca in the governor’s office.

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<sup>9</sup> El Zape is in the Mexican state of Durango. There is no evidence that Ruz ever wrote this document, since his thesis was about the prehispanic coast of Campeche.

Blanca Alicia Buenfil Blengio was born in 1917 in Campeche. Her father was a lawyer and was part of the Mexican Revolution, not as a foot soldier, but a member of the Campeche *intelligentsia* who worked to free México from the twenty-six year regime of Porfirio Díaz (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Blanca had two siblings and she lived in Campeche until she was age sixteen or seventeen. She had rather revolutionary ideas for her time, because she wanted to work and to better herself, unlike many women of her generation in México (Ruz Buenfil 2010). She was inspired by the twentieth-century French existentialist philosopher, writer and feminist, Simone de Beauvoir, who in the late 1940's was little-known; however her ideas would eventually help shape many of the concepts and arguments of post-1968 feminism (Grosholz 2004). According to Alberto III (2010), Blanca's father was appointed to the Supreme Court of Justice in Campeche, so they moved to México City. After two years they returned to Campeche and then her uncle, Héctor Pérez Martínez was elected governor of the state. Blanca had a very close relationship with him and shared his desire to improve Campeche. She worked for him as his secretary. She was twenty-five or twenty-six years old at the time and still single, since she had not found the right man - a situation that made her an "old maid" in the eyes of most Mexicans. She was not college educated, but had very modern, radical and non-conformist ideas, something that distinguished her from her Mexican peers and those in the broader world (Ruz Buenfil 2010). With affection and humor, Alberto III told me that when his father met his mother, his father was "a communist (or ex-communist), twice divorced, French, tall, handsome, with blue eyes, long hair, a pirate, and a pre-hippie revolutionary, and obviously my mother was just waiting for this kind of guy." Blanca and Ruz became acquainted with each other and within two or three months, they knew that the match was right. They married in Campeche in 1943 (Ruz Buenfil 2010).

Alberto III recalls that his parents honeymooned at Edzna, the site where his father was working at the time. During his tenure in Campeche, Ruz conducted a survey of the Campeche Coast from the Laguna de Términos. He investigated five sites - Xicalango,

los Guarixes (Isla del Carmen), Tixchel (on the Sabancuy inlet), Champotón, and the city of Campeche (Andrews 1971:424).

In the introduction to his master's thesis published in 1969, called *La Costa de Campeche en los Tiempos Prehispánicos: Prospección Cerámica y Bosquejo Histórico* he describes the scope of his project in Campeche:

*The work carried out on the coast lasted about two months. Examination of the material, its classification, tabulation, drawings and photos of pottery, the making of plans and maps, required 8 months. The study of comparative material, the review of historical sources, the preparation and drafting of this document took another 8 months. Not only was all of this information taken into account, but I also studied the ceramics found in the museums in Campeche and Mérida, such as in the museum known as "The Chaos" in Ciudad del Carmen; the collection of Dr. Enrique Campos, also from the same city; the collection Regil in Mérida; and the abundant material collected by the Carnegie Institution at Chichén Itzá. Other site material found in northern Yucatán and the Puuc - material that was studied in part by Henry Roberts and later by George Brainerd. We also examined ceramics from Edzna that were collected by workers the year before last (1969:9).  
Author's translation*

He did not explore Jaina<sup>10</sup>, but instead made an exhaustive study of the material from the site that was deposited in the museum of Campeche and that was found by Pavón. Ruz also used ethnohistorical and ethnographic sources for his investigations, such as documents of the Spanish conquistadors, Catholic priests, and indigenous sources (Ruz Lhuillier 1969). He wrote that Mr. Pavón Abreu, the Director of the Campeche Museum, was of great assistance. As will be the custom in his future works, Ruz admirably gives credit to a long list of people who helped him, even his teachers at ENAH and those from the Carnegie Institution of Washington. This is also where he thanked Blanca Buenfil, who typed the draft of his thesis, presumably before they were married (Ruz Lhuillier 1969:11).

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<sup>10</sup> Jaina is an island located very near the mouth of the Laguna de Términos

Ruz graduated from ENAH in 1945 and attained the distinction of being the first person with the official professional title of "archaeologist" (Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1992:33). He was one of many professionals that would follow. During Ruz's time at the university, Caso was the teacher who had the greatest impact on him and upon his career. He took Ruz with him to Monte Albán and Ruz learned how to conduct scientific research from his example (Ruz Lhuillier 1973a:366). Caso excavated at Monte Albán from 1931 to 1943 (Leon-Portilla 1973:877) and Ruz was there for two seasons.

In November 1945 Ruz took and passed his professional examination at ENAH, and in conjunction with this, submitted the paper *La Costa de Campeche en los Tiempos Prehispánicos: Prospección Cerámica y Bosquejo Histórico* (Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1992:33). From 1945 to 1946 Ruz earned the title "Arqueólogo C" (Bonifaz Nuño 1981:51) and in 1947 he was able to add the title "Arqueólogo A" to his name (Bonifaz Nuño 1981:51). Others in his graduating class were Eusebio Dávalos Hurtado<sup>11</sup> who specialized in physical anthropology, and Pedro Carrasco Pizana who studied ethnology. With the exception of Miguel Ángel Fernández, who was taught by Manuel Gamio, Alberto Ruz was the first professionally trained INAH archaeologist to work in the Maya area, a geographic locale that for many decades was investigated by foreigners.

According to Ana Luisa Izquierdo (1987), the professionalism and the institutionalization of archeology in México began with the graduation of Ruz. Before Ruz, Mexicans did not have the opportunity to gain a comprehensive archaeological education. For instance, Caso was a lawyer, and Reygadas Vertiz and Enrique Juan Palacios were engineers. Lizardi Ramos had a simple Bachelor of Science. Miguel Gamio was the only one with training in archaeology and he had gotten it from Columbia University when he studied with Franz Boas (Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1987:16-17).

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<sup>11</sup> Dávalos will be an important person for Ruz in the future. He was present when Ruz opened the tomb and coauthored the draft technical paper where it was stated that the bones of the occupant were most likely the bones of a man in his 40's. Dávalos became director of INAH in 1956 (Durán Solís 1988:630)

## THE BIRTH OF HIS FIRST CHILD AND HIS STUDIES IN PARIS

In 1945 Ruz received word that he would be given a scholarship from the Dirección Cultural del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, through the Instituto Francés de América Latina: Francia (de León Orozco 1981:51). At the time of notification, Ruz was in Campeche with his new wife, Blanca who was pregnant with their first child. In France, Ruz took courses at three different institutions. One was a course in “American Origins” at d'Etnographie Institute, which was under the Musée de l'Homme<sup>12</sup>. At the Ecole du Louvre Ruz took a course in Indochinese and East Indian Champa art, and at the Ecole du Langues Orientales he took a class in the history of China and Japan (García Moll 2007:9-10; Ochoa 1981:396). This training broadened his understanding of ancient art world-wide and gave him a special perspective that he used later to gain an understanding of ancient Maya art and architecture. In June or July 1945, the Ruz family traveled to México City and on September 11, 1945, Alberto III (2010) was born there. In November 1945 the family traveled to France. Eusebio Dávalos Hurtado, another recipient of the same fellowship and also a first graduate from ENAH went with them (de León Orozco 1981:51; Ruz Buenfil 2010). There was no public air travel at that time, so they took an ocean liner across the Atlantic. The ship was called the "L'Ile de France" (Ruz Buenfil 2010).

World War II had just ended in Europe and its people were struggling to meet their basic needs, so Blanca brought a large trunk with her, filled with all the things that they would need while in Paris (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Ruz's father had died in 1936 in Saint-Antonine d'Auberoche, Dordogne (Estrade 2001:411), but his mother, Louisa – known affectionately as “Meme” – was still living in Paris and they went to live with her for one and one-half years (Ruz Buenfil 2010). During this time, Blanca learned to speak French

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<sup>12</sup> The establishment of this museum in 1938 was a significant development for the support of sciences in France. It was begun by Paul Rivet, Marcel Mauss and their students, who wanted basic changes in the manner in which people in France studied human culture (Conklin 2002:256).

from her mother-in-law. Ruz's two sisters, Susanne and Lily, were also in Paris, as was Ruz's brother Michel<sup>13</sup>. In 1946, while in Paris, Ruz became a member of the French Society of Americanists (Becquelin 1982:7). That same year, they returned from France and Blanca was now pregnant with their second child, Jorge, who was born May 1947 (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Academically, the last three years - from 1943 to 1946 – were extremely productive for Ruz. In addition to his excavation work, he published and submitted ten articles and many INAH archaeological reports, writing on subjects that ranged from the archaeology of Campeche and Tula to Mayan languages, ancient writing, and his philosophy regarding the role of the archaeologist.

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<sup>13</sup> During the 1950's excavations at Palenque, Ruz's brother, Michel worked with at the site with him and also taught French classes in the village of Palenque (Ruz Buenfil 2010).

## Chapter 4: Family Life

In 1947, Ruz began to work at Uxmal, but he and the family lived in Mérida. The next year, Blanca started working full-time at the INAH Mérida office with her husband<sup>1</sup>. According to César Sáenz (1916-1998), that office was located on Pasaje Revolución Street (Gallegos Ruiz 1997:23). At that time, Alberto III, Ruz's eldest son was approximately three years old and Jorge was one year. While Blanca worked, the boys were cared for at home very well by Maya young ladies who were primarily the daughters of Ruz's excavation workers. The girls spoke Maya, not Spanish, so when they taught the boys songs and stories, the boys learned them in Maya. Those accounts were fanciful and imaginative constructions about the world of the Maya. Alberto III recalls, "I grew up listening to stories about *aluxes*, *adivinos*, *duendes*, and La Llorona<sup>2</sup>, learning from the Mayan people through their songs and stories" (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Meanwhile, his mom was busy organizing artifacts for the local museums and proofing Ruz's publications. She also hired and managed the office personnel and excavation workers. It was Blanca's responsibility to organize the working teams<sup>3</sup> and get them to the archaeology sites. She hired masons and carpenters and then sent them by train from Mérida, along with needed supplies such as cement, food, tools and other materials.

According to Alberto III, when his father began working at Palenque in 1949, the entire family would habitually go there by train at the beginning of each season. Sometimes their father would leave earlier, so he was frequently already at Palenque waiting for the family and the supplies to arrive. Again, Blanca played an important, but for the most part, unacknowledged role in her husband's excavation work and his publications. I have noted a few of her duties above, but there were more. In brief, I

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<sup>1</sup> I do not know what her official title was, but she was able to work full-time after she stopped breastfeeding baby Jorge.

<sup>2</sup> These words are all references to ghosts, goblins, spirits, as well as to a legend about "the weeping woman".

<sup>3</sup> Gallegos quotes Sáenz when he wrote that most of these workers were from Muna, Yucatán (Gallegos 1997:24).

believe that the assistance she rendered give us an understanding about how Ruz was able to accomplish so much at Palenque and still work at the other sites during the 1950's. He delegated the administrative and organizational work to his willing, able and trusted spouse. In this manner, he could concentrate his efforts on what he was trained to do – gather and analyze data, supervise the scientific excavations, consolidate and conserve the architecture and document what he found.

I have read accounts by Ruz's friends who have characterized his personality as austere, strictly disciplined and serious, although he did enjoy telling jokes if the situation was right (Bertrán 2002; Ochoa 1988). Merle Green Robertson described him as serious and stubborn (personal communication 2010). Since Blanca was much better at human relations than her husband, she easily took over that responsibility (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Before she met Ruz, she had been a secretary, so she was a skilled typist. Since Alberto Ruz was born and raised in France, Spanish was not his native language, however Blanca was a Mexican from birth, and she had a much better command of written Spanish than he (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Blanca typed and edited all of Ruz's reports. Throughout their married life, each time Ruz drafted his book or manuscripts she helped him by editing them. She was also the editor for articles that they compiled and published in the professional journal *Estudios de Cultura Maya* for the Center for Maya Studies at UNAM.

Since she had experience as a Mexican state government worker, she knew the importance of proper administration and understood the need for completing and filing paperwork, so she also handled that part of the project. She did all this and yet made time for her motherly duties such as taking the boys to parties, to dances and various family gatherings such as weddings, birthday parties and anniversaries.

#### *Relationships with Family*

According to Alberto III, the family lived happily in Mérida from the years 1947 to 1959. He remembered those years as the happiest of his life. His dad took him everywhere with him and encouraged him in many happy pursuits such as stamp and

coin-collecting. His father was skilled at weaving stories, so as a child, Alberto III heard the chronicles of their family history and these accounts were strongly inspirational for him. “He motivated me very much by the tales of his life and our family, so that was a very strong source of inspiration for me – the stories my father told me”<sup>4</sup>.

Alberto III had a keen interest in learning about other parts of the world and his dad gave him books that were set in other countries. Books by authors such as Jules Verne, James Fenimore Cooper, Robert Louis Stevenson, Mark Twain, and Emilio Salgari were among Alberto III’s favorites. Since he was present at his father’s excavations, Alberto III felt privileged and lucky at having his own vivid and animated stories to tell about his travels, and thus was able to greatly impress his playmates.

He recalled “the games of baseball and croquet in Mérida, the beach house in Chickchulub<sup>5</sup> [sic] and the outings in their small boat *Saeta*” (Ruz Buenfil 1991:xx). The family enjoyed games of chess and cricket. Half of Ruz’s work-year was spent conducting excavations at Mexican archaeological sites and the other half was spent at home with the family. He read books with his sons and helped to guide the boys in their choice of literature. Their father had a very large library that included many topics with titles in Spanish, French and English.

Alberto III also told me that he had always been considered the model child by his parents and their friends. He was good at sports as well as everything else in school, and all his friends’ parents loved him. On the other hand, his brother Jorge was the “odd man out”. Jorge’s talents were primarily in art and sports and as a child he felt as if he did not fit into the family. He was considered the rebel of the house (Ruz Buenfil 2010), a label

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<sup>4</sup> After Ruz’s discovery of the secret chamber and its tomb in the Temple of the Inscriptions, México and the world discovered Ruz’s great talent for communication and story-telling as he recounted events surrounding the discover over and over again. The journalist Antonio Bertrán (2002) wrote that Ruz’s friends called him “The Hitchcock of Archaeology” because, like the English filmmaker and producer Alfred Hitchcock, he knew how to keep the audience in suspense until the very end of the story.

<sup>5</sup> This is the name of a town in Yucatán that derives its name from a crater called “Chicxulub”. The crater most likely was created during the Cretaceous Period, roughly 65 million years ago.

that would eventually be given to Alberto III in his early adult years. Since Jorge's behavior was so different from the rest of the family, Alberto III teased him unfairly about being adopted, a practice that so many big brothers have perpetrated upon their younger siblings throughout the centuries.

*Family, Food and Entertaining*

The Ruz family would often entertain their extended family members and friends who stayed overnight at their house in Mérida and at the beach house. Alberto III remembers rows and rows of hammocks<sup>6</sup> strung from the rafters at the beach house. Their homes, both in Mérida and Chicxulub, were often bustling with visitors, family and friends. His dad's guests were primarily from México City and the United States<sup>7</sup>. Alberto III recalled that periodically, his dad would have informal sessions at his home "with his archaeologist friends on what my dad jokingly called their 'black archeological mess.'"<sup>8</sup> It was in this venue that they were able to share information, rumors, stories and work plans, all mixed with beer or rum with coke or Xtabentun<sup>9</sup> and a lot of laughter"<sup>10</sup> (Alberto III, personal communication). Even though they entertained many people, Alberto III told me that he never witnessed either of his parents consume alcohol to the point of intoxication, nor did he ever see them argue. Blanca's social circles were primarily close friends from Mérida and her extended family from Campeche. Alberto III

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<sup>6</sup> In Yucatán, it is common for residents to sleep in hammocks.

<sup>7</sup> Ruz recalled one of Sylvanus Morley's visits to his home where Morley requested that Blanca prepare her delicious Campeche dish, "*pámpanos en 'poc' chuc*" which was one of Morley's favorites (Ruz 1950:114).

<sup>8</sup> I do not know what Alberto III was referring to when he told me this, but I suspect that it had to do with the politics of Mexican archaeology.

<sup>9</sup> This substance is a Maya liqueur made from honey and anise.

<sup>10</sup> In turn, Ruz would visit the home of his friends, one of which was José Servin Palencia. Servin recalled that Ruz and many other archaeologists would gather at Servin's house to watch slides, listen to classical music, drink glasses of cognac and discuss "artistic themes of Ancient México" (Servin Palencia 1981:11).

stated that for a reason unknown to him, this large group of family members was called "Los Chulines".

Each night before retiring, Ruz loved to have a very hot cup of what he termed "mi chocolatito". Among his favorite foods were fish and seafood. He enjoyed going fishing in their little boat at the beach, returning home with a fresh catch that would be made into a meal for family and friends to enjoy. Alberto III remembers that when they moved to México City in 1959, every weekend they would go to the seafood market and buy large sacks of oysters. Sundays were spent at home, opening oyster shells and listening to the French singer, Edith Piaf, the music of Russian composer, Rachmaninoff, renditions of *Misa Criolla*<sup>11</sup> or *Misa Africana*, Mireille Mathieu<sup>12</sup>, and George Brassens<sup>13</sup>.

Some of the family's favorite dishes prepared by Blanca were "*Gigot roti con pommes frites*"<sup>14</sup>, but she also cooked Yucatecan food such as *relleno negro*, *cochinilla pibil*, *pámpanos en poc chuc*, *chaya tamales*, *queso relleno*, and *pollo pibil*. A favorite of the boys was *frijoles con puerco y plátanos fritos con arroz*.

#### *A Life of Travel*

It was in the year 1952 when Alberto Ruz discovered the tomb in the Temple of the Inscriptions. Alberto III told me that he and his brother were probably the first children to step down into the tomb. This event gave the seven-year-old Alberto III more stories to share with his friends (Ruz Buenfil 2010). The most significant change for the family, after the discovery of the tomb, was the opportunity for the entire family to travel abroad. The tomb discovery and its publicity brought new and wonderful possibilities into their

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<sup>11</sup> The term "Misa" is translated as "mass" in Spanish and is applied to the indigenous practice of transforming the traditional Catholic mass into local rhythms and instruments, thus altering it so that it blends with the people's own traditions.

<sup>12</sup> Alberto III remembered that Mathieu was also a favorite of his father's during the 1960's. She was a French singer and songwriter of popular music.

<sup>13</sup> Brassens was a French singer and songwriter who lived from 1921-1981.

<sup>14</sup> *Gigot roti con pommes frites* is a French lamb dish.

lives, recalls Alberto III, including travel abroad for the whole family. Their father received many speaking engagements, honors and invitations from governments of different countries, such as France, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Brazil, and the U.S.

But in the U.S, the early 1950's were a time of McCarthyism, anticommunism and cold war paranoia (Hare 2008). According to Alberto III, because of this anticommunist mood, his father thought that he was not going to be well-liked in the states, since he had been a documented member of the communist party both in Cuba and México (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Julio Le Riverend Brusone a friend from Cuba who wrote one of Ruz' obituaries, stated that the cold war and McCarthyism climate reminded Ruz "...of the feverish enthusiasm and extraordinary evil of the times of Urban II<sup>15</sup> and Frederick Barbarossa when Christianity was preparing to rescue the Holy Sepulcher from the East infidels" (Le Riverend 1979:168). Perhaps this unsubstantiated but perceived American "dislike" of him was simply speculation on the part of the elder Ruz, and even stemmed from the fact that Ruz had strong anti-American and anti-*yanqui* sentiments that dated back to his experiences in colonial Cuba where he had witnessed U.S. aggression<sup>16</sup>. All his life, even when he was growing up in France, prior to living in Cuba, he was strongly against imperialistic governments (Ruz Buenfil 2010). On the other hand, at this point in his career, most of his anthropologist colleagues were from North American institutions, including friends such as the archaeologists Sylvanus Morley and Eric Thompson of the Carnegie Institution of Washington; ethnographer and archaeologist, Frans Blom of Tulane University; archaeologist and museum curator Gordon Ekholm of the American Museum of Natural History; ethnographer and anthropologist Evon Vogt of Harvard University and many more (Ruz Buenfil 2010)<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> Pope Urban II is sometimes given the credit of initiating the Crusades with a speech he gave in 1095. He ruled from 1088 – 1099 (Munro 1906)

<sup>16</sup> Refer to Chapter 3 of this document for further information about this stage of Ruz's life.

<sup>17</sup> Still, there is some evidence that Ruz harbored resentment toward the U.S. university and scientific systems and its ability to churn out students when he wrote that they "pour a material worthy of a better fate into a monstrous mold [...]"

Each of these friends was welcomed into the Ruz home as overnight guests. Therefore, when the Ruz family went to the United States, they were always happily accommodated in the houses of these same friends<sup>18</sup>. Thus Alberto III and Jorge became acquainted with the children of each visited household. Alberto III began to understand and appreciate the differences between geographic regions of the United States and within North American culture as a whole. Instead of visiting the usual tourist attractions, their parents took the boys to anthropology and art museums. On occasions when they were able to stay in the U.S. longer, Alberto III and Jorge would visit the schools of their young friends where they would learn even more. It slowly dawned upon Alberto III that the capitalist monster from the north that his father had told him about in the past was not such a terrible monster after all and that there were “people inside the monster, who were both friendly and respectful of cultural differences” (Ruz Buenfil 2010).

But the family was also exposed to the darker side of U.S. society during the 1950’s, before the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Alberto III described what he saw as an Apartheid society with segregated buses, restaurants, beaches and rest rooms. His parents reacted to the segregation with an extreme sense of indignation at the treatment of African-Americans. He told me “My mother was a freedom rider before they existed. When she would get on the bus and see that it was segregated, she went to sit immediately in the part of the bus where the black people were sitting and she got into trouble right away”(Ruz Buenfil 2010).

### *Life at Palenque*

Alberto III enjoyed the summer expeditions with his dad to Chichén Itzá, Uxmal, Dzibilchaltun and Palenque. Since Ruz brought his whole family to Palenque during the

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but it is certain that sooner or later the best will become so large that it will burst the system" (Le Riverend 1979:168). Le Riverend does not reference exactly where and when Ruz made this statement.

<sup>18</sup> One of the homes that the Ruz family visited was that of Barbara and Robert Rands when Ruz would lecture at the University of Mississippi (Mendez 2003).

excavation season, they needed a place to stay and this made it important to have a good camp house at the site<sup>19</sup>. The Palenque camp was primitive, but Alberto and Blanca Ruz tried their best to create a family atmosphere among the crew (Thompson 1970:14), which is not an easy task considering the isolation, depravation and friction that is experienced in an archaeological camp in the hot humid jungle. Eric Thompson, who worked for Ruz as an epigrapher, described a memory from one of his visits to the site. He said that the homey family atmosphere with friendly and playful discussions was most apparent during mealtime, when they would all sit around a long table that was sheltered by a shed (Thompson 1970). Two long benches were placed on either side of the table, with Ruz at one end, at the head.

There was abundant wildlife at the camp, including a few jaguars and many snakes (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Alberto III told me that he and his brother grew up very free and independent in a jungle paradise until they were thirteen or fourteen-years old (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Even at the house in Mérida and the beach house, they were able to “run wild”.

In an interview with the journalist Sergio Ortiz (2004), Jorge Ruz Buenfil remembered that the first time that he came to Palenque from México City with his mother it took more than 22 hours to get there. The very last part of the trip was always on horseback. He related that during the 1950's the site was very muddy with tents set up everywhere, much like the “wild settlements of the Yukon Territory gold rush days” (Ortiz 2004:11). His brother Alberto III related that it was their dad that gave them their first jobs. Jorge, a gifted artist, copied the carved hieroglyphs and painted murals they found at the site. Alberto III enjoyed carrying stones and helped conserve the Temple of the Inscriptions. He washed and classified pottery and bones, putting some of the broken pieces back together. He helped mix the cement and sand used to build the new permanent camp and museum.

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<sup>19</sup> The existing dilapidated camp house is described at length in Chapter 5.

Many of those memories are shared in a 1979 letter that Alberto III wrote, soon after his father's unexpected death due to a heart attack<sup>20</sup>. It was a letter written directly to his dad and he affectionately remembered his dad's presence as he guided him while he worked. He wrote "Always you were there – my biggest hero, my best teacher, my most demanding tutor, my most loving and patient father" (Ruz Buenfil 1991:xx).

### *The Ruz Family Nationality*

I think that Ruz was very sensitive to his mixed nationality – a combination of Cuban, French and Mexican – and it was always somewhere present in his mind, but in the final analysis, I believe that he and his children strongly felt a Mexican identity. In the UNAM volume called *Homenaje a Alberto Ruz Lhuillier (1906-1979)* Servin Palencia<sup>21</sup> related one of his memories about Ruz and this issue. They first met in about the year 1949 through a mutual friend, the physical anthropologist, Dávalos Hurtado (1981)<sup>22</sup>. Dávalos told Servin about his friendship with Ruz and the unforgettable time that they enjoyed while they studied together in Paris. Dávalos had recommended that Servin meet with Ruz because he could help him get acquainted with the archaeological sites in the Maya area.

*Contrary to the predictions that some of my friends made about the character, temperament and methods of Alberto Ruz, especially regarding his rigorous compliance with rules and regulations, I got to know an individual who was sympathetic and friendly, cordial and cooperative, one who went out of his way to show my wife and me the colonial attractions of Mérida, at which time he had become an adopted citizen" (Servin Palencia 1981:9). Author's translation*

Ruz gave Servin a tour of Maya sites with Servin at the wheel of a dilapidated pickup truck. Jorge and Alberto III were in the back. Servin asked Ruz about his very pleasant,

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<sup>20</sup> The text of that letter can be seen in Appendix C.

<sup>21</sup> Jose Servin Palencia was a Mexican historian and a long-time friend of Ruz's.

<sup>22</sup> Dávalos was a classmate of Ruz's and was also the man who received a scholarship to study in France at the same time as Ruz. In addition, Dávalos was one of the two physical anthropologists who assessed the age of the person in the sumptuous tomb Ruz discovered, pronouncing the man as most likely being between 40 and 50 years of age.

guttural French accent. Then he followed up that question by disclosing that he himself had been born in France and still considered his first language to be French, even though a good part of his cultural identification was now Mexican. He said to Ruz, "I have Mexican citizenship. I feel, indeed like a son of this city (Mérida) and yes, how well they have treated me. And now I ask the question of you" (Servin Palencia 1981:10). Ruz understood what he was asking. "What am I?" he said. Servin wrote,

*Jokingly I answered, "You are ... a League of Nations". "Agreed" he answered "But in truth" and what he said was with great sincerity, "I feel Mexican." His boys were in the back of the truck, playing and acting up as Alberto quietly said to me, "Ask my children and see what their response might be (Servin Palencia 1981:10)" Author's translation*

When the question was posed to the boys, their response was immediate and united as if in a choir, "We are Mexicans!"

## Chapter 5: Dreams and Planning for the Excavations

### RUZ' FIRST VISIT TO PALENQUE

Ruz' first official visit to Palenque was in March 1947. He was forty-one years old. He filed a report with C. Eduardo Noguera, who at the time was the Director of Pre-Hispanic Monuments at the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH). According to the report, he was sent to Palenque to investigate a complaint filed by C. Joaquín Hernández Palacios, the Postmaster for Palenque. Hernández contended that Agustín Álvarez and his family, who were the guardians of the site, were not doing their job and that the ruins were being destroyed, neglected, and not being maintained (Ruz Lhuillier 2007).

This event took place at a time when the site was very isolated, since there were no good roads into the town or into the ruins. This isolation meant that Ruz' journey to the zone would be a long and complicated one. He left Mérida on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March and didn't arrive at the site until the 15<sup>th</sup>, four days later. The first leg of his journey was a bus trip from Mérida to Campeche, and then he went by train to Tenosique. From there he took a chiclero plane to the town of Palenque (Ruz Lhuillier 2007:35). The last leg of the trip was on horseback into the site. He returned to Tenosique three days later, but it took seven days to get back to Mérida, since he had to wait four days at Tenosique for the arrival of the train. During those three days at the site, he accomplished four major tasks: 1) he recorded the condition of the buildings; 2) he examined the camp house; 3) he talked to the guardians about the repairs that needed to be done to the house; and 4) he investigated claims made by the Postmaster of Palenque that the guardians were not taking care of the site properly (Ruz Lhuillier 2007).

During his inspection, he took notes on the condition of the buildings and captured 265 photos of the various buildings and the camp house. Only seventeen of these photos were filed with the report (García Moll 2007). He noted that the excavation debris from

the previous explorations of the buildings had not yet been cleaned up.<sup>1</sup> Ruz also recorded that there were places where water was seeping into the ancient architecture, that a black slime covered some of it, that weather was causing relentless destruction, and that mounds of rubble needed to be cleared away. He described the condition of eight primary structures at the site – The Palace, The Temple of the Inscriptions, The Temple of the Sun, The Temple of the Leafy Cross<sup>2</sup>, The Temple of the Cross, The House of the Count and the Temples of the North<sup>3</sup> – in a very concise, but descriptive manner. He concluded that the only places at the site that needed to be cleaned up were on the base slopes of the pyramids and the platforms that have never been explored. He explained that every year before explorations began, crews must first clean the site of vegetation. Since there had been no explorations for two years, it was not surprising that the unexplored parts of the site were overgrown.

One of the things that the Mr. Hernández, the Postmaster stated in his report was that he found large amounts of garbage at the site, but Ruz writes that this garbage was the rubble produced by the deterioration of the buildings or from previous explorations. In addition, Ruz related that it was not true “that the repairs made by Miguel Ángel Fernández are beginning to be destroyed”, unlike what was reported by the Postmaster. He writes

*I believe that the condition of the ruins is not due to destruction and neglect or lack of care and cleanliness by the guardian....The state that the ruins are in is exclusively due to the fact that, apart from suffering many centuries of the rigors of an extremely wet climate and the ravages of a vigorous jungle, intensive explorations that are urgently needed have never been done there. The valuable work carried out by our ill-fated colleague Miguel Ángel Fernández (with very*

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<sup>1</sup> The last archaeologist to work at Palenque had been Miguel Ángel Fernández who died in 1945. He was there for nine years but in 1945 he became extremely ill, left the site and died in México City (García Moll 1985:83).

<sup>2</sup> Now this temple is called “The Foliated Cross”.

<sup>3</sup> This group is now called “The North Group”.

*limited resources) only saved a small part of the architectural and ornamental details from destruction (Ruz Lhuillier 2007:46). Author's translation*

Ruz wrote that the isolation of the site, especially the lack of good transportation in and out, made it very difficult to conduct excavation work. He made an optimistic observation that by the end of this year, the new railroad tracks of the Southwest will be only ten kilometers from the ruins. He speculated that when these tracks are complete, it would be possible to bring all the needed materials for restoration and consolidation from the platform at Tenosique and into the site at a “more or less normal” cost (Ruz Lhuillier 2007:47).

Another complaint from the postmaster was in regards to the camp house, the building that houses the archaeologists during excavation season. However Ruz found the house to be clean and in good condition, except for the state of the roof which had a large opening in it where the palm thatch had rotted away. He made suggestions to the guardians for temporary improvements and then proposed a line item budget for the repairs. If repaired with the same material as the existing composition, its life expectancy would only be a short two years, so he also suggested that it have a tile or concrete roof (Ruz Lhuillier 2007:50).

If the site was not being neglected, as the Mr. Hernández had claimed, then why had he filed such a bad report? After interviewing the Postmaster, the guardians, and certain persons in the town that Ruz did not name, he concluded that it was all about jealousy, bad faith and money. The following is the rest of the story.

In October of 1946, Mr. Hernández visited the ruins but did not file a report at that time. Then, five months later, in February 1947, he sent his first negative report claiming that the site had been abandoned by the guardian. Soon after February 22<sup>nd</sup>, Mr. Rodolfo Gonzales, a man who works for Hernández, went to the site to get 200 pesos from Agustin Álvarez, the guardian of the site, telling him that the money was needed for the

next inspection hearing<sup>4</sup> and that he would return it to him at the end of the month. The money was not returned and so when Agustín talked with Hernández about it, Hernández told Agustín that he had received nothing from Gonzales and that Hernández knew nothing about the money.

On March 11<sup>th</sup>, Hernández once again reaffirmed his complaint about the guardian and urged that Álvarez be replaced. The money was never returned to Álvarez and while Ruz was there, he discovered that the assistant was on vacation for a month so he could not talk with him. The whole thing was especially suspicious, since the receipt in Álvarez' possession was written by Gonzales as though the guardian was the one that owed money. Ruz writes:

*My personal impression – resulting from my discussions with the guardians and with the aforementioned postmaster - is that there is a direct relationship between the matter of money taken from Agustín Álvarez and the insistence that he be dismissed as soon as possible. I cannot specify who is the instigator of this conflict and what is the end sought, but it is conceivable that harm is wanted and it is in bad faith. The evidence of such bad faith are mostly false reports about the work of the guardian, how the money was taken and the fact that the "receipt" that was given him for the 200 pesos is worded in such a way that it appears that Agustín Álvarez is the debtor and therefore he cannot legally claim what is owed (Ruz Lhuillier 2007:51). Author's translation*

Being a very astute investigator, Ruz also asked questions of the townspeople regarding the character of all parties and found that there existed in the town a dislike and envy of the guardian and his stepson Samuel Urbana Montejo due to the money they earned for taking care of the site (300 pesos per month) and consequently they have poultry, pigs and horses to ride. Ruz concludes the report by stating that the guardian is a very hardworking, serious and honest man who fulfills his obligations for the archaeological zone and that Ruz was confident that he could continue to do his job in the

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<sup>4</sup> Ruz does not explain the details of this hearing.

future. He also recommended that the guardians keep the vegetation out of the buildings, patios and galleries, thus making the site appear cleaner.

### **NELSON ROCKEFELLER AND THE COVARRUBIASES**

Even before the final decision was made to appoint Ruz as the successor to Angel Fernández at Palenque, plans were being formulated regarding the source and level of funding that would be needed – apparently without Ruz’s input. Among those contemplating funding for Palenque was Nelson Rockefeller. It is uncertain when he first became interested in helping pay for the Palenque excavations, but there is little doubt that his friends Rosa<sup>5</sup> and Miguel Covarrubias were the actors who first planted the seed as will be explained below. Miguel was a Mexican artist who painted and drew caricatures, but he was also an ethnographer and an art historian, keenly interested in the ancient Olmec culture. He moved from México to New York City at the age of nineteen and lived there until 1935<sup>6</sup> when he moved back to México with his American wife Rosa (Heinzelman 2004:4 & 7). During that time and even afterward, he made frequent trips between México and New York as is evidenced by correspondence. In 1940 he was hired by Alfred Barr, the director of the Modern Museum of Art (MOMA) to help curate an exhibit which Covarrubias named “Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art”. His job was to work with Rene d’Harnoncourt<sup>7</sup> in setting up the exhibit (Williams 1994:111) and Nelson Rockefeller was the president for the Board of Directors of the museum at that time.

The earliest reference to Rosa, Miguel and Nelson’s mutual desire to initiate exploration of Palenque, México is found in a letter from Rosa to Rockefeller in which she gave him an update on her husband Miguel’s progress in getting the exhibit ready,

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<sup>5</sup> Rosa was an American who met and married Miguel Covarrubias in 1930 (Malin 2000). She was an accomplished American dancer, working in New York City.

<sup>6</sup> By coincidence, this was also the same year that Ruz emigrated from Cuba to México.

<sup>7</sup> He was an art curator of MOMA at this time and became its director a few years later.

but at the end, she wrote "We hope soon the war will be over and we can all lead normal lives again. Perhaps we can even excavate at Palenque. Anyhow, we hope" (Covarrubias 1940).

During the 1930s and 40's the Covarrubiases were at the center of an Mexican artistic milieu similar to the innovative and well-known artistic communities found in Greenwich Village or the Left Bank in Paris. The Covarrubiases interests were diverse and ranged from topics such as history, food, literature, archaeology, modern Mexican art, and indigenous Mexican folk art. They had collected artifacts and folk art for many years (Williams 1994), particularly ancient Mesoamerican art.

Their house in Tizapán became a central gathering place for international personalities, writers, and artists, including Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, Leon Trotsky, John Huston, and Langston Hughes. Rosa was famous for the delicious meals she served and for her entertaining parties (Williams 1994:133-138). In addition, they and many of their Mexican friends were members of an organization called the "Liga de Escritores y Artistas Revolucionarios" (LEAR)<sup>8</sup>. As mentioned previously, LEAR was closely associated with the Mexican Communist Party, although it did not require its members to be communist (Caplow 2007).

Another famous and frequent visitor to the Covarrubiases' house was Nelson Rockefeller. Williams writes that on one occasion Rosa shared a story about how Miguel informed Rockefeller that in México, any hole dug into the ground will reveal an ancient ruin. To prove this to him, Miguel presented him with a Mexican map, told him to close his eyes and to put his finger on any part of the map. His finger landed on Palenque. According to Williams, it was through Rosa and Miguel's efforts that Rockefeller began funding the Palenque archaeology project (Williams 1994).

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<sup>8</sup> Alberto Ruz was also a member of LEAR, so it is quite likely that he too was a house visitor, but I have no written evidence of any visits.

In addition to soliciting funding, Rosa was also involved in helping plan the work program for Palenque. Neither Rosa nor Miguel were trained archaeologists, so there is a good possibility that someone else more knowledgeable helped Rosa develop it. My belief that Rosa helped develop it stems from the title of a document called “Undated Memorandum given to Mr. Nelson A. Rockefeller by Mrs. Covarrubias” found in the IAR archives at AMNH and in the Nelson Rockefeller archives (1946 or 1947). It is included in this dissertation in Appendix E. The memorandum contains a three-year budget of 400,000 pesos, broken out by funding categories of “private”, INAH and “state government”. For the first year’s budget, she proposed that Rockefeller contribute \$100,000 in pesos (10,000 American dollars). INAH would contribute 50,000 pesos and the State of Chiapas would contribute 50,000. The funding amounts for the second and third year would be half of the first year - Rockefeller and INAH would each supply 50,000 pesos during those years.

She goes on to state that as part of the first year’s work, a “model” and comfortable camp would be constructed in the jungle to be used by visitors and investigators. It would have laboratories and a small museum. The funding would also be used to buy exploration and construction equipment, instruments, trucks<sup>9</sup>, construction materials (cement, steel, etc.), all to be used for new construction as well as for the preservation of the ruins. Rosa explained that these materials would be more costly in Palenque than in other parts of México. This situation was due to the difficulty of transporting them into the State of Tabasco, then by river boat and then by mule into Palenque. The even more expensive alternative would be to bring them into the site by air.

She proposed that the work be intensive for the first three years. The staff performing the work would need to be “relatively” large and they would come from the ranks of the workers at Monte Albán, since that crew had twelve years experience doing this specialized work. She wrote that Palenque’s jungle needs to be cleared and that it needs

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<sup>9</sup> There were no roads into the site that could be used by a truck, so the listing of this item was not very practical; therefore I speculate that Rosa Covarrubias was not aware of the lack of access into the site.

roads so that construction materials could be hauled into the site. After clearing of the jungle, the large structures would be consolidated to prevent further deterioration. She stated that a branch railway was planned by the state and federal government and would be built soon. It would connect Tabasco to Campeche, and pass very near the site.

She wrote that after these three intensive years, “explorations would return to their normal pace”. INAH and the state government would then be the only funding sources. She proposed that the program begin in the winter of 1947-1948, but at the time that she drafted the plan, she stated that the person who specializes in this type of Maya archaeology is in the Yucatán at Uxmal where he is learning “the peculiar technique of reconstructing the elaborate Maya façades.” Rosa was referring to Alberto Ruz, but for an unknown reason she did not name him.

When Rockefeller finally made the decision to fund the project, he wanted to get federal tax benefits in exchange for the funding, so he needed a non-profit agency through which to funnel the money. He was also looking for an agency that would exercise a minimum amount of project supervision, but one that had experience with archaeology projects. He decided to use the Institute of Andean Research (IAR) for reasons that are outlined in the next few paragraphs. It is curious that there seems to be no evidence that Alberto Ruz was involved in any of these funding or planning discussions at this time. However discussions may have taken place between Rosa and Miguel Covarrubias and Ruz because, as stated previously, they all belonged to LEAR and must have at least been acquaintances.

#### **NELSON ROCKEFELLER AND THE INSTITUTE OF ANDEAN RESEARCH**

The IAR was established in 1936 by a group of U.S. archaeologists and scholars at the urging of Julio C. Tello (1880-1947) of the Universidad Mayor de San Marcos, Lima, Perú (Kelemen 1945:391). According to Duncan Strong (1899 – 1962), one of its board members (Strong 1943:4), the funds that established it were obtained from the Art

Committee of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs<sup>10</sup> (CIAA) and were administered by the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) (Kelemen 1945:391). George C. Vaillant (1901-1945), who was the curator at the AMNH from 1928 to 1940, may also have encouraged the creation of the IAR according to a memo from Susan Cable to Rockefeller (1947) found in the IAR archives at the AMNH. The Institute had the financial backing of Ms. Truxton Beale and Robert Woods Bliss (1875-1962) of Dumbarton Oaks (Lothrop 1948:52). Its purpose was to “promote and coordinate anthropological investigations in archaeology, ethnology, physical anthropology, linguistics, and community studies throughout the Andean area and other related regions” (Kelemen 1945:391).

The idea of using the IAR as the administrative pass-through for the Rockefeller funds was a suggestion from Rosa Covarrubias in an undated letter she wrote to Rockefeller (Cable 1947). The use of the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) as such an agency was another alternative since Rockefeller<sup>11</sup> was closely tied to that organization, but Cable writes that Rene d’Harnoncourt<sup>12</sup> recommended that instead of using MOMA that they use the IAR because

*...among other reasons, he feels that the museum is already criticized in México for dealing with the ‘ancient’ art of Picasso and the like instead of the contemporary art of the Mexican artists. Therefore the Museum’s backing of an archaeological excavation will be doubly criticized (Cable 1947:1)<sup>13</sup>.*

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<sup>10</sup> The Office of the CIAA was established in Washington in 1940 for the purpose of increasing and strengthening the participation of the United States in the inter-American system, a system that included international treaties and agreements (Thomson 1948:117).

<sup>11</sup> Rockefeller was a Trustee of the Museum of Modern Art and served as Treasurer from 1935-1939, and as President from 1939-1941 and then again from 1946-1953 (Rockefeller Archive Staff 2011).

<sup>12</sup> d’Harnoncourt was an important curator at MOMA and in 1949, two years after the cited incident, he became the museum’s director.

<sup>13</sup> I was not able to discover why d’Harnoncourt would have made this statement to Cable.

In the fall of 1947, Rockefeller sent notice to Samuel K Lothrop<sup>14</sup> of the IAR Board that he would be sending a \$10,000 check for the purpose of “intensive exploration of the ruins of Palenque” (Rockefeller 1947b). That same day, he sent Rosa a letter telling her that he was sending \$10,000 to the IAR and then that he would send \$5,000 for two subsequent years, with the condition that the Mexican government put in like amounts for the same period (Rockefeller 1947a). Most likely it was just a simple communication problem, but it is interesting to note that he did not copy the IAR Board in the letter telling Rosa about the funding and time limits for the funding. This would prove to be a disappointing oversight.

He stated that the funds would be available for three years as long as there was satisfactory progress on the program (Rockefeller 1947a). He wrote that he was happy to be involved in this project and to be working with "the Mexican government, Alfonso Caso, and with you and Miguel as well as with some of our other friends." Early in the negotiations for the money there appeared to be other communication problems between Nelson Rockefeller and the IAR because the officers of the IAR had the impression that the money was to go directly to Covarrubias. Consequently, in October a letter was sent to Covarrubias by the Chair of the Executive Committee telling him that Rockefeller had given the IAR \$10,000 "for your contemplated excavations at Palenque" (Lothrop 1947). The letter also stated that before they could send the money to him, they must wait on a ruling about the IAR's income tax exemption determination or until Rockefeller tells them to send Miguel the check.

Lothrop, who was the Chairman of the Board of the IAR at the time, wrote back to Rockefeller immediately after receiving the check, telling him he would be creating a subcommittee of five members from the executive committee with experience in México and that they would have no power to intervene in the work, unless it was to protect Rockefeller's interests. Rockefeller responded by saying that he would prefer that

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<sup>14</sup> Lothrop was distinguished archaeologist who specialized in Central and South American cultures

Lothrop discuss the purpose of this project committee with Covarrubias before appointing a committee.

Those on the IAR Executive Committee in 1947 were listed on the IAR stationary. They all were well-known anthropologists or archaeologists and included Alfred Louis Kroeber (1876-1960), Alfred Marston Tozzer (1877-1954), Alfred Vincent Kidder (1885-1963), Fay-Cooper Cole (1881-1961), Philip Ainsworth Means (1892-1944), Samuel Kirkland Lothrop (1892-1965), Leslie Spier (1893-1961), George Clapp Vaillant (1901-1945), Wendell C. Bennett (1905-1953), William Duncan Strong (1899-1962), and Julio C. Tello (1880-1947). The Secretary-Treasurer of the IAR at the time was Gordon Ekholm, who was the IAR representative who played the most important role in overseeing the project, but A.V. Kidder, the president of the IAR Board, was also involved as is seen in the archived correspondence.

Because Ekholm was a key player in the Palenque excavations and functioned as the administrator of the project, I will tell the reader a little more about him. Since 1937, Ekholm had been on the staff at the AMNH where the IAR organization was housed. He did not perform any of his work in the Andes and was the administrator of the IAR by default. He was also the curator of Mesoamerican Archaeology at the AMNH from 1937 to 1974. Most of his archaeological investigations were on the east coast of México in the Huastec region. A large amount of the artifacts he recovered from that work are still housed at the museum (Greco and Elson 2011). He was born in St. Paul Minnesota in 1909 and earned his PhD at Harvard in 1941. He worked under George C. Vaillant, excavating in northwestern México.

In addition to being known for his theories on pre-Columbian trans-Atlantic contacts (Ekholm 1953), he also was famous for challenging the authenticity of pre-Columbian art. Falsifications are a common occurrence, since Mesoamerican artifacts bring very high prices from collectors. For example, in one of his letters to Rockefeller soon after visiting with him, Ekholm writes that he had been "...overly cautious when examining

the Mexican objects you recently acquired. I am very glad, though, that after a very careful examination under better conditions we could pronounce the yokes and the large hacha perfectly sound” (Ekholm 1956)<sup>15</sup>. As the Palenque project administrator, he was very consistent in communicating with Ruz, Kidder, the officials at INAH, and Rockefeller about the progress of the program and the status of the funds. As can be seen in his letters, he was particularly diligent about trying to keep Rockefeller up-to-date and engaged so that the funding would continue to flow into the excavations and conservation work.

Since A.V. Kidder was also a key personality in administering the Rockefeller funds to Palenque, I will introduce him here. Kidder did his first excavation work in the American Southwest from 1907 (Fagan 1996:372) to the end of the 1920’s. He received his PhD from Harvard University in 1914 and fourteen years later, in 1928, he was given the task of overseeing all the Carnegie Institution’s archaeological activities (Willey 1967:301). Their main office was located in Washington, D. C. One year later he was appointed head of the Division of Historical Research at the Carnegie where they were embarking upon excavations and restorations at sites in Mesoamerica such as Chichén Itzá, Uaxactún and Kaminaljuyu. His leadership approach to this work for the Carnegie was what he classified as “pan-scientific”, in other words, multidisciplinary and it included not only scientific excavation but physical anthropology, medical and social anthropology, ethnography, accounts of aboriginal history, colonial history, plant and animal biology, ceramics, geography, geology, and farming (Willey 1967:302-303). During the first three years of Ruz’s supervision of the Palenque excavations, Kidder was the President of the IAR and was very involved in keeping up with the progress of the project and in trying to keep Rockefeller interested in continuing to fund the work. In 1947, when talk of the IAR’s involvement in the Palenque investigations began, Kidder

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<sup>15</sup> According to David Stuart (personal communication), since Ekholm “was the only bona-fide Mesoamerican archaeologist in NYC, Ekholm was tightly connected with art dealers and collectors. He routinely authenticated artifacts for Rockefeller, Bliss, and other major collectors at the time.”

was only three years away from his retirement. His last month with the Carnegie was November of 1950 (Kidder 1950b).

On December 15, 1947, Kidder sent a letter to Ekholm (Kidder 1947) telling him the following: 1) the executive committee of the IAR met and decided that they needed to give more supervision than what was originally thought, and that a committee had been appointed to administer the program made up of members of the Executive Committee and “ex-officiis” that included Bennett, Strong, Stewart, Kidder, and Ekholm; 2) they planned to meet with Miguel Covarrubias when he came to New York in order to discuss the details of the project; 3) the director of the IAR would go to México to meet with the director of INAH; 4) the IAR would hold back \$500 each year for travel expenses and administration, with any remainder to go to the next year's project; 5) they made recommendations to Rockefeller that the salaries of the Mexican field director and scientific staff be paid for by INAH and that INAH would be asked to do the planning and fieldwork supervision in cooperation with IAR; and 6) INAH would be the fiscal agent and as such, they would send the account expenses in duplicate to Rockefeller's office and to the IAR<sup>16</sup>. Kidder didn't want to bother Rockefeller with all of the above details, so he suggested that Ekholm convey a short version of it to him instead of the detailed report. He expressed some concern about "making the fuller statement" to Rockefeller before meeting with Miguel because there might be something that they might not have thought of yet (1947).

In January 1948, Ekholm sent a check for the Palenque project in the amount of \$2,000 to Daniel Rubín de la Borbolla (Ekholm 1948c). At the time, Borbolla was the Director of the National Museum of México, but he was also a good friend of Miguel Covarrubias. According to Ekholm, Borbolla and Covarrubias were the people that solicited the original grant request from Rockefeller (Ekholm 1948c), although at this

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<sup>16</sup> In reality, line item expenditures made by Ruz were not tracked by the IAR or by Rockefeller. That was left up to the INAH administrators.

point in time, Ekholm and Kidder did not know that Rosa Covarrubias seemed to be the key proponent of funding the excavations. Ekholm stated that the check was a partial payment, until the "long-delayed" letter comes from Marquina, the Director of INAH. The letter that they were waiting for was one that would affirm the matching fund commitment from the Mexican government and which was required by the IAR and Rockefeller before a full release of the funds could be made.

Ekholm also wrote that Kidder would be willing to come to México at any time that the Mexicans wished, in order to "help in planning the details of the project". He stated that the IAR would like to visit Palenque after the project started and expressed happiness about the plans to construct a road into Palenque. He asked Borbolla about future procedures regarding grant requests from Rockefeller and stated that it might be best if Miguel Covarrubias and Borbolla initiate them, since they were the original solicitors of the project. He let them know that the IAR would be happy to do this for them, but that it would be helpful if he had copies of the original correspondence between them and Rockefeller. There was no evidence in the archived files that the IAR ever received any of this requested correspondence until the end of December 1948. At that time, it was Rockefeller's staff that sent the correspondence containing funding discussions, including the work plan that Rosa Covarrubias had written.

### **THE MEXICANS**

A meeting at an undetermined location finally took place between the IAR committee, Miguel Covarrubias and Daniel Borbolla at which time they discussed the details of the project. The group drew up an agreement dated February 3, 1948 (Ekholm 1948b). However, as will be revealed later, Ignacio Marquina, the Director of INAH, contended that he did not know about this agreement indicating that Covarrubias and Borbolla did not have authorization to sign it on INAH's behalf.

At this point in my narrative, I should supply the reader with background information on Ignacio Marquina Barredo. Marquina began his career as an architect, but was then

trained in archaeology by Manuel Gamio. He worked with Gamio at the Templo Mayor and at Teotihuacan (Piña Chán and Villalobos Pérez 1988:500-501). His interests included ethnology, ancient urban planning, public administration, and sociology, and modern and Mesoamerican architecture. In 1935, he formed a private architectural firm with Salvador Vértiz Hornedo, a partnership that lasted until his partner's death in 1970. In 1940, he was appointed head of the Mexican Department of Prehispanic Monuments at INAH and seven year later, in 1947, he became the director of INAH (Piña Chán and Villalobos Pérez 1988:504).

Two weeks after the signing of the agreement between the IAR, Covarrubias and Borbolla, Ekholm wrote to Rockefeller, telling him of the meeting to discuss the Palenque project (Ekholm 1948a). He included a copy of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with his letter. Rockefeller replied that he agreed with the contents of the MOU. It included the following: 1) an operations committee would be established made up of the director, two others from INAH, the IAR chairman, and the secretary for overall planning and operation of the project; 2) INAH would receive funds from IAR as determined by the committee to do work at Palenque; 3) funds were to be used only for scientific aspects such as exploration, excavation, mapping, and other field techniques; 4) other tasks such as road building, reconstruction, improvement of living quarters, etc. would not be part of the IAR program; 5) the IAR would reserve 10% for operational expenses and for any publication costs or progress report costs not covered by other funds. The balance at the end of the year, after these possible expenses, would be part of regular funds; 6) the IAR may propose "the name of a student or professional who might form part of the project for a stated period"<sup>17</sup> and if the operations committee approved the allocation, funds could be made available for this person. Later, Ekholm sent Kidder a copy of the MOU, saying that they must wait for the Mexicans to make the

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<sup>17</sup> During the 1951 field season, Ekholm would use this clause to bring in one of his students to Palenque, Robert Rands and his wife, Barbara. They would work again in 1956 and then in 1959, Barbara worked in the Group IV cemetery after Ruz's tenure.

next move. He expected this to happen after Covarrubias and Borbolla return to México in about a month, and that they would soon send Kidder an invitation to meet with them in México.

Nine months later, Borbolla notified Ekholm that because of economic conditions in México, they could not maintain the original agreement with the IAR where they had specified a certain level of matching funds (de la Borbolla Cedillo 1948b). He stated that Marquina, the Director of INAH had sent a letter to Kidder explaining the situation in detail. The devaluation of the peso was to blame for the deficit and so the Federal and state governments were having difficulty coming up with the entire \$50,000. Therefore, INAH could only contribute \$20,000<sup>18</sup> pesos, plus salaries and travel for the technical staff, transportation, and equipment. He wrote that Dr. Kidder would be able to give him more details on the situation because Marquina had sent Kidder a letter about it<sup>19</sup>. Meanwhile, the IAR still held the remaining 8,000 of the Rockefeller funds, pending receipt of Marquina's letter.

The pressure to get ready for the 1949 field season was building. Because the rainy season usually takes place during the months of June, July and August, there was an urgent need to get the season started by March or April and finished before June. This schedule would ensure at least four months of rain-free excavation. However, Kidder and Ekholm insisted that they still had not seen the letter from Marquina. Ekholm told Borbolla that he met with his project committee and told them about the decrease in the Mexican portion of the funding. He told him that until he gets the Marquina letter, he can do nothing about sending the remaining \$8,000. He wrote "I trust that the work at Palenque may be inaugurated, for otherwise I fear that Mr. Rockefeller may not be disposed to continue his interest" (Kidder 1948).

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<sup>18</sup> This amount will later change to \$30,000 for unexplained reasons.

<sup>19</sup> This is the letter of December 4, 1948 that didn't arrive at the IAR for several months because Marquina had sent it to a non-existent address in Washington, D. C.

Borbolla then wrote to Kidder (de la Borbolla Cedillo 1948a) explaining that Marquina had written the letter more than one month previously, but that they would write a new one. He also told him that the Mexican Secretary of Communications had offered to construct a road to Palenque.

Finally, in January, Kidder told Marquina that a copy of his wayward letter had arrived, but since the IAR had heard from Borbolla who told them the contents of the letter, Ekholm had sent the remaining funds. He was pleased to hear that 30,000 pesos had been released by INAH for work in Palenque for the 1949 season, stating that he believed that Palenque will become a Mecca for tourists as had Chichén Itzá, Teotihuacán, Uxmal and others. He asked him for the name of the person that will be in charge of the Palenque excavations<sup>20</sup> and told him that if Marquina plans to go there soon, Kidder wanted to go along with him. Two weeks later, Ekholm sent \$7,000 to Marquina telling him that he was retaining \$1,000 as per the agreement between Covarrubias, Borbolla and the committee of the IAR. He expressed his regrets at not being able to come to México this next season.

Finally on January 10<sup>th</sup>, the letter dated December 4, 1948 from Marquina arrived on Kidder's desk (Kidder 1949g). Apparently the letter had been addressed incorrectly since it was sent to "Sr. Doctor Alfred V. Kidder, Director of the Institute of Andean Research, Washington, DC". The IAR was located at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City and did not have an office in Washington, D.C.

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<sup>20</sup> When talk of the project began, Ekholm and Kidder had the impression that the archaeologist would be Miguel Covarrubias, so the reason that he asked this question of Marquina is not clear.

## Chapter 6: the 1949 Season

### RUZ'S PREPARATIONS

In February 1949, eleven months after Ruz first inspected the site, Ignacio Marquina (1888-1981), the head of INAH, appointed Ruz to lead the excavations at Palenque (Ruz Lhuillier 1949c). His mentor and teacher, Alfonso Caso (1896-1970), told Ruz that one of his work goals at Palenque was to establish a chronology for the site using ceramics and stratigraphy. The Mexicans wanted to know how Palenque fit into the larger picture of Mexican pre-history (Stuart and Stuart 2008:92). One of Ruz's students, Mercedes De La Garza wrote that before Ruz left for his job in Palenque, Caso jokingly told him that he was to find an Olmec temple under a Maya building (de la Garza 2004:13).

In addition to directing the site at Palenque, Ruz was given the responsibility of supervising archaeological sites in the Southwest Region, which included the states of Chiapas, Campeche, Quintana Roo and Yucatán. This area delineates that part of México considered ancient lands of the Maya. He served in that capacity until 1958 (Bonifaz Nuño 1981; García Moll 2007; Ruz Lhuillier 1973b:7).

That same month, Ruz corresponded with Kidder, the Chair of the IAR, to give him an update on the Palenque project and Ruz's plans. He stated that he and Marquina had been anticipating this project for "several years". Ruz told him that after getting his technical staff, his supplies and equipment together, he planned to go to Palenque the first part of March, which was only a few weeks away (Ruz Lhuillier 1949b). He modestly acknowledged that his appointment to the job was due to many people, as well as lucky circumstances. Expressing his gratitude, he said that he would try very hard to be successful. Ruz also wrote a letter of thanks and introduction to Rockefeller the same day (Ruz Lhuillier 1949c), telling him that Marquina had appointed him to perform the Palenque explorations. He let him know that INAH was contributing \$30,000 and that they hoped to get money from the government of Chiapas and the Mexican Minister of Health, Dr. Gamboa. In addition, he stated the following: 1) that he had turned in a work

plan to Marquina; 2) that he would start work in March and would work for three months; and 3) that he sends greetings to his good friend Miguel Covarrubias who would soon arrive in New York City, where Rockefeller resided.

Ruz sent his draft plan dated February 17th to Marquina who then sent it to Kidder and Ekholm (Marquina 1949a). Kidder and Ekholm expressed happiness about Ruz getting the job. However, due to communication problems between Rockefeller and Ekholm, Ruz thought that he would receive funds for five years and that the funds would be twice the amount that Rockefeller had actually committed, a situation that would eventually become apparent by December of this same year. The following were the ambitious goals Ruz hoped to accomplish in five years:

*Ruz's Five Year Goal* (Marquina 1949a):

- Review past explorations.
- Determine the various architectural periods.
- Collect a wealth of information on ceramics at the site, those found on the surface as well as those found in buildings.
- Explore the evolutionary development of the architectural styles throughout the site's history.
- Discover and record the frescos found on the walls of the buildings.
- Study the osteological findings and share it with the physical anthropologists that specialize in the Maya.
- Understand the direct or indirect contacts made by the ancient people within their surrounding area and understand how the city was influenced by cultures in the highlands, the villages of Oaxaca, Guerrero and the Atlantic Coast.
- Understand the origins of the Maya civilization by seeing how the people of Palenque might have connected with the Olmec region, the Petén or the Guatemalan highlands.
- Investigate the religious center of the site and its neighboring regions, "especially those sites situated in the valley and the slopes where the farmers must have been living and whose activities made the building and sustenance of such a metropolis possible".
- Study the indigenous Chol communities surviving in the foothills of Chiapas between Palenque and Salto de Agua – a population who's anthropological, ethnological and linguistic backgrounds should be studied in a manner similar to what was done in the adjacent areas among the Tzeltals.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I am not aware of the name of this study or who wrote it.

- Establish a minimum of five years of funding in order to “present a picture of the indigenous life in this region from its inception to their current survival”

Next, Ruz outlined how he would implement those goals, beginning in 1949. His approach to the work was multidisciplinary and in his plan, he included research into the fields of archaeology, anthropology ethnology, linguistics and history. He concluded with the caveat that parts of his plan would only be completed as resources from INAH and other agencies would permit (Ruz Lhuillier 1949d). The following is a summary of what he wrote:

1. The funds from Rockefeller would be used solely for the purpose of research work and the grant from INAH would be used for the construction and creation of a new camp at the site.
2. Not only did the work include study and exploration, but it involved the most urgent consolidation and restoration work, as well as the clearing and cleaning of the buildings and courtyards.
3. The technical personnel would include a site director (Ruz), two archaeologists, and an ethnographer, a person who specializes in drawing; a restoration specialist and a project supervisor.
4. He specified the areas to be cleared, particularly the Palace, the Temple of the Sun, the Temple of the Inscriptions, the North Group, and the Ballcourt and all their surrounding buildings. He planned to leave the large trees as well as the orange trees that were not interfering with the architecture. Those that had fallen or those that were cleared would either be used for their wood or be burned at a location away from the site. He planned to sow grass seed to prevent weeds from growing on the surface of the plazas. This work would be done by 15 people, supervised by the project supervisor, and they would work throughout the season only on this task.
5. They would begin work on the Palace, primarily on the north side. Excavation of the east patio was planned and if there was time, they hoped to find the oldest construction layer. At the same time they would consolidate what they found. This work would involve ten laborers, including a supervisor, four masons and their assistants.
6. They would continue the work that had begun several years earlier on the Palace Tower. Four masons and their assistants would perform the work, which would include the complete restoration of the tower and other structures in the Palace. It would all be supervised by Ruz.
7. Many galleries and courtyards of the Palace would be cleaned of rubble and then consolidated. Some of the masonry debris would be placed outside the structure. This would be done by ten laborers and supervised by an archaeologist.

8. They proposed to use previous surveys and other data based upon past explorations, particularly in the northern areas, west of the Temple of the Inscriptions and other potential cemeteries. They planned to use ten laborers supervised by an archaeologist.
9. They would continue to discover, recover, draw and consolidate the House E murals from the Palace and look for others elsewhere. The drawing specialist would do this work with the help of laborers, if necessary.
10. The stucco reliefs on the pillars of the palace would continue to be cleaned. Restorers would fill in the cracks and replace and reinforce broken parts and try to protect the surface with suitable materials. The restoration specialist would be in charge of this duty, with the help of an artist and laborers, if needed.
11. They would begin to catalog the tombs, offerings, paintings, sculptures and other findings, using the procedures developed at other INAH archaeological sites such as Monte Albán and Tlatilco.
12. They would conduct an ethnographic and language study in the neighboring towns among the Chol language groups that live on the slopes between Palenque and Salto de Agua.
13. The technical staff must deliver their reports to Ruz one month before the end of the year
14. Ruz would take the reports to his place of residence in Mérida, Yucatán, compile them, develop the data gathered and give his report to INAH in a timely manner so that the next season would not be delayed.
15. Ruz would give regular progress reports to the Director of Prehistoric Monuments and to the INAH director. The annual reports would go to Rockefeller and to the IAR. It would be the role of INAH to report to the public, in accordance with their guidelines. Every year, a synopsis of the excavations would be published.
16. Using grant funds from INAH only, a new field camp would be built. Its location within the site was based upon the following: 1) the need to be close to the ruins; 2) the desire that the building should be located where it would not block the view of the ancient buildings; 3) the need to be near a water supply, and 4) the need to “orient the camp in such a way as to take advantage of the dominant winds from the valley.” See Figure 6.1 to view its final location. He writes that the likely place would be a “small esplanade on the edge of the path that leads people to the ruins, immediately North of the acropolis, more or less where Blom’s Group A is located.” Below are the camp project details that Ruz outlined:
  - a. The project would be supervised by an INAH architect
  - b. The building must be sufficiently roomy enough so that 5 or 6 technicians can live and work there without being cramped.
  - c. They would purchase important household items such as cots, hammocks, chairs, tables, shelves, cabinets, a stove and a refrigerator.
  - d. It would have electricity, running water, bathrooms, showers and a kitchen.

- e. The building would be slightly raised and have the protection of wire mesh to keep the insects and animals out (including the roofed gallery).
  - f. They would build auxiliary buildings such as a garage, a cellar for materials and tools and a small museum.
17. They would make an effort to get a commitment from the State of Chiapas to build a road from the town to the ruins.

While Ruz was writing his five-year work plan, the IAR staff was discussing project supervision. In late February of 1949 Kidder told Ekholm (Kidder 1949f) that he might be able to go to the site in April, unless he gets into more "trouble" at Kaminaljuyu<sup>2</sup>. He asked Ekholm if he could charge the trip to the Palenque fund and Ekholm responded that he could. Meanwhile, Marquina asked Ekholm to send all the remaining funds to him so that they can order supplies and get the project prepared.

On March 1<sup>st</sup> Ekholm notified Marquina that he was sending \$7,000 to the México City branch of the National City Bank. He stated that together with the \$2,000 already sent, the total now comes to \$9,000 and he would hold the other \$1,000 until the IAR takes out administrative fees that might be used for publications or travel. He explained that at the end of the season, if there is any money remaining, it would go toward the excavation. He sent another copy of the agreement between Covarrubias and Borbolla where this practice was established (Ekholm 1949b).

Kidder and Ekholm pondered (Ekholm 1949c; Kidder 1949k) whether or not they should send the remaining \$1,000 to INAH. If Kidder went to Palenque, it would cost no more than \$500.00, so that was all they needed in reserve, unless Ekholm and the IAR Board thought differently. Kidder felt strongly that in order to keep Rockefeller on board with the funding, that a visit to Palenque by Kidder was a necessity. He told Ekholm that he would work with Marquina on this visit or he could delay it until next year, since he had so much to do at Kaminaljuyu. He did not want to give the Mexicans the impression that the IAR did not trust them to do a good job (Kidder 1949k).

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<sup>2</sup> Kaminaljuyu is a pre-classic Maya site near Guatemala City where he was working at the time.

Marquina acknowledged to Ekholm the receipt of the \$7,000 (Marquina 1949b). Then he stated the following: 1) he understood that the entire \$10,000 was to be used for the excavations and he had made his plans accordingly; 2) he acknowledged that the funds for Dr. Kidder to travel to Palenque would be taken out of the grant; 3) he told him that there was no need to reserve the money for publication purposes because INAH would bear those costs; 4) Dr. Borbolla informed Marquina that he did not sign any agreement and Marquina asked Borbolla to clarify this with Ekholm; 5) that they were now beginning the work and he hoped that the remaining funds would be available when he asked for it again later, and 6) he was sending a copy of the letter to Dr. Kidder to get his opinion.

Ekholm sympathized with Kidder's hesitancy about going to Palenque right away because they didn't know how it might be viewed by the Mexicans (Ekholm 1949d). Yet, he still believed that the IAR should contribute some kind of advice or consultation to the job. He believed that the original plan made by the committee about policy decisions had "broken down", but that they should keep their interests alive. He wrote that he hadn't talked with the committee about this yet, but he would talk with Duncan Strong, an IAR board member. Paul Kirchhoff, another board member told him "Oh, of course Marquina will be annoyed, but he usually is on any co-operative venture of this kind" (Ekholm 1949d).

In a letter dated April 11<sup>th</sup>, Kidder expressed an interest to Marquina (Kidder 1949a) about coming to Palenque during the first two weeks of May and asked if he or Eduardo Noguera<sup>3</sup> could escort him, not only to talk about archaeological problems, but to have a personal visit with them.

In mid April, Kidder communicated with Ekholm once again about the issue of Marquina's lack of awareness about the agreement made between Covarrubias and Borbolla (Kidder 1949b). He thought that surely Borbolla had told Marquina about Borbolla's participation in such an agreement. He had written Ruz and Marquina about

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<sup>3</sup> As written earlier Noguera was the Director of Pre-Hispanic Monuments at the INAH.

Kidder's visiting Palenque in early May, but he had not heard back from Marquina about the two of them making the trip together. His explanation was that "He's allergic to writing."

Later that same month, Ekholm told Kidder (Ekholm 1949a) that he was writing Marquina, telling him that the remaining funds would be forwarded to him, minus the cost of Kidder's proposed trip. He had sent a copy of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to Marquina previously and "so there is really no reason for his not being aware of these arrangements" (Ekholm 1949a).

In May, Kidder was still at Kaminaljuyu (Evans and Webster 2001:389) when he wrote Ekholm (Kidder 1949l) stating that he had received a telegram from Ruz suggesting that Kidder fly directly from Guatemala to Palenque, but since Guatemalan planes cannot land in México, he would need to charter a plane instead. He had thought that he might be able to use the Carnegie's "attaché for air" to take him, but as it turns out the pilot is only accredited in the Central American republics and would need permission both from Washington and México to land at Palenque. This complication meant that he definitely would not be able to make the trip. He wrote that he would try to contact Ruz either in México or in Yucatán on his way back to the states in June or early July. He still thought that they needed to visit Palenque, but it would have to wait until next year. He notified Ruz that he could not come, telling him that he hoped to be able to visit with him in either Mérida or México City when Kidder returns from the U.S. in July.

Meanwhile, Rosa Covarrubias had contacted Rockefeller, complaining to him that the IAR was holding back \$1,000. Rockefeller was advised by staffer Vera Goeller to tell Rosa that she or Ruz should contact the IAR if they had questions about the retainage (Goeller 1949). Goeller also reminded Rockefeller that he had pledged an additional \$5,000 for two consecutive years, but only if the Mexicans matched it. So far Goeller had seen no evidence that the Mexicans had met that commitment.

Seven days later, Ekholm sent Rockefeller an update on the status of the funds (Ekholm 1949e), explaining that they had sent \$9,000 to México and \$1,000 was still

with the IAR due to the agreement signed between the IAR, Covarrubias and Borbolla. He enclosed a copy of the agreement and then told him that Kidder would not be able to go to Palenque this season. Also, since there would be no IAR travel expenses he would soon be sending the remaining funds to Ruz.

In a strange turn of events, Kidder was able to visit Palenque this same season, arriving on May 26<sup>th</sup>. On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, four days before he left for Palenque, he sent a letter to Ekholm, informing him that he had suddenly received a wire from Ruz notifying him that a plane would take him into Palenque for a one-day visit (Kidder 1949m). Kidder saw this development as very beneficial because it would allow him to give Rockefeller a first-hand account on how things were going at the site. As he discovered later there were two other important reasons that Ruz had chartered the plane, not just to give Kidder a ride, apart from giving Kidder a ride.

At the end of May, Ekholm sent the remaining \$1,000 to Marquina without retaining any money for Kidder's Palenque trip. Instead, as can be seen from the project expenditures below, Ruz had charged the trip to the project. Along with the money, Ekholm relayed a message to Marquina from Kidder, saying that Ruz was doing a "very fine job" (Ekholm 1949f).

Eleven days later, Kidder wrote a two and one-half page letter to Marquina describing the Palenque visit (Kidder 1949i). He explained that Ruz had chartered a plane that not only transported Kidder to the site, but also Karl Ruppert of the Carnegie Institution of Washington<sup>4</sup> and George Brainerd<sup>5</sup> of the University of California at Los Angeles. Ruz met them at the landing field with his expedition car and took them for two or three leagues toward the ruins. The rest of the journey was on horseback. They arrived at the site at noon and left the next afternoon. Upon the group's return to Mérida, one of Ruz's

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<sup>4</sup> Kidder also worked for the Carnegie Institution at this time as Chairman of the Division of Historical Research.

<sup>5</sup>When this trip was made, Brainerd was Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Staff Archaeologist at the Southwest Museum at the University of California.

student archaeology workers named Lauro José Zavala<sup>6</sup> made the trip with them, since he was suffering from a severe case of malaria. Zavala's situation may have been the most important reason for the chartered plane.

Kidder was able to spend several hours at the site with Ruz during the afternoon of the 26<sup>th</sup> and the morning of the 27<sup>th</sup>. They talked about "practical and scientific" problems and issues about preservation of the buildings. In addition, they discussed how to develop the site as an example of Classic Maya art and architecture. Ruz told him that he was working on a permanent camp for the investigators and it would be one that might eventually be used to house visitors<sup>7</sup>. Ruz had targeted the ancient buildings in most need of consolidation, and he stated that Agustín Villagra was recording all the murals.

Kidder told Marquina how impressed he was with what Ruz had accomplished, especially considering that it is a large operation in a tropical environment and that there were tremendous transportation problems slowing the process of getting supplies and materials into the site. He wrote that everything for the support of the work has to be

*...brought in by motor part way over an extremely bad road and then moved by mule or, in the case of certain objects which cannot be packed on animals, carried by hand for a league or more across broken terrain and, at the end, up a steep declivity to the site (Kidder 1949i).*

Again he emphasized the need for a road, not just for efficiency and economics, but for the large number of tourists that would eventually visit, a number that was expected to increase when the railroad line was complete. He believed that another high priority was the need for mechanical equipment to clear out the large quantities of unidentifiable stucco, stone and rubble that have fallen from the buildings. This rubble covered the floors and doorways of most of the structures and made it impossible to see the lower parts of buildings. Debris had to be carted away because if they piled it up on the plazas

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<sup>6</sup> Zavala was a cohort of César Sáenz at the Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia in México City and would eventually be known for directing the excavations of Palenque's building groups I, II, III and IV and its ballcourt during the years 1949 and 1950.

<sup>7</sup> At this point in time, there were few hotels in the surrounding pueblos.

it would “greatly lessen the esthetic effort of this most beautiful of all Maya ruins” (Kidder 1949i).<sup>8</sup> Such equipment could not be brought to the site until a road is completed. He stated that he would begin to look for a manufacturer in the U.S. willing to donate equipment in exchange for publicity.

He informed Marquina of the great effort that Ruz was making to try to preserve and restore the stucco ornamentation on the buildings. He described Ruz’s use of the neutral tone cement to fill in the cracks and to hold in place the stuccos that were ready to fall. He related Ruz’s ideas about making the roofs of the buildings watertight<sup>9</sup>, thus preventing moisture from seeping through cracks, weakening the mortar and encouraging plants to grow.

Ruz faced a dilemma about what portion of the site should be preserved versus the portion that should be restored. The extent to which the surrounding vegetation should be cleared was also an issue. Regarding the buildings, there was the problem of conservation versus rebuilding. Ruz believed that consolidation, rather than restoration “should be the primary objective.”

In the same letter, Kidder described the vegetation and the buildings at the site:

*...these temples, rising as they do from and silhouetted against the green jungle constitute one of the most impressive sights I have ever seen and I feel that to cut away the growth that now surrounds them and covers their tall substructures will greatly detract from the beauty of Palenque. Questions such as this, and those regarding how much reconstruction should be done require the very careful thought which Mr. Ruz is giving them, for they are of fundamental importance in planning a work which will render Palenque one of the world’s most impressive monuments of antiquity, both for the beauty of its architecture and its sculpture and for the unrivalled magnificence of its natural surroundings (Kidder 1949i:2).*

Kidder told Marquina that he would report back to Rockefeller, and would once again urge him to visit the site so that Marquina could see how much had been accomplished

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<sup>8</sup> Although the location of some of these mounds is known, many remain undocumented.

<sup>9</sup> With a coating of Portland cement according to the letter that Kidder sent to Rockefeller (Kidder 1949f)

and how much work still needed to be done. He expressed his opinion that “ten years would not be too long a time to devote to the project” (Kidder 1949i:3).

Around two weeks later, Kidder wrote a letter similar to the one he sent to Marquina, but this letter was designed to encourage Rockefeller to visit the site and to continue the funding (Kidder 1949j). He told him that he took a two-hour flight by chartered plane and landed at a field that would eventually become the Palenque railroad station of the Ferrocarril Del Sureste, a line that would connect Yucatán with the rest of México<sup>10</sup>. The station was located around nine miles from the site. He wrote that his impression of Ruz was that of a “very intelligent and energetic young man” (Kidder 1949j). When Kidder saw the site, he was overwhelmed with its beauty and setting. He described the clear and unpolluted stream that flows through it as well as the various rapids that flow in cascades down its cliffs. He described the aqueducts supported by Maya arches that channel the stream beside the Palace. He informed him that Ruz’ primary objective for the season had been to salvage the “remarkable stucco sculptures and ornaments which constitute the most striking and artistically most important feature of Palenque” (Kidder 1949j).

Kidder described the finding of an eight foot stone carved tablet that had the longest inscriptions that they had found so far<sup>11</sup>. He told him that one of the reasons for the good condition of some of the buildings was the “unusually fine and tenacious lime cement that was used by the ancient masons” (Kidder 1949j:2). Again he described the dilemma of the “twofold problem of deriving the maximum of archaeological data from Palenque and of rendering it most effective as an example of Maya architectural and sculptural art at its best” (Kidder 1949j:2). He speculated again about how much of the site should be reconstructed and how much should be simply repaired and stabilized, finally deciding that a large percent of it should only be stabilized and that archaeologists should not

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<sup>10</sup> Construction of the Southeast Railroad was started during the Lazaro Cardenas administration and was concluded under the leadership of the next president, Miguel Alemán. This line would finally link the Palenque region with those in Central México and with the railways of Yucatán. This connection linking México City with the State of Yucatán had been a dream that developed during the Mexican Revolution (Mellanes Castellanos 1951:16).

<sup>11</sup> This tablet will eventually be called “The Palace Tablet”.

reconstruct it. He naively suggested to Rockefeller that an advisory committee be formed<sup>12</sup> to help Ruz cope with the responsibility of deciding how to landscape and treat the buildings. This committee would be made up of people such as Alfonso Caso, Ignacio Marquina and Miguel Covarrubias and they should visit the site right away<sup>13</sup>. A group such as this would help to protect Ruz against future criticism. Kidder again mentioned the need for the road and for mechanical equipment to remove the fallen material. He eloquently wrote that when Ruz completes his work, Palenque:

*...will become one of the show places of America and a fitting monument to the artistic and engineering genius of the Maya. Archaeologists, the people of México, and future travelers from all parts of the world will be greatly in your debt for having helped so effectively in its rescue from the jungle and in saving it for the pleasure and instruction of all (Kidder 1949j).*

Early in July, Rockefeller replied to Kidder, thanking him for the update on the Palenque project, telling him that the Mexican government needed to put in more money if the job was going to be done properly, especially since there was a need for a road (Rockefeller 1949b). Acknowledging the political side of things, he asked Kidder who he thinks might be “the force” to enable this to happen - possibly the planning committee that Kidder proposed? He offered his assistance in order to get this done and thanked the IAR staff for their help.

In his response to Rockefeller, Kidder agreed with him about the need for the Mexican government to more fully fund the project. He informed him that no committee had been put together that could help to lobby for the building of the road, but that Marquina, Borbolla and Covarrubias would all be in New York City for the Congress of the Americanists’ meeting in September and at that time, pressure should be applied to get the road built (Kidder 1949h). He also told him that he had recently stopped in

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<sup>12</sup> I describe this as “naïve” because the practice of committee formation in archaeology was more common in North America than in México.

<sup>13</sup> To my knowledge this committee was never formed.

Mérida to see Ruz and discovered that the field season went well and that the most urgent stabilizations had been finished.

In November Kidder contacted Ekholm to get feedback from him about how to approach Rockefeller for the next donation for the Palenque project (Kidder 1949n), but when Ekholm wrote back, he told Kidder that there had been some confusion over the original monetary commitment from Rockefeller for the project (Ekholm 1949g). He talked with Samuel Lothrop, another member of the IAR board, and he had the impression that the funding was to be \$10,000 for 5 years, but now Lothrop believed that for some reason Rockefeller is "hedging a bit" due to the fact that Miguel Covarrubias did not get the excavation job<sup>14</sup> and that Rockefeller was more interested in the artistic aspects of the site than anything else (i.e. at the expense of scientific archaeology). He suggested that Ekholm write to Covarrubias to explain and clarify the situation. They also were expecting Miguel to arrive in New York City soon.

A few days later Kidder sent a letter to Covarrubias (Kidder 1949o), telling him that Kidder had talked to Rockefeller's secretary, a man named Friele, and learned that the original Palenque project pledge was not \$10,000 for five years, but was \$10,000 the first year and then \$5,000 for two subsequent years. Kidder wrote that if this is true then the Palenque project must now be seriously cut back. He explained to Covarrubias that he was writing to him because Covarrubias was the one who initiated the project and Kidder wanted to know if this lesser, three-year plan was how Covarrubias remembered it. There was nothing in the IAR files to tell Kidder the original details of the plan and he asked him if he would be in New York any time soon and if so, could he talk with Rockefeller to maybe get him "to raise the ante"? Kidder expressed an extreme desire to talk with Miguel about the situation but since Covarrubias had an "allergy" to letter writing, Kidder was including a multiple-choice letter for Covarrubias' convenience that required "no more than 3 checkmarks". Kidder stated that a committee should be appointed to

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<sup>14</sup> I found no evidence in the Rockefeller files that Covarrubias ever wanted to do the excavations at Palenque himself, although at the beginning, Rockefeller did call it "Miguel's project".

visit Palenque to confer with Ruz on his restoration and preservation plans. Although Ruz was doing a fine job on his own, Kidder felt that for Ruz's and the IAR's protection a committee like this could be helpful. When he saw Rubín de la Borbolla and Pablo Martínez del Río<sup>15</sup> at the Congress of the Americanists in September of the previous month, he suggested the committee formation to them, but he did not disclose how they received the suggestion.

On December 14<sup>th</sup> Kidder finally wrote to Rockefeller and told him that he had mistakenly thought that Rockefeller's pledge was in the amount of \$10,000 per year for five years and that he remembered getting that information from Miguel Covarrubias (Kidder 1949c). Kidder now felt that he should have asked Rockefeller himself and he blamed himself for not talking to Rockefeller directly about it so now he was extremely embarrassed over it. He felt that he had no reason to doubt the information that he received from Miguel, especially since Miguel was the one who initiated the project and had nurtured Rockefeller's interest in it. Kidder explained that the excavation plans would now need to be scaled back substantially, since all the plans made by Ruz and Kidder were based upon a much larger budget and for a longer period of time. He "fervently" asked Rockefeller to reconsider and raise his contribution to \$10,000 per year due to the site's magnificence and due to its potential as a fabulous tourist attraction, rivaling Chichén Itzá and Copan (Kidder 1949c). He also brought up the subject of the needed road and since it had not been built yet, he proposed that Rockefeller promise additional funds if the Mexicans would build it. He believed that INAH would continue the conservation work at the site; however, building the road was beyond INAH's means. Again, he renewed his invitation to Rockefeller and his wife to visit Palenque.

That same day, Kidder wrote to Ruz, telling him that Kidder had misunderstood the original yearly level of the Rockefeller funding, as well as the length of time it would be given. He also let Ruz know that he had received word from Covarrubias via telegram

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<sup>15</sup> Martínez del Río was a Mexican anthropologist who taught at the Escuela Nacional De Antropología E Historia (ENAH).

that this lower funding level was what Rockefeller had originally intended<sup>16</sup>, but that he was trying to convince Rockefeller to increase the amount. The other bad news he related was that he was not able to find an American tractor company interested in donating equipment, although he had asked several companies. He wrote that he would soon go to México to talk with Marquina and Covarrubias about all these matters. He also did not know when the \$5,000 would become available, but he believed that it would materialize around December 31<sup>st</sup> and when the IAR received it, they would once again hold back 10%, just as they did the previous funding year (1949).

Meanwhile, in order to clarify his position on the funding levels, Rockefeller responded to Kidder (Rockefeller 1949a) by sending him an envelope with various pieces of correspondence and memos about the Palenque project, including the document entitled “Undated memorandum given to Mr. Nelson A. Rockefeller by Mrs. Covarrubias” (Covarrubias 1946 or 1947) where she had originally laid out the “intensive” three-year plan and the money associated with it. Then, perhaps as conciliatory gesture, he told Kidder that even though the Mexicans had not contributed “the like amounts for the same period” as was agreed to in the MOA, he was very happy to send the \$5,000 immediately if it would be helpful. He also told him that he and Ms. Rockefeller would not be able to go to Palenque this next season.

Soon thereafter, Kidder wrote to Ekholm (Kidder 1949d) sending copies of the documents that Rockefeller sent to him. Included in it was the undated memorandum from Ms. Rosa Covarrubias. Kidder was still confounded about where they got the impression that Rockefeller was to donate \$10,000 for five years. He told Ekholm that he would leave for México on Sunday and would try to talk with Covarrubias to see if he could petition Rockefeller to increase the donation and also to see if someone from INAH would come to the site with Kidder to confer and advise Ruz<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> The telegram was Miguel’s response to Kidder’s three-question letter mentioned earlier.

<sup>17</sup> I do not know why Kidder was so concerned about getting advice for Ruz and I can only speculate that it had something to do with conversations that might have taken place between Ruz and Kidder.

That same day Kidder responded to Rockefeller, thanking him for the backup material and telling him that the only explanation he could offer for his confusion about the funds was that "the wish must have been the father to the thought"<sup>18</sup> when Ekholm, Lothrop and I mistook the figures in our first talk with Miguel Covarrubias" (Kidder 1949e). He stated that the \$5,000 that Rockefeller was offering immediately would be helpful because the Mexican government would not make their funds available to Ruz until well into 1950, the next year. Again he talked about Ruz's need for an advisory committee to help with planning. Even though Ruz was an excellent archaeologist "...he should have the concurrence in his plans from the higher-ups" (Kidder 1949e). Kidder was sad that the Rockefellers could not visit the site. He told Ruz that he had plans to retire next November and he would love meet the Rockefellers at Palenque to "see the wonderful old place with you." Ekholm soon received the check from Rockefeller and sent a payment of \$4,750 to Marquina for the second year's excavation project. He told him that they were retaining \$250 for expenses that the IAR might incur during the year, but that he would send the remaining funds to him later. Ekholm planned a trip to México in March and hoped to see him then (Ekholm 1950b).

Even though the funding would be much less than expected in future years, Ruz still maintained that he wanted to initiate a research project at Palenque that was much larger and more systematic than any that had been done in the past. He proceeded to revise his five-year project plan, a plan that provided for a complete cultural and historical panorama of the indigenous life for the entire Palenque region from its earliest beginnings to the present. He wanted this study to include archaeological explorations both at Palenque and in the surrounding area (Ruz Lhuillier 1952c) and an investigation of Palenque's relationship with other nearby and distant Maya cities and even other Mesoamerican civilizations. They would seek to understand the evolutionary stages of

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<sup>18</sup> This quote is from Shakespeare's King Henry IV Part 2 Pt. II. Act IV. Sc. 5. L. 93 "Thy wish was father, Harry, to that thought" (Shakespeare 1864:432).

the architecture, ceramics, painting and sculptural art, hieroglyphs, and burial practices as well as other forms of technology that were used by the ancient people of Palenque.

He believed that archaeological explorations could be aided by anthropological studies of local indigenous people's skeletal remains and burial records. He wanted to also perform ethnological and linguistic studies of the Chol groups living in the nearby foothills of the mountains of Chiapas, and then to compare the findings with those from the Lacandon and Tzeltal who also lived nearby (Ruz Lhuillier 1952c)<sup>19</sup>.

### THE 1949 SEASON'S WORK

At the end of each Palenque season, it became Ruz's habit to compile his INAH reports at his home in Mérida<sup>20</sup>. On March of 1950, he finished and signed his *Informe de la Temporada de 1949*. Subsequently, he would then create a more formal report for the INAH *Anales del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía*, a journal that specialized in INAH- sponsored research on Mexican history and archaeology which was first published in 1877 (Castillo Mangas 2007:35). The following is a summary of the work that Ruz recorded for the 1949 season. A majority of the information comes from three written sources: The *Anales*, the unpublished *Informes*, and from an unpublished report that he sent to Rockefeller.

Just as he would in every subsequent season report, he acknowledged and thanked his funding sources and listed all of the archaeologists who had helped him that season: Agustín Villagra Caletí, illustrator from INAH; Lauro Zavala, archaeology intern from the Instituto Indigenista Interamericano who worked in the area called "the tombs"<sup>21</sup>; Jesús Núñez Chinchilla, a student at the National School of Anthropology and History

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<sup>19</sup> To my knowledge, this task was never accomplished.

<sup>20</sup> However, there were times when the reports published in the *Anales* were delayed up to four years. His 1953, 1954, 1955 and 1956 reports were not published until 1958. His 1957 and 1958 reports were not published until 1962.

<sup>21</sup> Otherwise known as Groups I, II and III (III is now known as the Murcielagos Group).

(ENAH) who was in charge of the Palace work; and Santos Villasánchez, a restorer from INAH. Ruz's brother Miguel Ruz<sup>22</sup> served as the field supervisor and artist. Eric Thompson of the Carnegie Institution of Washington assisted with the epigraphy (Ruz Lhuillier 1952c). The project architect for the proposed new archaeological camp and attached museum was Luis MacGregor (García Moll 2007).

The first phase of the season work plan was an extensive cleaning of the site, including a thorough weeding and weed prevention program of all the major buildings in the central part of the acropolis, in and around the Palace. Ruz believed that one of his most important goals was to build a site camp that would be large and comfortable enough to house the many specialists needed over the next few years to restore and to explore the site<sup>23</sup>. The existence of this camp would better ensure a healthy and productive team. In addition, it could give temporary housing to guest researchers or to visitors that were recommended by INAH. In terms of archaeology and architecture, his desire was to systematically study the site's temples, burials and ceramics. He would continue to restore the Palace Tower, work that had been initiated by Miguel Ángel Fernández. He proposed that all buildings explored should also be consolidated. One of his priorities was to preserve and perhaps restore the stucco reliefs that decorate the pillars of the Palace, since they were in immediate danger of being destroyed by weather and vegetation. Discovering and drawing all the paintings in the Palace was also on his list. He proposed to begin a systematic method for the study of the findings and then begin an artifact catalog using the same rules implemented by other INAH archaeologists. Originally, he had proposed the first ethnological and linguistic research

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<sup>22</sup> In France, he was known as Michel. Later he became a guide and a French teacher at Palenque. Moisés Morales, a well-known Palenque guide, was one of his students (personal communication 2010).

<sup>23</sup> In addition, I was informed by Ruz's eldest son that the camp was needed so that Ruz could bring his wife and family to help him at the site (Ruz Buenfil 2010).

study of the Chol Maya that lived in the region of Palenque and Salto de Agua, but he stated that this item had to be taken out of their plans due to unforeseen circumstances.<sup>24</sup>

Ruz spent one month organizing the 1949 project (Ruz Lhuillier 1952c), which included reading the previous archaeological reports, developing a project plan, selecting his technical staff and developing administrative procedures. He procured equipment, tools, machinery, materials and food.<sup>25</sup> Exploration at Palenque started at the end of March and lasted until the middle of June. Technical staff who participated on the project was to deliver their reports to him by January 1950. He underscored the restrictions for each of his two main funding sources – the Rockefeller funds were to be spent on archaeological work whereas the funds from INAH were to be used to rehabilitate and reconstruct the existing camp. The following table displays his income and expenses for the season:

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<sup>24</sup> This statement is a reference to his discovery that his funding from Nelson Rockefeller would be much less than previously anticipated.

<sup>25</sup> Although Ruz did not mention it here, many of these tasks were also performed by his wife Blanca as stated previously and according to Alberto Ruz Buenfil, their eldest son (Ruz Buenfil 2011).

Table 1: 1949 Project Expenses by Line Item

<b>Income Sources</b>	<b>Income in Pesos</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
INAH Subsidy + INAH Personnel (in-kind)	30,000.00 + 41,930.77	0.51
Rockefeller	70,354.14 <sup>26</sup>	0.49
Total Pesos	100,354.14	100.00
<b>Line Item Expenses</b>	<b>Cost in Pesos</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Personnel	42,942.32	42
Transportation (including Kidder trip)	19,426.29	19
Construction & Reconstruction Material	14,314.11	14
Tools, machinery and camp equip <sup>27</sup>	16,870.20	16.5
Technical equipment, drawing, photo, etc <sup>28</sup>	8,690.71	8.5
Total	102,243.63	100

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR THE 1949 SEASON (RUZ LHULLIER 1950B)**

Ruz's archaeologists were able to obtain new data from the Palace, the Palace Tower, the "burial groups"<sup>29</sup> and the Temple of Inscriptions. He wrote that he believed he had found several earlier constructions under some of the explored buildings. In the Palace he observed that the most ancient layer was a platform that they found in an

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<sup>26</sup> Based upon the \$10,000 that Rockefeller donated for this year, the exchange rate between México and the U.S. equaled 7.04.

<sup>27</sup> This budget item included picks, shovels, a pulley, wheelbarrows, a water pump, a light generator, a refrigerator, a stove, electrical equipment, tents, cots, bedding, cooking utensils and a table, etc.

<sup>28</sup> This item included cameras, drawing materials, stationery, photographic prints, Photostats and blueprints.

<sup>29</sup> Here he is referring to Groups I, II and Murciélago (Group III).

exploration pit, which measured 4.50 m. above the plaza level. The latest buildings of the Palace were those groups that were built on top, especially the buildings of the northern gallery of House A-D where they found a tablet later dubbed “The Palace Tablet”. It had fallen forward when the wall of House A-D fell and that was how the three-stone panel was discovered (Figure 6.2). It had a dedication date of 9.14.10.0.0 according to Eric Thompson. This date corresponded to the height of Palenque’s grandeur. The stairs and staggered landings on the north side and its gallery and stucco reliefs were the second stage of the construction of the Palace. The third period was marked by several modifications: the building of new vertical walls upon an existing stepped vertical platform and the addition of the large well-carved slabs and talud of the lower body of the pyramid. Finally, a broad staircase was built upon the original one. Then, perhaps the large terraces on the west side were built, covering the body of the original platform.

Regarding the tombs in the “funerary group”, as of this year they had found three types: a tomb by itself (Group II), a mausoleum for numerous tombs (Group III, now known as the Murciélagos Group), and the secondary use of a building for a burial that was originally intended for another purpose (Group I). In all cases they saw one or more narrow staircases with vaults at right angles. As mentioned earlier, the archaeology student Lauro José Zavala was supervising this work, but unfortunately he developed a severe case of malaria during the last fifteen days of the season (Zavala 1949:27) so he was unable to finish it.

Ruz felt the need to address the preponderance of staircases found in the Palace, the Temple of Jaguar, the Temple of the Inscriptions, and perhaps in every building. He thought that it suggested the possibility that their construction was for defense. He noted that Eduard Georg Seler (1849–1922) visited Palenque in 1910 (Stuart and Stuart 2008:86) and when Seler examined the stairs and tunnels inside the foundation of the Palace,<sup>30</sup> Seler also thought that they had been built for defensive purposes. Judging from

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<sup>30</sup> These tunnels are commonly known as the “subterráneos”.

the Palace's location and the height of its platform on the north side, Ruz speculated that its position was particularly strategic and partly defensive, especially since the site sits on an escarpment high above the flatlands and swamps.

Ruz posited that these platforms were used as a series of strongholds positioned at different heights, thus the site's name "Palenque", a word that in Spanish means "stockade" or "fenced area". According to a report written by José Antonio Calderón, Capitán General de Guatemala, there was no doubt that the native people "retained in their memory the existence of defensive works"(Calderón 1785). Ruz writes that this statement is an indirect reference to an approximate translation of the word "Otolum", a word that Marcos E. Becerra<sup>31</sup> translated as "fortified houses" (Ruz Lhuillier 1952c:60).<sup>32</sup>

Palenque's geographic location on a high ridge was obviously one that protected the ancient city's inhabitants against enemies. Ruz thought that there might have been many different population groups passing this way, and after studying historical maps he had determined that the site was located on the southern edge of an ancient major transit corridor. Ruz described this corridor as a "lowland" that extended out towards the sea, an area where there were possibly countless numbers of human migrations that passed in both directions. He wrote that these wet and fertile plains were inhabited by people who were called the Chontales, frontier people who had characteristics of both Mayas and Nahuas. He noted that there were Mexican sources that called the region "Nonoalco"<sup>33</sup>, a place "where the languages change" and it marks an end to one culture and the beginning

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<sup>31</sup> Becerra was a prolific Mexican linguist and ethnographer who lived from 1870 to 1940.

<sup>32</sup> To see a more in-depth treatment of the derivation of the town name "Palenque" and its association with the ruins, see Hardy's 1991 Palenque Round Table article called "Historical Notes on the Discovery of the Ruins"

<sup>33</sup> Ruz does not quote his "Mexican sources", but there is a possibility that he was referring to a place called "Onohualco, [corrected to] Nonohualco" in César Macazaga Ordoño, *Nombres Geográficos de México* (México. D. F.: Editorial Innovación, 1979), page 113 wherein it states "Onohualco figura al este del mapa del Imperio Mexicano. publicado en las primeras ediciones de la Historia de Clavijero. La región corresponde actualmente a los Estados de Tabasco y Chiapas." (A special thanks to Nick Hopkins for providing this information to me).

of another<sup>34</sup>. He related that somewhere on the coast, the character Quetzalcoatl Topiltzin disappeared, recalling that Quetzalcoatl had been previously expelled from Tula and found refuge with the Olmeca-Xicalanca, another group of people who had been expelled from the Mexican highlands. Later the area evolved into a major trade route that stretched between the Yucatán peninsula, the Gulf Coast, and Central México. He stated that this route would eventually become an avenue used by the Aztecs for militaristic purposes against the Mayan cities and people of Yucatán. Ruz wrote:

*The presence of foreign and hostile groups in the region of Palenque is, therefore, much more than just a hypothesis. Also, remember that in referring to the invaders of Yucatán, named Tutul Xiu[s], Landa says they came 'from the south, in Chiapas'. Even more precisely, Herrera claimed that they came "from the slopes of the mountains of the Lacandones of Chiapas. (Ruz Lhuillier 1952c:60)*  
Author's translation

He explained that currently in the Museum of Man in Paris, there are several fine orange paste ceramic pieces that were found in Mesoamerica during the end of the last century. Cylindrical or pear-shaped, they were of the same form, made of the same content, and decorated the same as those that have been found in Central México, Chichén Itzá, and all along the Atlantic coast, where Ruz thought they originated. He stated that they were contemporary with the Toltec period. He also proposed that these staircases at Palenque reinforced his belief that there was an unrelenting pressure by the coastal people against Palenque and that it was eventually occupied by these Atlantic groups. This occupation, which was probably late, was the beginning of the decline of Palenque and also the decline of the “secular tradition of wisdom and art under the blows of warlike peoples, and which in turn suffered the irresistible pull of the Nahuatl tide of the highlands of México” (Ruz Lhuillier 1952c:60).

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<sup>34</sup> Schele and Mathews (1998:95) write that this broad coastal plan was known as “Nonowal and Xacalanco by later peoples of Mesoamerica.” They do not reference a source for this information.

## 1949 EXPLORATIONS IN THE TEMPLE OF THE INSCRIPTIONS<sup>35</sup>

Ruz is remembered best for his discoveries in the Temple of the Inscriptions. As explained in his *Informe de Temporada de 1949*, Ruz chose the Temple of the Inscriptions as one of the first to be explored because of its height and because it had not been investigated previously. Since it was taller than any other building at the site, he posited that it would be more likely to have previous building construction layers under it. When they first arrived this season, they found the temple and its base covered with weeds so the first thing they had to do was to clear it. Subsequently, in order to understand the original pyramid body and its form, they made nine trenches into its base at an approximate depth of ½ meter.<sup>36</sup> The following is a description of each trench. For a view of some of this work, see Figure 6.3:

Trench # 1 - The first trench was begun at the base of the pyramid in a north-south direction, several meters east of the building's approximate center. At this location, they found several carved stones that were *in situ*. When they removed the rubble that covered them, they found that these stones represented the edge of the east *alfarda*<sup>37</sup> that decorated a staircase. As they advanced the trench, they found the original base for the body of the pyramid's sloping walls. At a height of about 10 meters they discovered a landing of 2.40 meters wide with a perfectly preserved *talud-tablero*.<sup>38</sup>

Trench # 2 – This trench was dug 10 meters away and parallel to the first trench. The wall (the *tablero*) measured 1.25 meters tall, with molding that protruded out 0.60 meters at the bottom and 0.55 meters on the top. The wall slope (*talud*) was at 76

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<sup>35</sup> As explained in the “Study Limitations” section of this dissertation, Ruz’s most well known discovery was in the Temple of the Inscriptions; therefore the work he did in this building will be my primary focus in this chapter.

<sup>36</sup> This number was not given by Ruz but was instead derived by the author after viewing the photos in the *Informe*.

<sup>37</sup> Alfardas are ramps found on both sides of stairs. In ancient Mesoamerican architecture, they are often carved with motifs.

<sup>38</sup> Also referred to as slope and panel, this architectural style so common in early Mesoamerican culture consists of a platform structure (the *tablero*), and an inward-sloping (*talud*).

degrees. Both the *alfarda*<sup>39</sup> and the wall were determined to be of the same period, based upon the way it was constructed.

Trench # 3 – To determine the width of the staircase, Ruz opened another trench on the west side of the pyramid body, parallel to trench # 1. This one uncovered the west *alfarda* and part of the first steps of the staircase. The *alfarda* was beveled and was made from a medium to large stone. The steps were built with thick stones reinforced with a lime mixture. Each step measured between 0.30 to 0.28 meters high. The *alfarda* had an inclination of 47 degrees.

Trenches # 4 to 8 – He continued the use of the trenches to try to determine the original architectural form of the building. Three were dug parallel to Trench 1 and two were made in an east/west orientation.

Trench # 6 was placed on the immediate west side of the Inscriptions Temple, toward Building XIII where he was able to see four staggered levels that led to a small patio located about 13 meters up, between the two temples<sup>40</sup>.

Trench # 7 - After finding the patio, he wanted to determine its dimensions as well as find the west boundary of the temple, so he put in an east/west trench (# 7) and found the southern boundary of the courtyard and its SW corner which was covered with light debris.

Trench # 8 – By digging this east/west trench he was able to find the temple's platform, but it was covered with rubble from parts of the façade and the roof comb that had fallen. They began pushing the rubble down the NW corner of the pyramid. By removing the small pieces of debris and leaving the larger stones for use in the restoration work, they could then view the foundation of the temple at the top of the pyramid. Now it was possible to see that the height of the talud that supported the temple was 1.68 meters

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<sup>39</sup> *Alfarda* is the Spanish architectural term for the decorative slabs that flank the staircases found on Mesoamerican pyramids.

<sup>40</sup> It is interesting to note that later, while exploring the interior staircase inside the Temple of the Inscriptions, he would discover that this patio is connected to the stairs by side corridors that he thought also served as ventilation ducts for the stairs.

high and 6.93 meters wide, including another set of alfardas measuring 1.44 meters wide with a slope of 44 degrees. These alfardas, located on both sides of the stairs, led from the temple platform up to the floor of the temple. They had been created from a single slab, but were now broken; it was possible to barely see a few features of a carved human body on them. The steps were formed by large stones perfectly carved and fitted. While cleaning the front of the temple platform, they found many pieces of the stuccos that had decorated the temple façade, its roof comb and all the pillars. These were numbered, photographed, and placed in storage. Most of them appeared to represent gods, human heads, hieroglyphs, numerals, affixes and many unidentified motifs. In this same location, they also found two fragments of a carved bench, but its form and shape could not be determined (Figure 6.4).

Trench # 9 - They began trench #9 by clearing all the rubble from the front of and inside the temple. As they cleaned, they uncovered the temple steps. He concluded that during the next season it would be necessary to continue to uncover, then conserve and consolidate them all the way to the base. This would make the steps less difficult and dangerous to climb, since they were at very steep angle.

The rubble inside the temple that blocked its access was removed. Then they were able to clean out the debris that covered the central and side rooms. The floor of the temple was made from large carved stone slabs fifteen cm. thick tightly fitted together instead of stucco as was the case in other temples at Palenque. On the floor of the central room, one of the slabs immediately left of the entry way had a double row of round holes that had been fitted with plugs that could be easily removed (Figure 6.5). Next to that slab, there was another that had been broken and dirt was exposed where a hole had been dug. He speculated that the hole was made by a looter who had given up when he found the rest of the stone had been plastered to the others with strong mortar<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> Later, Ruz would surmise that it was Désiré Charnay, an explorer from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, who dug this hole (Ruz Lhuillier 1958a).

After cleaning out the hole, they found walls that were not part of the temple support and that seemed to extend downward. They decided to excavate the hole to try to discover if these walls belonged to an earlier structure. The work proved to be very hard, because the hole was packed with large stones reinforced with very strong mortar. In addition, the hole was only big enough for one person at a time, so the digging was slow. The pit ran east to west and was 1.60 meters wide. When they reached a depth of 0.70 meters, a long stone appeared that was attached to both walls with stucco. Just below this stone, a wall was visible with a possible vaulted ceiling, blocked up by a stone mud wall. In the course of clearing this wall they found an *ofrenda* in it that was a button or ornament made of bone.

About two meters down into the hole, they found one step and then many others followed. At about the same level, they discovered a slab that had been placed at the central base the aforementioned rough wall. The slab was the top of an offering box anchored by mud. Inside the box was a rounded stone with an irregular shape that was painted red on top and placed on top of the stone were two jade earrings. This was *Ofrenda II*.

After taking the box out, they continued their way down to the next step and noted that at the southern edge of the stairs there was a plaster tube that ran along with the steps. It was made of very thin stone slabs trimmed and covered with plaster.<sup>42</sup> This structure tended to disintegrate when it came into contact with the humid air. Ruz could not tell if it continued up to the very top of the stairs because they still had not uncovered what they thought were three top steps located immediately under the perforated slab that was held together with very hard mortar in the temple floor.<sup>43</sup> They proceeded to take the rough masonry wall apart. Behind the wall they found more debris and mortar as well as another vaulted ceiling. Continuing down they found another wall that also had an

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<sup>42</sup> Later, this tube would be called a "Psycho-tube" or psychoduct.

<sup>43</sup> Ruz would eventually discover that the tube did indeed lead all the way up to the temple floor.

offering attached to the wall in a masonry box. It contained a fragment of plaster from a decorative motif along with dirt and red paint.

They dismantled the box and the entire wall and behind it were more steps. After clearing that wall, they came to another vaulted ceiling and another wall of rough stonework, but with no offering. After taking this wall down, they found more debris fill and more steps. They reached another ceiling vault and another masonry wall. At this point, Ruz reported that the season had come to a close and they were forced to stop the explorations. In total, they had uncovered twenty-one steps and had reached a depth of eight meters below the sanctuary floor. Inside the pyramid, the stairs were headed in a western direction.

The work was very hard and as they dug, there was much speculation about where this passage led.<sup>44</sup> In Ruz's summary for the year, he wrote that he had several ideas about the function of the staircase. It might lead to an older temple, to a tomb, or to a chamber. The stairwell could have been a secret accessway to and from the temple for defensive purposes or it might have had a theatrical purpose - to give the appearance that a godly priest could magically disappear. Or it could simply be a way to move people about for household domestic functions or for secret purposes in servicing the temple.

Conditions inside the stairwell were almost unbearable because of the humidity and the dust. They began to use a gasoline lamp to light the way as they went deeper into the hole, but it used up what little oxygen they had (A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:96). The team was composed of eight to ten men, some lined up in the hole and others on top hauling out the rubble.

In order to ensure that their activities in the belly of the pyramid did not cause the building to become unstable during the off-season, Ruz left braces inside some of the vault sections. There was no danger of collapse since the walls of the vaulted staircase

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<sup>44</sup> In his 1953 Saturday Evening Post article, as told to Alden Mason, Ruz said that his brother Miguel jokingly called it a fire escape (Ruz 1953).

seemed to be very stable and well-built, but he thought that since they had taken the fill out of the staircase, it might cause the building to settle. They would diligently watch it to look for signs of instability and then intervene if it started to collapse.

He made several observations about some of the features inside the temple structure. Ruz noticed the use of large slabs, in contrast to the small stone slabs that are characteristic of most of the buildings of Palenque. The windows in both the interior rooms and the outside corridor had rectangular openings that penetrated the walls and ventilated the building. Some of these windows had been filled-in from the outside in ancient times, leaving them as wall-niches.

Ruz noticed that there were rings built into the walls, perhaps for the purpose of stabilizing fiber cords or vines that held back curtains made of woven cotton fabrics. He had found them in all the buildings at Palenque, including the Temple of the Cross.

Generally there were three ring types:

1. A stone placed in a vertical position into a carved niche with two carved slots to hold it, one on top and one on the bottom which could then hold thick ropes. They found this type embedded in the middle room door of the Inscriptions temple. There were three on each side – one at ground level, another at 0.48 meters below the corbelled vault, and the third was exactly in between these two.
2. A device that is made by tunneling a hole into the wall and out again right next to the first hole. The effect is that there is a small bridge between the two holes to which the rope or textile is hung.
3. The other device is made by embedding of a small but long curved stone in a shallow-carved open socket. These were found placed in the left and right doors of the gallery outside.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR THE 1949 SEASON (RUZ LHULLIER 1949D)

The following is a description of his accomplishments for the season found in a report sent to the IAR<sup>45</sup>:

- The center of the north side of the Palace was explored after removal of the rubble in the North Gallery.
- They explored three funerary mounds outside the archaeological zone, north of the hill,<sup>46</sup>
- They reproduced the already known as well as newly found murals of House E in the Palace<sup>47</sup>.
- The East Gallery stucco's were cleaned and repaired,
- The top floor of the Palace tower was explored and the bottom floors were rebuilt to prevent them from falling. Ruz does not state it here, but in his *Informe* for this season (Ruz Lhuillier 1950a); he included a drawing of the dilapidated roof and a reconstruction of the roof's original cornice, based upon the remains (Figure 1.9).
- They discovered a pit in the Temple of the Inscriptions building that was actually a "long tunnel",
- They began a pottery and stone object catalog,
- They did not initiate the linguistic and ethnological study of the Chol Indians due to unforeseen budget issues related to needing to pay "high salaries to the workmen due to the construction of the new Ferrocarril del Sureste<sup>48</sup>, the high cost of building materials and the travel expense of Dr. Kidder"(Ruz Lhuillier 1949d),
- They verified that there is no building under the stepped layers of the northern side of the Palace, but they did find a platform the purpose of which would be investigated next season.<sup>49</sup>
- New information was found that would establish the layout of the Gallery north of the Palace.

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<sup>45</sup> Ruz begins this report with his original goals for 1949 and then describes his accomplishments.

<sup>46</sup> At the time that Ruz wrote this, the zone was much smaller than it is today. The funerary mounds that he refers to are Groups I, II and Murcielagos (III).

<sup>47</sup> Ruz does not state the location of these murals within House E, but there are drawings in the AMAH files that would indicate that he is referring to the ones on the outside of the building.

<sup>48</sup> Ruz is referring to the inflation of local salaries that occurred when the railroad was being built; in other words, he had to compete with the salaries being paid to the laborers. Previously, Ruz had written that this study was not done due to the reduction in his funding from Rockefeller.

<sup>49</sup> Ruz would later qualify this when he realized that the Palace had been built in stages.

- Ruz noted with enthusiasm the discovery of a new relief that measured 3.35 X 2.4 meters.<sup>50</sup> He described it as a ceremonial scene with 286 glyphs and considered it one of the finest examples of Maya art to date. He stated that J. Eric Thompson reviewed the glyphs and

*...finds numerous other dates and points to the significance of little known glyphs, defining certain numerals, and explaining the unusual use of the lunar count with Calendar Round dates and other interesting points. Dr. Thompson considers the find as the most important inscription since the discovery of the reliefs of the Sun, the Cross and the Foliated Cross, and that it is the most important discovered inscriptions in 150 years (Ruz Lhuillier 1949d:3) Author's translation*

Ruz did not write about it in his list of accomplishments, but in his *Informe* for the year, he wrote that after examining the body of the pyramid of the Temple of the Inscriptions, he thought that he had found evidence of three possible construction periods for this temple (Ruz Lhuillier 1950a). However as the seasons progressed he would change his opinion about these “periods”, realizing that they were all part of the same construction, but built in different phases.

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<sup>50</sup> The tablet would later be called “The Palace Tablet”.

## Chapter 7: The 1950 Season

### THE NEED TO AMEND THE EXCAVATION PLANS

Ruz's carefully-laid-out plan developed at the beginning of 1949 needed modification since it was based upon Rockefeller subsidies of \$10,000 per year for five consecutive years. Now he knew that the actual funds would only be 40% of what he was told previously. In addition, he learned that he would only receive \$20,000 pesos from INAH for the 1950 season. These two developments must have been devastating since it meant that he had to reduce the scope of his work. He decided that he would limit his work to exploration and restoration, and still include the construction of the sorely needed site excavation camp. As noted earlier, he ultimately deleted the budget item he had defined as ethnographic and linguistic research of the local Chol Indians (Ruz Lhuillier 1952d:1).

Ruz wrote to Kidder in May (Ruz Lhuillier 1950e) and he began the letter by telling him that he was writing it from the porch of the Temple of the Inscriptions. He reported that at the foot of the pyramid, a bulldozer was busily clearing away some of the debris from the main plaza and that the long-planned road was being built (Figure 7.1). The road would extend from the railroad line near the modern town of Palenque to the site. He believed that this was a major commitment on the part of the state of Chiapas and the Mexican government. Work trucks had arrived and access/egress for the site was better. Consequently, Ruz had great hopes that they would be able to make even more progress than the previous year. He planned to give Rockefeller his latest report on the 1949 season, along with some photos that would keep him up-to-date. Again he told him that if Rockefeller could view the ruins, he would not hesitate to continue funding the work.

At the end of May, Ekholm wrote to Rockefeller and told him that he had recently visited Palenque on March 27<sup>th</sup> (Ekholm 1950d). It was his first time to visit the site and he wanted to share his impressions. He told him that regular train service had not yet

begun, so he had to “go by *autovía*<sup>1</sup> on the unfinished track” (Ekholm 1950d). At the Palenque station, he discovered that the twelve-mile road from the station to the site was almost finished and they expected the road to be surfaced by April<sup>2</sup>. He was able to ride to the site in a jeep.

Ekholm’s vision for Palenque was similar to what the Carnegie Institution’s was for Copan – to make it “an attractive and pleasant place to visit”. He was happy that Ruz agreed with Kidder and himself about the idea “that only the main portion of the site should be cleared and planted with grass so that the buildings will be seen against the background of the heavy forest cover of the hills”. He noted the attractiveness of the natural springs that flow through the site and their benefit for tourism. He stated that he was impressed with the skill that Ruz had used to consolidate the buildings, and yet their “new” look was non-intrusive. He told Rockefeller that his funds had been well spent and again he invited him to the site so that he could see the work in progress.

The next month, Kidder wrote Ekholm and told him that he should hold onto the 10% retainage in case Rockefeller decided to go to Palenque, and either Kidder or Ekholm might need to accompany him (Kidder 1950c): “...the road between México [City] and Yucatán is now open” so he thought that it would be easier to get to Palenque from that direction. He asked Ekholm to let him know if Miguel Covarrubias was in town so that they could both “needle” Miguel and Rosa into asking Rockefeller for more money.

Four days later, on June 20<sup>th</sup>, Kidder received correspondence from Ekholm telling him that he had talked with Miguel Covarrubias, and he told Kidder that he would be spending the weekend with Rockefeller in the country. He would do what he could to get Rockefeller to commit to “a couple more years” (Ekholm 1950c). It is interesting to note that while Kidder and Ekholm were attempting to get Rockefeller to continue his funding

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<sup>1</sup> I interpret this term “*autovía*” to be a “hand car”, an early form of individual transport used when public rail services were not available.

<sup>2</sup> The road was actually completed by May 9th, according to a letter from Ruz to Kidder, at which time they were then able to bring trucks and other heavy equipment into the site to clear debris (Ruz Lhuillier 1950)

for Palenque, Miguel's wife Rosa would be instrumental in convincing Rockefeller to discontinue it, as will become evident in the next chapter.

Two months later, Kidder sent a letter to Ruz congratulating him on the presidential visit to the ruins by Miguel Alemán adding that he hoped the president would be able to find funds to continue the Palenque work. Kidder planned to ask Ekholm to send Ruz the remaining season funds and he also let Ruz of his (Kidder's) forthcoming retirement in November of that same year (Kidder 1950a).

### SUMMARY OF THE WORK DONE AT PALENQUE IN 1950

Ruz's commission for this season began on April 12th. He left Mérida on the 24<sup>th</sup> of that month with his specialized builders and drivers (Ruz Lhuillier 1950b:1), many of whom came from Muna, Yucatán (Gallegos Ruiz 1997:23)<sup>3</sup>. He arrived in Palenque on the 28th. His technical team members left México City one day after his departure. Those team members included Agustín Villagra Caletí, an illustrator from INAH, Lauro José Zavala, archeology intern at the National School of Anthropology and American Indian Technical Institute, and Alejandro Mangino Tazzer, a student at the National School of Anthropology and History (ENAH) and the National School of Architecture. Many of the architectural drawings and the maps for the work were initialed "M.R." There is no one on the above list with those initials; however in previous reports, Ruz gave his brother, Miguel<sup>4</sup> Ruz credit for the drawings he did for the project, so I believe that any drawing with the initials "M.R" were Miguel's. (View Figure 7.2 for an image of Ruz and his brother sitting at a work table at the site). The project work began after the 24<sup>th</sup> of April and lasted until July 9th. As was his usual custom at the end of the season, Ruz returned to Mérida and concluded his analysis and reports, finishing his official "*Informe*" on March 20, 1951. During the season, the team worked toward the restoration and

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<sup>3</sup> In addition to these specialized workers, Ruz also hired people from the Palenque pueblo and from nearby villages, the majority of whom were native Maya Chol speakers.

<sup>4</sup> Miguel was also known as "Michel" in French.

consolidation of The Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple XIII, the Palace Tower, and the Palace Aqueduct. They also worked in Group III (now known as the Murciélagos Group) and Group IV.

Total funds available for the 1950 season were 63,200 pesos, with \$20,000 from INAH and \$5,000 U.S. dollars from the Rockefeller grant. The exchange rate during this time was \$8.64 pesos per U.S. dollar. Table 2 shows the line item expenditures included in Ruz's report.

Table 2: 1950 Project Expenses by Line Item<sup>5</sup>

Category	Description	Expended	Percent of Total
Personal 1	Workers' wages and salaries and allowances of staff	31,410.40	0.4970
Personal 2	Camp support and medical supplies	3,204.24	0.0507
Transport	Travel of staff and specialists, freight equipment, vehicles and materials, status of funds and postal and telegraph charges	\$11,091.60	0.1755
Materials	Construction and restoration - cement, lime, bricks, wood, iron, etc.	\$10,939.92	0.1731
Machinery	Tools useful for camp	\$1,624.24	0.0257
Investigation	Research Articles, equipment and works of photography and drawing	\$4,929.60	0.0780
Total		63,200.00	100

*The New Road*

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<sup>5</sup> In Ruz's succeeding archaeological reports he would never again be this specific about his line item expenditures.

Upon arriving at the site, Ruz found that the long-proposed road tying the East Railway Station with the modern town of Palenque was already under construction. In addition, the road from the town to the site was being built. Even though a generalized map for the road to the site was created and included in Ruz's *Informe*, its exact alignment was most likely left up to the construction company. There is no report on how many structures were cleared in its path from the pueblo to the site. We do know that the construction crew had sliced into the corner of Building A in Blom's Group IV, forcing the archaeologists to explore the building (Molina Montes 1978). This job was given to the student intern, Lauro José Zavala<sup>6</sup>. In the wall of the second story of this building, which was vaulted, a three-slab panel later named the Tablet of the Slaves was discovered (Stuart and Stuart 2008:93). See Figure 7.3 for a map that Zavala drew of the group, the building and the location where they found the tablet. Figure 7.4 displays photographs taken as the stone panels were loaded onto a truck. Ruz stated that the carved image on the tablet was one that was seen over and over again at this site – the offering and the receipt of a gift by a high dignitary at Palenque.

In addition to unearthing the corner of a building, the road crew uncovered a grave dubbed “*La Tumba Aislada*”<sup>7</sup> (Zavala 1950:44). At the time of the discovery, they had to stop their work while Zavala investigated the grave. The construction workers ended the road at the foot of the Temple of the Inscriptions and cleared out the grass at that location, making a plaza. The road was then paved. Ancient Palenque was now connected with the rest of the world. Ruz wrote that this connection had important consequences for the future of the area.

*The first [consequence] is that this easier access has resulted in an increase in the flow of visitors, which in turn brings with it new obligations, such as the need for more surveillance, building maintenance, protection of the works of art,*

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<sup>6</sup> See his *Informe de Trabajo* 1950 for more information.

<sup>7</sup> This discovery was written about in the section called the “Segunda Parte” in Zavala’s unpublished report “Palenque: Sección Tumbas, Informe Personal Exploraciones Arqueológicas, Segunda Temporada 1950”

*intensified cleaning of roads and major monuments. In turn, more building consolidation and restoration will also increase visits to the area, as will the protection of the buildings and the institution of safety considerations (Ruz Lhuillier 1952d) Author's translation*

#### *The Visit of President Miguel Alemán*

The president of the Republic of México visited the site on May 28<sup>th</sup> and at that time he saw the dilapidated state of the architecture. Consequently, he promised an increase in government support, which would be directed toward the consolidation and restoration of the most dilapidated buildings, as opposed to more exploration. Ruz stated in his report that he would need to amend his plans for the following years to emphasize restoration over exploration and “only perform explorations when it would strengthen or restore a building” (Ruz Lhuillier 1951b:47).

#### *Cleaning the Site of Debris and Weeds*

Just as in the previous year, crews were busy weeding and bushing around the camp, especially around those monuments that were to be explored, such as the Palace, the Temple of Inscriptions, Group III (now known as the Murciélagos Group), located on the hillside north of the Palace, and the Ballcourt. They had planted grass the last season and it had blossomed late, due to the year-long drought that the area had experienced. The grass had become very tall, but sparse so they had to cut it several times in order to get it to grow thick enough to prevent unwanted weeds and shrubs.

#### *The Combination Museum and Camp Building*

The new camp and museum were to be located on a small esplanade north of the acropolis. The crew continued to work on its construction under the supervision of Alejandro Mangino Tazzer (Ruz Lhuillier 1952d:25). The architectural plans for the building (Figure 7.5) had been created the year before by Luis MacGregor<sup>8</sup> (Ruz

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<sup>8</sup> I have not been able to find any addition information about this individual.

Lhuillier 1952e:5). The construction crew had very little sand available to them at first, so they had to mix lime with sandy soil for a strong masonry seal. However after the road was built, they were able to bring in sand and gravel so eventually they were able to make a standard concrete mix.

During this season they were able to build the frame, then put up the concrete pillars, place the beams for the trusses and then finish the concrete roof. They bought local wood and then sawed and planed it to make the shutters that would keep out the rain but allow ventilation; they then made the frames and doors. Galvanized pipe was installed that brought running water into the building, and a tank was added that was fed by a pump so that they could bring in water from the Otolum stream. MacGregor's original plans were changed somewhat to conform to the site conditions, availability of materials, labor, and economic resources. When finished, the building would contain sleeping quarters for technicians and guests, a dining room, a kitchen, bathrooms and a small museum. He hoped that the housing section of the building would be ready for occupation within a few weeks.

Ruz felt an urgent need for the small museum (Ruz Lhuillier 1952d:34) because all the artifacts and works of art found at Palenque were kept in a simple hut near the camp. The hut's building frame was falling in and it had almost completely decayed, so the integrity of the artifacts was threatened, and even worse, they were not secure and could easily be stolen. He believed that the high quality and beauty of these objects warranted a special gallery and museum where they could be displayed for the public. They also needed a bodega for the storage of items not on display.

### **EXPLORING THE TEMPLE OF INSCRIPTIONS**

Ruz personally oversaw excavations at the Temple of the Inscriptions that began with the outside staircase located on the body of the temple<sup>9</sup>. The condition of the stairs would

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<sup>9</sup> More information on the nine trenches that Ruz dug on the pyramid base is found in the previous chapter.

determine how easy it would be to get into and out of the temple, therefore it was a priority<sup>10</sup>. The stairs were about three meters wide to a point that reached half-way down the body of the pyramid and below that, their width was unknown because they were covered with rubble. They cleared all the steps and then temporarily consolidated them all the way up to the temple platform, making it easier to climb to the top. Since they were hauling large amounts of debris out of the inner stairs of the temple, I speculate that they were making hundreds of trips up and down the stairs every day, but I found no mention of this in his written documents. The steps totaled sixty and were divided into four uneven sections. The landings measured approximately one meter wide. Starting from the bottom, the stair sections were grouped into 9, 19, 19, and 13 steps. At the foot of the stairs was a circular stone altar found under the rubble. It was yellowish, soft, worn and broken into three incomplete pieces. It had four cylindrical legs originally supporting it, but they had fallen.

In the rubble and very near the altar, a stone carved figure was found that measured 9.5 inches. Ruz compared the shape of the figure to the “Tuxtla Statuette” and then pointed out that unlike that statue, this one is hominid, without legs, and had possibly “tiger” (i.e., feline) features. He identified its style as Olmec, not Maya. On its chest and back were small engraved circles that might have been places for ornamental disks that were now missing. Ruz saw this figurine as signs of a possible “cultural link” that existed in ancient times between Palenque and the peoples from the Atlantic Coast; or he thought it might have been a totem that was stored, revered and then handed down for several centuries before finally being used in a ceremony (Ruz Lhuillier 1952d:6). Suspecting that there might be other offerings buried at the foot of the stairs, in the stair landings, or around the stone altar, they made several test pits, but the only result was a painted fallen stucco.

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<sup>10</sup> Today, there is a modern accessway that leads to the back of the pyramid where it joins the mountain, but it is uncertain if this “back door” to the pyramid was present during the Ruz excavations.

They started exploring the interior staircase the previous year, and this year the exploration was continued. In effect, the ancient people had made the staircase useless by filling it with large and small stones and with dirt that had been solidified with red mud. Ruz's task was to supervise its clearing by dismantling the rubble and hauling it out through the upper temple entrance. Figure 7.6 displays three photos of the stairwell. The top photo shows an example of one of the walls that they had to dismantle within its vaulted ceiling, and the photo below, on the left, displays the ropes that they used to pull buckets of debris out of the stairwell. He reported that during this season, they were able to move down the steps from a location of 23 degrees to 46 degrees. They were then at a depth of 14.70 meters from the temple floor. At this level, the steps ended, a corridor began, and then turned at a right angle to the north, and then eastward at another right angle, thus making a "U" landing. Here a new series of stairs began again toward the center of the pyramid, which is the point at which they ran out of time.

At that same level, they discovered two galleries<sup>11</sup> that were parallel to each other extending west toward the neighboring Temple XIII. The galleries measured much narrower than the stairs and he did not have time to explore them further. He only removed the top half of the fill that covered them. In its transverse branch, the vaulted ceiling was stabilized by a stone beam. After finding the galleries, Ruz wrote that he was revising his theory about where the staircase might lead. Last season, he had speculated that it was one of the following possibilities: 1) the stairs were there to connect with an older building below; 2) they connected with an ancient grave; or 3) they served as a secret passage used to enter and exit the temple for the purpose of either defense or theatrics. Now he hypothesized that they were not used for ritual or for theatrical purposes<sup>12</sup>, but instead were for defense. He wrote "...we believe that this staircase was

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<sup>11</sup> Later, Ruz would decide that these were shafts created to ventilate the stairway.

<sup>12</sup> Thus surprising and amazing the king's subjects.

part of the defensive measures that the Palencanos used to withstand enemy attacks” (Ruz Lhuillier 1952d:32)<sup>13</sup>.

Writing in his 1950 archaeological report with a view toward the future, he then concluded that the problem of the mysterious staircase would be resolved during the next season (Ruz Lhuillier 1952d:32). But he was wrong. The work of clearing the stairs would stretch into the 1952 season, at which time he would finally reach the end of them and discover their real purpose.

#### *Carvings in the Floor of the Inscriptions Temple*

Ruz and his crew found several carvings on the slabs of the Inscriptions’ sanctuary floor, some of which cannot be seen today due to erosion. One of them was the image of a square that was divided into four fairly even quartered segments, with wide strips that run along the edges of each square (Figure 7.7). Inside each quartered segment were crudely drawn and barely visible human faces. The faces had the usual peculiarities of many of the carved or stuccoed characters that the ancient Palencanos expressed in their portraits - a strong aquiline nose and distorted face. The wide strips that surrounded the quarter sections had been segmented into squares that totaled 40. Ruz suggested the possibility that this configuration might have been made in association with a game similar to the Mexican "*patolli*"<sup>14</sup> an ancient Mesoamerican game whose playing board is also divided into cross sections as described by Fray Diego Durán (1951).

Another carving was found almost midway inside the structure on the floor by the west pillar. It was an image of a human male figure sitting with his legs folded, hair gathered up on top of his head, and adorned with feathers. In his left hand he had an

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<sup>13</sup> In 1951, after the 1950 season, when he was invited to contribute work to a publication in honor of his mentor and teacher, Alfonso Caso, Ruz wrote an article called “Chichén-Itzá y Palenque, Ciudades Fortificadas” (Ruz Lhuillier 1951a). The publication was based upon this premise and upon the idea that there were aggressive and warlike migrations of groups from Central México that came through Palenque on their way to Chichén Itzá.

<sup>14</sup> This game is mentioned in Fray Diego Duran’s work called *Historia De Las Indias de Nueva España y Islas de Terra Firma*.

unidentified object. The man was sitting upon a grid of faintly visible squares<sup>15</sup>. In the engraving, the character appeared to be rather stiff, which caused the artist Villagra to suggest that it might have been carved by an apprentice sculptor.

The third carving was found in the floor, slightly behind the outer gallery's western pillar. It was an image of a figure with only part of its carving visible (Figure 7.8 and 7.9). This was because the slab had possibly been broken off. I speculate that it might have been carried from some other part of the site to be used by the builders of the temple because it had some special significance, or because it was simply convenient to place it there. The carving was well-executed and was characteristic of the high quality carvings found on the sculpted stones at Palenque. Ruz believed it to be a "representation of the god of rain<sup>16</sup>, with its monstrous mask, long hooked nose, and a forehead stretched into two branches ending in foliated plants" (Ruz Lhuillier 1950:9).

### *The Aqueduct*

Ancient Palenque has several "aqueducts"<sup>17</sup>, one of which was built on the east side of the Palace. The water for that structure flows from a perennial spring that originates from a suspended water table inside El Mirador Hill, directly south of the site. Ruz's team explored the aqueduct, but not for the primary purpose of finding new information. Instead, they wanted to return the channel to the original course dredged by its ancient

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<sup>15</sup> The image looks as though the man is sitting upon a mat, but Ruz does not make this interpretation.

<sup>16</sup> Years later, the name coined for this representation would be the "Jester God" who, according to Miller and Schele (1986:53) was named for his tri-pointed forehead that resembles the dangly hat of a medieval court jesters and is seen primarily in images associated with royalty.

<sup>17</sup> The term "aqueduct" was first used to describe these features in a report made by Antonio Del Rio (Del Rio and Cabrera 1822) written in 1786 and in reality bears little resemblance to the raised structures that can be seen in Central Mexico. For more information regarding these water structures see Kirk French, "Creating Space through Water Management", masters' thesis, 2002.

engineers and restore its original vaulted infrastructure as best as they could<sup>18</sup>. Alejandro Mangino was in charge of this activity. Figure 7.10 is a photo of Ruz sitting inside the aqueduct near an artificial pool they discovered this season. Ruz understood the importance of de-silting the channel to ensure that it flowed properly, thus preventing flooding during the heavy downpours of the rainy season. Figure 7.11 contains two photos taken as the workmen were clearing some of the debris out of the channel.

*Group III, Otherwise known as the Murciélagos Group (Sección Tumbas)*

A finely made blackware vase was discovered by Zavala while working in the residential Murciélagos Group (Figure 7.12). The vase contained an “initial series”<sup>19</sup> along with other glyphs and dates, thus it was named “The Initial Series Vase”. The inscription found on this vase, as well as the one on the Tablet of the Slaves were still being reviewed and analyzed when Ruz wrote his report. To date, this vessel contains the very latest known calendar date found at the site and it possibly refers to the last known Palenque ruler (personal communication: Stuart 2012).

*End of the Season at Palenque*

Ruz ended his season at Palenque on July 9<sup>th</sup>, since the rainy season had started and then began working at Uxmal with César Sáenz. In mid-August, Ekholm wrote to Ruz and told him that he was sending the remaining grant money to INAH and then wrote that "the stairway extending downward from the Temple of the Inscriptions still remains tantalizing." He added that at the end, Ruz might "hit the jackpot" and then asked for a photo of the newly found relief panel called The Tablet of the Slaves (Ekholm 1950a).

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<sup>18</sup> The Maudslay map of the site (Figure 1.7) displays the stream's original channel as well as its shifted position when Maudslay saw it during his visit in 1891.

<sup>19</sup> The words “initial series” refer to a Maya Long Count date that is usually found at the beginning of a Maya inscription.

## Chapter 8: The 1951 Season<sup>1</sup>

During the 1951 season, Ruz put together a technical team made up of archaeologists Rafael Orellana, César Augusto Sáenz, and Lauro José Zavala. Also present were Arturo Romano, a physical anthropologist, ethnographer Laurette Séjourné, artist Agustín Villagra, and restorer Héctor García Manzanedo. The appointed administrator for the work was Vicente Serrano from INAH's Dirección de Monumentos Prehispánicos.

American archaeologists Robert and Barbara Rands were responsible for stratigraphic excavation and ceramic analysis<sup>2</sup> (Mendez 2003:2) this season. Their presence was unusual, since the excavation was essentially a Mexican operation, but they had been “recommended by the Institute of Andean Research” (Ruz Lhuillier 1952e:48), one of Ruz's sources of funding. At the beginning the Rands' were working in a collaborative effort between INAH and Columbia University of New York (Stuart and Stuart 2008:93). In an interview with Alonso Mendez at the Maya Exploration Center, Robert Rands stated that the reason that he began working at Palenque was because he was a student of Gordon Ekholm and that the IAR had set aside funds in the grant for travel to Palenque (Mendez 2003:2). At the onset, their work was paid for by the Wenner-Gren Foundation

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<sup>1</sup> Most of the information in this chapter was obtained from Ruz's 1951 INAH *Anales* published in 1952 (Ruz Lhuillier 1952c). For an unknown reason, there were only six pieces of correspondence in the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) files regarding this season. Four of the letters were from the IAR archives at the AMNH, while the other two were from the archives of the Rockefeller Foundation. There was no record of the 1951 *Informe de Trabajo* in the IAR files, so this would indicate that Ruz did not send one to Gordon Ekholm; however, one was sent to the INAH Archivos Técnicos, but it was only 15 pages long. There were three other important reports written by archaeologists under his direction for the year 1951 and they included those from Rafael Tapia Orellana (1951), Robert and Barbara Rands (1961) and César A. Sáenz Vargas. Since I am not in possession of Ruz's *Informe* for that year, I used his 1952 INAH *Anales* report where he described his work.

<sup>2</sup> In an interview with archaeologist Alonzo Mendez, Rands disclosed that because he knew that the work with ceramics would be more than he could do alone, he asked if his wife Barbara could come with him to wash and classify the pottery while he excavated. He related that the reaction of the Mexicans was “Why should you have your wife and we don't?” After long negotiations between IAR and INAH, the arrangement was approved.

in a grant paid to Robert Rands in the amount of \$1,000<sup>3</sup>. The Rands' report on their 1951 and 1959<sup>4</sup> excavations was finally published in 1961 in the journal *Estudios de Cultura Maya* (Rands and Rands). According to Ron Bishop, Bob Rands' friend, colleague and fellow ceramicist,

*The focus of activities at Palenque, directed by Ruz, was on architectural reconstruction. Recovery of pottery [sherds] was not controlled—almost no pottery associated with any of the structures was saved [up until the Rands' began working there]. Bob's work therefore would be rather independent, but under the official oversight of Ruz. Since Bob had necessary funding, Ruz raised no objections.... Bob would focus on locating and stratigraphically excavating refuse dumps [in order] to begin to develop a ceramic sequence for the site<sup>5</sup> (personal communication 2011).*

Barbara Rands, who later became a graduate student in the master's program for archaeology at the University of New Mexico, wrote her thesis on the ceramics of the Temple of the Inscriptions (1954). She supervised three stratigraphic test pits near that temple (Figure 8.1) and this work was documented in her thesis (Rands 1954).

At the beginning of February 1951, Rockefeller sent his final grant of \$5,000 to Ekholm, restating his original terms and conditions and then summarizing the amount of money that he had sent so far (Rockefeller 1951a). He also wanted to let Ruz know that the money was being sent, despite the fact that the Mexican government did not match his money by 50 percent as per the original agreement. Furthermore, the money was being made available to Ruz because of the project's success and he made it clear that this payment would be the final one.

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<sup>3</sup> In a personal communication dated June 6, 2011, Mark Mahoney of the Wenner-Gren Foundation told me that the grant was given on April 24, 1951.

<sup>4</sup> The Ruz excavations ended in 1958, therefore Barbara Rands was working at Palenque without Ruz's direct supervision, although Ruz was still head of monuments for the region. In her report, she stated that Arturo Romano Pacheco, an archaeologist with INAH was working with her (Rands and Rands 1961).

<sup>5</sup> In 1952, after Bob Rands received his PhD and was appointed to a position at the University of Mississippi, he received \$1,000 from that institution to continue to work on Palenque ceramics, but it was not until 1955 that he was able to return to Palenque to continue field work – this time with the financial backing of INAH (Ron Bishop, personal communication July 6, 2011).

It was mid-May when Ruz wrote to Rockefeller from the field (Ruz Lhuillier 1951c) informing him that the new season had started and that they would work until the end of July<sup>6</sup>. He listed the members of his staff this season and also told him that there were approximately one-hundred men cleaning the site, exploring, restoring the Palace, and building the new camp. He explained that the Mexican government was showing much more interest in Palenque due to Rockefeller's contributions and the intensive work that Ruz accomplished with the funds.

In defense of the Mexican government, Ruz explained that they had contributed matching sums in the form of cash, technical labor, construction of the asphalt road from the railroad station to the site, and the building of a bridge. When President Alemán came to visit Ruz in 1950, he gave the president a five-year work plan – one that required greater resources than ever before and also one that would place new emphasis upon the conservation of buildings and less on investigation. He went on to state that the three year plan was approved by the Mexican president, but "its budget depends upon the present government" (Ruz Lhuillier 1951c). To date, Palenque had been allocated 115,000 pesos for plan implementation by the government. Even though the amount was more than before, it "is very insufficient when one considers the great scientific and historical importance of the place, the unequalled beauty of its natural setting, the artistic treasures of its stone work and stucco reliefs" (Ruz Lhuillier 1951c). Ruz once again urged Rockefeller to come visit so that he could see the city and then he could understand the importance of more funding to "round out" the contribution that the government had pledged. He gave him several alternative transportation options for reaching Palenque, all of them indirect and a bit complicated, and added that there were two kinds of planes that could land at the Palenque airfield – the Avro-Anson and the Beechcraft.

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<sup>6</sup> The season for 1951 ran from April 30 until 28 July.

## SUMMARY OF THE WORK FOR 1951

As mentioned above, the site visit of Mexican President Miguel Alemán in late May of 1950 caused Ruz to change his work focus from exploration to conservation. The president had pledged a “special allowance” of \$115,006 for Palenque (Gallegos Ruiz 1997:25). However this money was with the condition that the highest priority be given to the restoration of the decaying buildings before exploring them; thus the reason for changing his scope of work (Ruz Lhuillier 1952e:47). Ruz declared that during the 1951 season, he would measure his success by how much cleaning, debris removal and restoration he was able to accomplish (Ruz Lhuillier 1952e:48).

### *The New Camp Building*

They completed part of the new camp that would be used to house technicians. It included a work room, a dining hall, a dormitory, a bathroom and another smaller sleeping area with its own bathroom. Figure 8.2 contains four photos of the work done in 1950 and Figure 8.3 shows two photos of the new building as it looked at the end of the 1951 season. The building had a wide hallway oriented toward the plain below the hill so that the cooling winds could flow through it and cool its rooms. The only task remaining was to install running water, electricity, the glass for the living room windows, and the metal screens for the corridor. This season, there were also plans to build the attached museum and the bodega to store ceramics and stucco. There would also be a photo lab and a kitchen.

### *Cleaning the Zone*

Just as they did every year, they had to allocate several men to the job of removing and burning brush in Palenque’s central zone, an area that includes the Temple of the Inscriptions, the Cross Group, and the Palace. The galleries, rooms, patios, cornices, ceilings and crests of these same buildings had to be cleaned of foliage. Usually by the end of the season, the unexplored buildings would once again sprout two-meter-

thick vegetation. Interestingly, Ruz had instructions from INAH this season that he was to assign seven personnel to the exclusive job of maintaining and cleaning the roads and the site, as well as securing and patrolling the zone. Not only did the new road improve the ability of the archaeologists to consolidate, conserve and explore, it also brought with it an increase in tourist visitation. In association with this increased accessibility, Ruz developed performance and behavior guidelines designed to maximize the work of his employees and to make clear what was expected of visitors (Ruz Lhuillier 1952e:49)<sup>7</sup>.

### *The Palace*

I have written about the Palace previously, but I have not described its unusual construction. The “Palace” is a set of buildings and rooms, associated with open courtyards, all built upon a ten-meter raised structure measuring one-hundred meters long by sixty meters wide. All the courtyards, except the northeast and outer galleries to the west, east and north, had been previously cleared and explored by Miguel Ángel Fernández and by Ruz, but all the other buildings were still completely covered by stones and rubble due to the collapse of walls, pillars, arches and roof combs. This season Ruz’s explorations of the Palace were primarily in the three patios – the northeast, the northwest and the west patio, leaving the east patio for a later time. In addition, they worked in the Palace buildings to the south, in the Tower and below in the area commonly called the “*subterráneos*”. He delegated each of these work areas to one of his junior archaeologists, while the work on the Tower was performed by Ruz himself.

They used Maudslay’s map<sup>8</sup> of the Palace and its alphabetic naming system for each “house” in the complex (Ruz Lhuillier 1952e:80). At that point in time and for the

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<sup>7</sup> His report does not tell us if this was INAH’s idea or if it was Ruz’s nor were the details of those guidelines contained in the report.

<sup>8</sup> As mentioned in the Introduction to the thesis, this map was drawn at the direction of Maudslay by the surveyor Hugh W. Price (Stuart and Stuart 2008).

next 34 years<sup>9</sup>, Maudslay's map of the Palace was the most accurate ever published. As they excavated the Palace, the map was amended to add new data and building footprints.

### *Northeast Patio*

César Sáenz removed the piles of rubble that reached three meters high in some places in the eastern interior gallery and all the chambers surrounding the NE courtyard. The 700 cubic meters of rubble weighed over 1,200 tons. They gathered up all the large slabs from the vaults in the northern exterior and the eastern interior gallery. During this process, they discovered new architectural data, such as building walls and the bases of pillars. They placed several test pits in the floor to determine if there were older structures under it, and to search for offerings or ceramics. Using architectural data gathered from the test pits and trenches, they rebuilt the southern rooms, the associated staircase, and the bases of the pillars of the gallery to the north. They also consolidated the northern staircase of the NE gallery and other architecture associated with it.

### *Northwest Patio*

Meanwhile, Lauro J. Zavala cleaned out 650 cubic meters of rubble from the NW patio; this weighed around 1,200 tons. While doing this, he discovered many new walls, pillars, stairs, and superimposed floors. His workers picked through the debris and found numerous pieces of stucco, including 20 masks that had fallen from the modeled building reliefs that decorated the pillars and other parts of the buildings. In addition, there were numerous ceramic and stone objects, including yokes and votive axes, fragments of yokes, and pieces of alabaster travertine (*tecalli*)<sup>10</sup> vessels. He consolidated and totally reconstructed the interior gallery to the best of his ability and found that it included an

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<sup>9</sup> In 1985, Merle Green Robertson published an improved map that was based upon Maudslay's map of the Palace. It was part of her series of books on the sculpture of Palenque (Robertson 1985:ill.1). A site map was also published by Ruz in his 1973 book on the Temple of the Inscriptions.

<sup>10</sup> Tecalli is the Nahuatl name for a white translucent stone commonly called travertine.

arch, a stucco frieze panel, a cornice and a bench. During this process, he discovered five secondary burials and two *ofrendas* in the floor. Figure 8.4 is a very poor map of the Palace's NE patio and the location of Zavala's finds.

### *Southwest Patio*<sup>11</sup>

In the southwest patio, there was a pile of rubble more than three meters high when Rafael Orellana started to clean it. This was the area directly in front of House E, a building containing a carved stone monument called "The Oval Palace Tablet" that was mounted upon its central wall. The courtyard enclosed many destroyed structures, hallways, chambers, small rooms and stairs, and it had not been previously investigated. They disposed of about one ton of earth and gravel, or about 600 cubic meters of material. They found more yokes and votive axes as well as delicately carved fine-textured limestone tablets crafted in the typical Palenque style. Clay figurines and stucco fragments were abundant. Orellana also noticed that at the base of the Tower on each side of the stepped altar were a series of stepped-fret motifs. He included a map upon which he labeled the two areas farthest to the east "Sub Galería" and "*temazcalli*"<sup>12</sup>. There were two unplugged holes in the floor of what they decided was a *temazcalli*, or a sweat bath. Those holes apparently led to a drainpipe that connected the sweat bath to the two toilets that had been found in that same courtyard. After studying the data, he was able to rebuild and consolidate the remaining architecture of this area.

### *Southern Buildings*

Arturo Romano cleaned and consolidated the extremely destroyed double gallery located in the southernmost part of the Palace, as well as the lower galleries in the "*subterráneos*". In the lower galleries, there had been many debris landslides coming

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<sup>11</sup> Another name for this location is the "Tower Court".

<sup>12</sup> This word means "houses of heat" or sweat houses in Náhuatl.

down from the roofs and walls of the upper buildings, causing the lower galleries to be totally blocked. He was able to gather up 750 cubic meters of building rubble totaling more than 1,300 tons. He recovered many things of interest during his work, such as pieces of molded stucco, parts of alabaster vases, clay figurines, two small carved stones with writing and a rectangular altar<sup>13</sup> with hieroglyphs carved on three sides (Figure 8.5), now in the site museum. They also found many *metates* and *manos* both complete and broken, along with ceramic pots.

### *The Tower*

Prior to the Ruz excavations, Miguel Ángel Fernández had worked to consolidate the lowest level of the Tower and had replaced its lintels with zapote wood. Ruz took those beams out and put in concrete beams instead. He explored the structure and then cleared out much of the rubble from the roof that had fallen onto the floor of the third level. This tower has three stories, not including the first level which is not really a story but a limestone platform, plastered together with stucco. They removed the unstable southwest pillar and then replaced the missing stone ledges that decorated the outside edges of each floor. They rediscovered the very interesting “blind floor” that Holmes had written about that is located between the first and second floor (Holmes 1897:180). It had small vent openings in the form of "Ik" signs. They consolidated and reinforced the Tower to the roof of the second floor and next season they planned to rebuild the third level and its roof.

### *The Temple of the Inscriptions*

Ruz was still trying to determine the shape and form of the stairs that led up the face of the pyramid into the Temple of the Inscriptions. Since they needed safe access into the temple, the restoration and consolidation of the stairs became very important. The lower part of the pyramid steps appeared to be much wider than the top and it had

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<sup>13</sup> This “altar” is now called the “subterranean throne”.

alfardas. He rebuilt the differing sections of the stairs for its entire length of fifty-one steps. There were a total of nine tiers. They fully explored and cleared rubble from the northeastern portion of the pyramid body for a total of 600 cubic meters, equaling more than 1,000 tons. This activity helped them to see the profile of the pyramid and to see that parts of it had slipped down by two meters. They rebuilt the foundation where the temple sits. By the end of the season, the structure and its base began “to show off its stunning architecture, standing against the background of the jungle, visible from the station of the Railroad of the Southeast, ten miles away” (Ruz Lhuillier 1952e:54).

They continued to excavate the interior steps that they had discovered in the 1949 season. In the 1950 season they were able to uncover twenty-three steps, and in 1951, twenty-three more. This year they discovered a landing that led to two narrow, parallel hallways or galleries pointing toward the temple to the west<sup>14</sup>. They removed the remaining fill from those galleries to see where they exited. At the ends of the galleries workers broke through the exterior of the pyramid at the place where it had been plastered shut, and discovered that the galleries exit onto a patio that joins the Temple of the Inscriptions with Temple XIII on the west. They closed up the exits and consolidated them. They continued cleaning the stairs and reached a depth of about eighteen meters from the temple floor. At the end of the season, they had reached another vault similar to those found in previous seasons, and it also was filled with solidified rubble. In total, they removed 200 cubic meters of rocks and dirt, totaling 400 tons.

Ruz reported to J. Alden Mason in a 1953 interview from *Saturday Evening Post* that his workers and colleagues teased him about his “whodunit” mystery and asked him when it would be solved. Even his wife told him as he left for the 1952 season at

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<sup>14</sup> Later, in an interview with Alden Mason for the *Saturday Evening Post* (Ruz and Mason 1953:96), Ruz would call these “ventilation shafts” and relate that the fresh air offered by them was very welcome to the crew that worked to clear the interior stairs.

Palenque, “Don’t you dare come home till you get to the end of it!” (A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953)

### *The Stratigraphic Explorations*

The ceramic specialists Barbara and Robert Rands dug test pits in Groups II and IV, in a location near the Temple of the Sun, in the Temple of the Inscriptions, and at the foot of the North Group temples in order to acquire pottery fragments. They also gathered many ceramic pieces from the Palace and inside the Temple of the Inscriptions. In total, there were thirty-one boxes of sherds and some figurines that they took back to the U.S. for with the promise that the results would be furnished later.<sup>15</sup>

### *The Restoration of Stucco Reliefs and Paintings in the Palace*

Sergio Vargas carefully restored the fallen stuccos found lying on the floor of the Palace courtyards and restored the thirteen medallion frames on the east outside gallery wall, but the figures and faces within the frames were no longer visible. In House E, Agustín Villagra made color reproductions of the very sketchy remains of the motifs found on the outer wall the house (Figure 8.6). Another task that Villagra was to undertake this season was an ink drawing of a carved monument dubbed “The Tablet of the Slaves”. As has been stated previously, this tablet was found in Building A, Group IV by Zavala the previous year. Its discovery was made after workers who were building the road into the site, unwittingly dug into Building A, making partial excavation of the building necessary (Zavala 1950:92).

### *The Museum*

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<sup>15</sup> Ruz does not state where in the United States these ceramics went, but since Barbara Rands was writing her dissertation on the ceramics of the Temple of the Inscriptions, it is possible that they were in her possession at some point in time.

Laurette Séjourné and the artists Héctor G. Manzanedo and Sergio Vargas were assigned to organize what could loosely be called “the museum”. Ruz commented that Palenque desperately needed a good place to store carved monuments and artifacts. He wrote that for over 25 years, all of the artifacts found at the site had been kept in a hut. During those years, the hut had collapsed several times and the result was that many of the objects had been destroyed and some had even disappeared. When the season began this time, they discovered that the roof of the hut had fallen again and many of the objects were lying in the mud and fallen on the ground. Some were jammed into overflowing boxes and cans amid other unrelated objects and then others had been propped up on wooden boards. To repair the roof, they temporarily put sheets of oiled cardboard over it and then carefully cleaned the artifacts and arranged them on shelves, along with the new finds. They discarded fragments of stucco that had no recognizable characteristics since it would be impossible to reunite them with their source. Those pieces and fragments that were more complete were recorded and classified by their composition, such as stone, stucco, and clay or by their recognizable forms and decorations, such as masks, heads, bodies, spirals, beads, etc.

Ruz wrote that during their first season they began a museum card catalog such as those used in the National Museum of Anthropology. Previously, they had created 150 cards that documented the artifacts found in the years 1949 and 1950<sup>16</sup>. This year they created 211 more. Eighty-three of the cards recorded all the tablets and other stone artifacts from earlier explorations, and 128 recorded the stuccos.

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<sup>16</sup> I do not know if this is the same artifact catalog Ruz mentioned earlier that he was creating for INAH.

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

In total, more than 6,000 tons of rubble was cleared from the buildings of Palenque during this season<sup>17</sup>. After this work, they found new information about the Palace which allowed them to enhance and complete the map that Maudslay had created. Ruz believed that the manner in which the ancient Palencanos originally constructed their Palace Tower revealed a preoccupation with lightening the load of building structures (1952e:56-57). He speculated that this same concern with dead load reduction was the reason that they placed triangular/lobed hollow motifs in the corridors. He also thought that the “Ik” window openings may have served this same purpose, in addition to allowing ventilation. The open work of the roof combs also followed this principle. He wrote that the combs were easy to construct and had an aesthetically pleasing look.

Based upon the data gathered so far, he thought that he could detect five construction periods for the Palace:

- 1) An original phase during which older platforms under the existing “houses” were built,
- 2) During a period of “splendor”, the buildings that we know today as “The Palace” were constructed
- 3) Buildings were then superimposed on top of some of the existing buildings during a period of decline
- 4) Again, crude overlays of less quality were built, but probably by non-Maya
- 5) In a final phase almost all existing windows were boarded up and closed

Ruz believed that some of the most important finds for this season were the artifacts from the “Totonac” region of the Atlantic coast (Figure 8.7). They were found in the Palace and had been broken into 30 pieces. When put together, they formed fifteen

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<sup>17</sup> During the site’s most recent mapping effort which took place from 1998 to 2000, the mapping supervisor Ed Barnhart inadvertently mapped one of Ruz’s rubble piles located to the right just inside the main gate. It is a very large mound and it is flat on the top so it was easy to mistake it for a building (2011 personal communication). He recalled that there were other rubble piles next to Temple X and behind the Temple of the Count that might also be Ruz’s. Nowhere in Ruz’s reports does he mention where he placed the rubble.

green or gray stone carved "yokes" and "votive axes". There were ten axes, some of which were finely carved. He believed that they were from the Palace building phase listed as number four above, where a layer of less sophisticated, crude construction was placed on top of existing buildings. He did not believe that they were Maya (Ruz Lhuillier 1952b:58).

### *Palenque Stucco*

Ruz thought that the quality of Palenque's stucco is unmatched in the Maya area, and with each excavation, he admired their workmanship more and more. This season they had found so many fallen stucco fragments from the once-decorated Palace buildings that they could not count them all. Some of the best of these were the 22 masks from the northern courtyard and most of them represented the sun god. Some of the other images were of another very stern-faced deity or that of a human face having deity features.

On the walls of the lower part of the northwest Palace courtyard, they discovered the remains of a series of stucco frieze motifs which alternated and repeated all around the sides of the foundation. Those remains were in the form of stone frames that once held molded stucco, but now they had almost disappeared. One motif was that of a zoomorphic figure that had a snake entwined with it. The other was an intricate medallion decorated with ornamentation all around it and inside the medallion were two very realistic human faces looking towards each other, but with the figure of the sun god between them (Figure 8.8). He wrote that "All these faces are very reminiscent of the motif which adorns the back of the Piedras Negras Throne 1 dated 9.17.15.0.0 (785 AD)" (Ruz Lhuillier 1952e:60). Thus he thought that the Palenque throne might be contemporary with the Piedras Negras example.

### *Painting*

They drew a very rough sketch of the faint remains of a fresco located on the east interior wall of the northeast Palace court. Even though there was very little that remained, they were able to extrapolate the missing parts by relying upon images of other carved panels seen at Palenque. The scene was one of submission and offering, with three seated characters. It was Ruz's opinion that it might have religious significance or it might represent the image of a leader from another city submitting to the Palenque domain.

### *Tombs*

During the first seasons of 1949 and 1950, they discovered several graves in Groups I, II and Murciélagos (III) and this year they found at least three tombs in a courtyard located in residential Group IV. They were discovered during the Rands' stratigraphic excavations; the tombs were constructed with rough limestone slabs. In the Palace they found several secondary burials that appeared to be set in place in conjunction with the phased construction.

### *Ceramics*

Because of the work of Bob and Barbara Rands, the excavation team was able to begin a systematic analysis of all the ceramics that had been gathered to date. Ruz summarized the current findings, stipulating that the materials would be studied more fully at a later time. Most of the ceramics for this analysis were from the patios and galleries of the Palace, other stratigraphic pits, and from pits dug around the Temple of the Inscriptions. Of the fine ceramic pieces, the most common pottery at Palenque was black, brown or orange. Ruz writes that cream and red were not a common pottery colors at Palenque, an unusual situation when compared to other Classic Maya sites where these types are in abundance. Also, gray pottery is rarely found at Palenque.

He stated that pottery goods discovered at Palenque have characteristics<sup>18</sup> similar to other Maya sites, but the vessels forms do not compare very well. Forms most frequently found are concave bowls with divergent walls, cylindrical tripod bowls, and tripod plates with or without a basal angle flange. Some have a strip of clay placed at the bottom pressed in with the fingertips. Vessel legs are sometimes very large and have internal rattles or they are solid and/or very small, almost like flat buttons. Some of the less sophisticated types are globular pots, bowls with convex walls and other composite silhouettes.

He wrote that polychrome painted ceramics are almost non-existent at this site, and there are few polychromes with fresco decorations. When found, decorations are fine line incisions in the form of geometric patterns or sometimes animals or motifs from the natural world, with the monkey form most common.

Figurines were found throughout the site, some made from molds and others hand modeled. A few of these still retained their original paint. Some of the forms were made hollow for use as whistles. The most common subjects were human bodies and heads with many different headdresses. There were some with old faces bearing tattoos, heads with cranial deformation, zoomorphic headgear masks, stacked animals, and faces emerging from the jaws of animals. Ruz took special note of the existence of warrior figurines holding defensive and offensive weapons such as shields, helmets, hardwood mallets, clubs double-edged blade tips of obsidian and flint spears.

Ruz included the Rands preliminary findings:<sup>19</sup>

- The pottery of Palenque was not typical of other Maya sites.

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<sup>18</sup> He does not go into detail about these characteristics.

<sup>19</sup> This was written before Robert Rands developed a specific pottery scheme for Palenque (see Rands 1974); instead he was using the chronology developed for Uaxactún, Guatemala.

- The sites with pottery most similar to Palenque's ceramics were located in this same western Maya area, such as Yoxiha, Jonuta, Zopo, Tecolpa and Trinidad (located near Monte Cristo, today known as Emiliano Zapata).
- The Rands found no material at Palenque that could have been from the formative period (Mamom or Chicanel). Any assignable elements for the Tzakol period were rare and not definitive enough since they lacked its most common characteristic - the trim baseline (no ring bases, lids, frescos).
- Most of the ceramics for this study were from a late period, perhaps for the end of the classic period (Tepeu II and III).

### ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

Unlike so many North American Mayanists of the previous decade, Ruz seemed to delight in extrapolating economic, geographic, cultural and social information from his archaeological finds<sup>20</sup>. In his report, he concluded that he had a better understanding of why the Classic Maya city of Palenque was so different from other Maya centers of the same era, and yet was very similar to other sites in the Usumacinta River region such as Piedras Negras, Yaxchilan and Bonampak. Its location against a mountain and its visual perspective – looking north towards the water saturated plains of Tabasco – played a major role in its cultural and historical development. For example the life of the people of the modern city of Palenque, Chiapas in the 1950's was increasingly associated with the economy and the politics of the State of Tabasco. Many people from this state move to modern Palenque and they eventually occupy leading influential positions in the economy and administration. Therefore, Ruz reasoned, in the ancient past there must have been a similar attraction offered by the ancient Maya metropolis of Palenque, a city oriented toward the lowlands, trading its wares, spreading its culture and in turn receiving

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<sup>20</sup> See Walter Taylor's 1946 book *A Study of Archaeology* for a more in-depth look at this issue.

cultural influences and "sensing vibrations of other civilized centers participating in the life of the plain *de gre ou de force*<sup>21</sup>" (Ruz Lhuillier 1952e:64).

He explained that its geographic location helped to explain why Palenque is so different within the world of the Classic Maya. It appears to have been the cultural capital of a territory that reached into the lowlands to the east and the west, benefiting from the trade networks of the Grijalva and Usumacinta Rivers. To the north are the coastal belt and the geographic area of Nonoalco<sup>22</sup>. To the south are the foothills of the Sierra de Chiapas.

As evidenced by the data he had collected so far, Palenque was primarily a Classic Maya site. Perhaps some of the site was occupied even later, in the second half of the ninth *baktun*, i.e. between the seventh and ninth centuries. Yet it is evident that it had a previous earlier occupation. They found glyph dates positioned in the middle of the ninth *baktun* from temples such as the Sun and Cross. They also found a very small amount of ceramics contemporary with the *Tzakol* period and some conformed well to the *Tepeu* II and III phases. Ruz reminded his readers that the research material used for the ceramic study was not contemporary with the most recent Palenque buildings. This is due to the fact that most of the study material came from deep test pits in the Palace, from the fill of the patio west of the Temple of the Inscriptions, and from a location at the back of that same temple. Therefore, it was not the same pottery that was in use when the buildings were built. Also noted was the progress made on dating the buildings in the Palace, even though their study of the Palace was not yet complete in all aspects. They now knew which of the buildings of the Palace platform were the oldest.

Judging from the Palace building stages, Ruz suggested the following two major cultural and social changes: 1) the growth of a large group of priests, warriors and

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<sup>21</sup> This phrase means "by fair or foul means".

<sup>22</sup> This area is located north of Palenque between the Usumacinta, the Gulf, and the Laguna de Términos.

bureaucrats that led to the conversion of courtyards and corridors into rooms. Then they added other amenities such as steam baths and toilets for use by the large number of royals and "courtiers". During this stage, they continued to build buildings with the Maya corbeled vault, but the stucco decoration on the walls and the architecture was much inferior to previous years; and 2) an hypothesized occupation by non-Maya groups that subdivided its galleries into smaller rooms, using crude stone construction that was poorly bound with inferior mud.

Ruz first wrote about his theory of Palenque's late occupation period and the exterior cultural pressure exerted by Veracruz coastal settlers in his 1949 season report. He postulated that because many yokes, votive axes and fragments of alabaster vases were discovered this season, his occupation theory might actually be true. In the late 1800's, the explorer-archaeologist, Alfred Maudslay had found this same cultural complex at Palenque when he documented the presence of a yoke, and then in the 1930's, the archaeologist Miguel Ángel Fernández found a votive ax. In addition, Ruz had seen fine orange clay vessels in the collections of the Museum of Man in Paris that were from Palenque. Ruz does not tell us who excavated them and how they came to be in Paris.

Since these objects were superimposed upon the crudely-altered Palace, Ruz proposed that they indicated an invasion or occupation that happened in a late period, and that it was the result of a struggle that went on for centuries. He believed that the people of Palenque built defensive works "whose memory lingers in the current name of the creek running through the ruins, '*Otolum*' or 'fortified house'" and thus is derived from the Spanish translation of the name "Palenque". He thought that he could see these defensive works in terraces that appear as staggered lines of stones on the foothills of the mountain<sup>23</sup>. He did not see any structural building remains along with these terraces; however sometimes they had narrow interior stairs that formed various angles, and their walls were supported by the rocks – an adaptation that was needed due to the steep relief

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<sup>23</sup> Ruz does not clarify whether he is referring to the mountains above the site or the hills below.

of the cliffs. He thought that they were an attempt to protect Palenque against a possible take-over by an enemy that mounted campaigns against the city from all sides.<sup>24</sup> It was his contention that this same struggle was the genesis of a large military class, one that is evidenced in the clay figurines, many in full military gear.<sup>25</sup>

Other factors that Ruz saw as proof of occupation were the presence of large numbers of non-Maya objects such as yokes and “hachas” that he thought could not be explained as a result of trade. The objects are similar to those from the eleventh century El Tajin culture which existed at a time much later than the flowering of Palenque. He noted that for México, the eleventh century was a time of population displacement and migration flow, especially in the Nahua lands to the south. “This powerful stream, one of whose currents would profoundly alter the history of the Mayas of Yucatán, would push the coastal people of the towns of Nonoalco towards the foothills of the Sierra de Chiapas, where Palenque is located, with fatal consequences for the great city” (Ruz Lhuillier 1952e:66).

He wrote that his team had also seen evidence of the intentional destruction of objects, rather than the natural wear and tear over time. For instance there were stucco friezes and reliefs that were almost totally destroyed in this manner. In addition they saw evidence of the destruction of structures under the Palace and the breaking apart and scattering of yokes that were sometimes semi-burnt<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> It is my opinion that most likely these terraces were built to prevent erosion.

<sup>25</sup> This same year, Ruz would write an article in the book *Homenaje al Doctor Alfonso Caso* called “Chichén-Itzá y Palenque, Ciudades Fortificadas” where he speculated that it might have been the Toltecs that were assaulting and invading Palenque.

<sup>26</sup> At the time that Ruz wrote this, it was not widely known that the ancient Maya culture regularly burned and destroyed their own fine objects in order to introduce and ensoul the newer objects, a ritual that the living Maya have been known to do today.

He then once again mentioned the plastered closing of most of the doors, windows and vents in all the buildings at the site, including the buildings of the Palace. He assumed that one of the last stages of the struggle at Palenque was an attempt to resist by using the thick walls of the monuments as defense. On the other hand, perhaps it was the coastal invaders of Palenque who had to defend themselves against the native population revolting against their new rulers.<sup>27</sup>

But the final act of the Palencano drama might also have been a popular revolt against a ruling class that had for many centuries oppressed its people and had enforced its centralized laws. Most likely they had also reaped tribute in neighboring towns in exchange for the protection of Palenque's powerful gods. However, their faith in their powerful leaders and their gods evaporated when the coastal invasions began and the result was a severing of the power of the Palencano chiefs, a power that had been slowly depleted after centuries of splendid court life among the "most refined of the Native American civilizations" (Ruz Lhuillier 1952e:66).<sup>28</sup>

### **THE END OF THE 1951 SEASON**

On June 4<sup>th</sup> 1951 Rockefeller sent a response to Ruz thanking him for his May letter and telling him how happy he was that the Mexican president was now showing interest in Palenque (Rockefeller 1951b). He told him that even though he would like to continue the funding, he could not because of other commitments. He did however tell him that he was in great appreciation of the fine work that Ruz done and he asked him to keep him informed about future discoveries and results. At the end of the Palenque

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<sup>27</sup> It is the author's opinion that the closing of the windows with plaster may have taken place due to the need for more privacy as the elite population grew and as more rooms were built on the Palace platform.

<sup>28</sup> In 1979, years later, in a speech Ruz delivered at the Simposio Sobre el Modo de Producción Tributario en Mesoamerica at the School of Sciences at the University of Yucatán he would reveal that many of his ideas about Maya society came from "the theoretical framework of the Asian mode of production developed by Karl Marx that was then commented upon by various sociologists, such as Godelier, Chesneaux and others from France, as well as Bartra in México". He is referring to the anthropologists Maurice Godelier, Jean Chesneaux and Roger Bartra.

season, Ruz once again worked at Uxmal, Yucatán (Izquierdo 1987), just as he had done the three previous years.

On October 9, 1951, Rosa Covarrubias wrote to Rockefeller, urging him to stop funding the Palenque project. Although this letter is not available to me, I am aware of some of its contents. Rockefeller's secretary Vera Goeller wrote a memo to Rockefeller on April 2, 1954 reminding him that three years earlier Rosa had urged him to stop the funding the Palenque project and so he did (Goeller 1954). There is no information in the Goeller letter that reveals the reason for Rosa's request. However in March of 1954, after Rosa heard a presentation that Ruz made about the spectacular 1952 discovery of the Temple of the Inscriptions tomb, she would write to Rockefeller again, this time begging him to begin funding the Palenque excavations again. Some of the details of these events will be discussed in a later chapter regarding season 1954.

## Chapter 9: The 1952 Season

There is no correspondence between the IAR and Ruz in the files at the American Museum of Natural History for the 1952 season. This is most likely because Ruz was no longer receiving funds from the IAR so there was no need to communicate. The following paragraphs are a summary of what Ruz wrote about his discovery in the *Anales* published in 1954 (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d). It covered two seasons of work due to the discovery of a mysterious altar at the close of the first season. The second season was initiated because he and his crew wanted to determine the need and the possibility of raising the carved lid sitting atop the “altar”; therefore they took a short break and then returned to work, so technically there was an additional season in 1952. Both seasons were funded by INEH, but with very little money.<sup>1</sup>

The first 1952 season began on April 28 and ended July 5th and the second season spanned a little over one month, from November 15 to December 21. Ruz named archaeologists César Sáenz and Rafael Orellana as his helpers during the first season and only César Sáenz was named during the second. In addition, the following people contributed their expertise: the photographer Luis Limón, the artist Agustín Villagra, physical anthropologist Eusebio Dávalos, the anthropologist and photographer Arturo Romano, the historian and folklore specialist José Servin, who was also a photographer, and the illustrator Hipólito Sánchez. Maps and cross sections of the Temple of the Inscriptions were drawn by the engineering student Alfredo Rosado in Mérida. Ruz stated that during both of these seasons the Secretary of INAH Alfonso Ortega Martínez was present. He reported that Ortega took some of the offerings and jewels to México City from the sumptuous burial<sup>2</sup> that will be describe below.

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<sup>1</sup> There is the possibility that the State of Chiapas may have contributed funds, but I do not have these records.

<sup>2</sup> Ruz does not state from which burial these objects originated, but since he is writing about the second 1952 season, he must be referring to the Temple of the Inscriptions chamber burial.

The construction of the new camp made slow but steady progress. They built the kitchen, installed running water and electricity, and put in the windows for the living room. Finally, they were able to pour part of the foundation for the future attached museum. Since they now had a permanent crew of seven workers to keep the site clean and weed-free year-round, they only had to do a simple weeding of the grounds in and around the Palace and the camp.

### **THE NORTHEAST AND EAST PATIOS OF THE PALACE**

Ruz summarized the work that Sáenz completed in the east and northeast patios of the Palace. Many of the buildings that surrounded the east patio had been destroyed by the weather and erosion. Sáenz cleaned out the debris that covered the courtyard, the east galleries, some of the central rooms, the hallway, the north rooms, part of the west rooms and the south corridor. He took a total of 600 cubic meters of rubble out of the area. Afterward, they were able to fill in more gaps on the Palace Maudslay map. While clearing the debris, Sáenz uncovered more of the pillars in the east exterior gallery and found two small benches in the interior rooms. The hall located between the east gallery and the central rooms had apparently been divided into small rooms in ancient times. A similar division occurred in the corridor west of these rooms, and one of them had a small altar that was composed of a flat stone resting on four rectangular supports. During the process of exploring the east patio, they found the following objects: a fragment of a smooth yoke, two *manos* and *metates*, a clay mask, and a large head made of stucco that Ruz believed was an image of the sun god.

During the previous year, the staircase that led from the northeast courtyard to the rooms on the south was reconstructed by the team. This year, Sáenz decided that they needed to rebuild the stairs because he noticed that the length of the stairs did not match the Maudslay map. After further investigation, they realized that they had reconstructed the stairs based upon one of the courtyard's earlier construction phases, so they needed to make them longer.

Ruz supervised the placement of concrete lintels in the Palace in order to reinforce the 25 doors that still had pillars in good condition. The previous year, Ruz had reconstructed the tower up to the second floor. This year they reconstructed the third floor, including its roof, based upon the evidence of its original form that Ruz found in previous investigations. The limestone slab throne discovered previously in the rubble of the top floor was put in its original position.

### **THE TEMPLE OF THE INSCRIPTIONS AND ITS PYRAMID BASE**

Rafael Orellana attempted to find the pyramid's northeast limit by cleaning the debris off the east side of the basement body for about one-third of its length. The sloping wall attached to the pyramid was partially preserved on all sides and there were some vestiges of the remaining stucco overlays. However, as Orellana was removing the debris from the wall it became so weak that it started to collapse. Orellana added a buttress at the bottom of the sloping wall to reinforce it and then recorded information regarding its original construction so that he could rebuild the pyramid base at a later date. The broken circular altar found in the rubble at the foot of the temple stairs was put back together using dowels and cement to make it stable. They were then able to place it upon its four cylindrical legs.

Restoration of the platform that supported the temple was supervised by César Sáenz. The crews placed concrete lintels in five of the doors to the temple portico to stop the rain from leaking into the sanctuary. They also filled in the very wide cracks that spanned the back of the sanctuary wall. Other efforts at waterproofing were made on the platform and the floor of the temple by replacing some of the large and small original paving slabs. These efforts resulted in the protection of only half of the porch and the floor from water.

Inside the temple sanctuary they removed the floor slab with the finger-holes where they had first made entry into the interior steps. When they did this, they discovered only one step under the stone instead of the two that they had anticipated. Therefore the tally

of the long flight of stairs leading down into the temple interior was 45, not 46 as was thought previously. In the sanctuary, they placed a one-kilowatt power generator that lit up the staircase and the other interior passages. This was a much better alternative to the gasoline light that they had been using.

Ruz had first begun clearing the interior staircase inside the pyramid in 1949. That work finally came to an end in mid May 1952. At the start of the 1952 season, they had progressed to a depth of about 18 meters from the temple floor. (See Figure 9.1 for a view down the stairs). When they reached the 18th step of the last flight of stairs, they encountered another roughly-constructed wall of stone and rubble, even stronger than those found previously (Figure 9.2). After taking the wall down, they found another mass of rock-fill. A few yards beyond was another wall, made of very strong stone and lime. Built into the wall, at about eye level, they found a box made of a double row of stone slabs and mortar. It contained an offering of two jade earrings, seven jade beads, two green jade disks carved like flowers, a 13 x 8 millimeter pearl, three small clay plates and three shells<sup>3</sup>. After removing the offering, they began to take down the wall. It was over 3.66 meters thick. In a 1953 interview with Aldon Mason, Ruz told him, “breaking through it took a full week of the hardest labor of the entire expedition” (A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:96). Ruz and his team had finally reached the end of their journey down the staircase. It had taken the workers four seasons, a total of ten months, to clear the stairway.

### **GROUP BURIAL**

After clearing the wall, they realized that they were standing in a corridor. It was over three meters long and at the end there were two steps that led up to a structure containing a collective burial (Figure 9.3). The structure was in an extremely cramped space of 1.30 x 1.00 meters. It was a crude sepulcher box containing the skeletal remains of several

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<sup>3</sup> He does not specify the species at this point in time.

human bodies wedged into an arched structure at the end of the corridor. The box was made in layers; the first three were stone and under that was a lime mixture of more stones and stone flakes. As they slowly cleared away this mixture, they were able to recover the human remains. Apparently the mortar was applied directly to the bodies and the stones joining them so that the structure would hold together. This was evident because in some cases the mortar was found in the shape of the skulls. At the base of this human bone mixture, there were traces of what Ruz termed “red paint”<sup>4</sup> that helped preserve the lower portions of the mortar and the corpses.

Those investigating the group burial were César Sáenz, Rafael Orellana and a Palenque physician named Dr. Miguel Dominguez, who assisted in identifying the medical names for each bone and the bone pieces. Soon thereafter Felipe Montemayor, a physical anthropologist from the National Museum of Anthropology, visited and made a quick assessment of the collective burial, retrieving samples to take to México City in order to perform a closer examination. The burial is believed to have been primary<sup>5</sup> and was made up of five or six individuals. The bones were in very bad condition due to water seepage, as was evidenced by the presence of calcareous salts, and also because the bones had been compacted and forced into a very small space. The following describes the skeletons and their positions. They are numbered to distinguish each individual skeleton:

1. A partly preserved skeleton that included a skull, a scapula, a clavicle, ribs, vertebrae, a left humerus, a left radius and an ulna that was placed in a right lateral decubitus position. Its head was to the north with a semi-flexed left arm.
2. A very decayed partial skeleton that had a skull, ribs, shoulder blades and then only pieces of a humerus and femur. Its original position may have been in a sitting pose, but the body was forced forward so that the skull was sitting on rib bones.

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<sup>4</sup> The “red paint” is not actually paint, but derives from cinnabar which possesses a blood red color. This mineral was widely used in the ancient Maya area in royal burials and scholars have known about its use since the time of the Maudslay expeditions (Maudslay 1886:587). It is unclear why Ruz did not call it cinnabar.

<sup>5</sup> A primary burial is the initial burial of the entire articulated corpse, as opposed to secondary burials where the corpse was buried in one location, but was exhumed and placed in another.

3. Another partially-preserved skeleton that still possessed a skull, ribs, vertebrae, an iliac, an ulna, a radius and the phalanges of the right hand. It was in the left lateral decubitus position; head pointed northeast, face down.
4. This skeleton was the most complete, since the skull, vertebrae, ribs, fragments of scapula and humerus, the femur, tibia, fibula and foot bones were present. It was placed in a left lateral decubitus position, head to the north with its leg bent left and the right leg bent by force.
5. The last set of remains was very hard to distinguish as an individual skeleton. They could not determine if it was only one individual or if the remains were mixed in with a sixth. There was only a trace of a cranium, a jawbone, fragments of humeri, ribs and some vertebrae. Its position was hard to detect, but its head was to the north and under the skeleton of Number 3 above.

The laboratory study conducted on the bones revealed that one body was possibly female. Two skulls had typical characteristics of artificial tabular oblique deformation<sup>6</sup>. The teeth of one skull had maxillary dental mutilation of a type B-4 in its left central incisor and type E-1 in its left lateral incisor and the left canine<sup>7</sup>. Since the oxidized discoloration caused by the use of pyrite fillings was not present, Montemayor proposed that the fillings were jadeite. There were no offerings included in this crowded space.

### **THE SECRET CHAMBER**

The night before discovering the collective burial, they noticed a triangular slab embedded in the north wall along the corridor<sup>8</sup>. This slab fit perfectly into a niche of the same shape, but in its lower left corner there was a small gap that had been plugged with stones and lime. One of Ruz's crew placed the tip of his crowbar into the hole and it disappeared, thus they knew that there was a hollow space behind it. They cleared out the small stones and peered inside, using the electric light. As they looked in, they saw the inside of a great vaulted chamber that had stucco reliefs on its walls and a very large

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<sup>6</sup> Here Ruz is referring to the head-flattening practiced by the ancient Maya elite.

<sup>7</sup> See Javier Romero (1958:24-25) to view pictures of these type of mutilations.

<sup>8</sup> George Stuart noted that Juan Chablé, a master stonemason told him that he has been the first to “notice the unusual triangular pattern on the side wall of the final landing of the interior stairway...” (Stuart and Stuart 2008:5).

monument in the middle that occupied most of the space<sup>9</sup>. According to Schele and Mathews (Schele and Mathews 1998:110), there is “no equal to the sarcophagus in size or imagery” in the Americas.

It took them two laborious days to rotate the triangular stone door to the chamber outward. Using a rope and crowbars, they gained entry into the chamber on Sunday, June 15<sup>th</sup> (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d; A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:96). There were four steps made from small stones that allowed access to the chamber. Ruz described what he saw and felt as he entered.

*The crossing of the threshold was, of course, a moment of indescribable emotion. I was in a spacious crypt that seemed to be carved in ice since its walls were covered with a shiny calcareous layer and numerous stalactites hung from the vault like curtains and thick stalagmites gave the impression of huge candles* (Ruz Lhuillier 1970a:111). Author translation

That Sunday they spent about thirteen hours inside the chamber. Those present included Eduardo Noguera, Director of Prehispanic Monuments, and Lorenzo Gamio, an archaeologist in charge of the Monte Albán project (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d:87), as well as the archaeologists from the 1952 season, César Sáenz and Rafael Orellana. According to Ruz’s youngest son, Jorge Ruz Buenfil, others present were Guadalupe Pech Hernandez, Alberto Sánchez Lopez, and Tomás Mendoza (Ortiz 2004:9). Interestingly, he also allowed many people from the town of Palenque to step through the entrance into the chamber (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d:87).

### *Stucco Wall Reliefs*

As they looked into its interior, they saw that the walls were decorated with stucco reliefs of human figures, some standing and some sitting; all were slightly bigger than life-size (Figure 9.4 is a photo of the upper portion of one of them). They were in poor

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<sup>9</sup> See Ruz Lhuillier and Mason 1953, page 96 for a more complete and very eloquent description of Ruz’s first view into the chamber.

condition due to the high level of humidity in the room that had persisted for more than a millennium, so they urgently needed conservation and consolidation. There were nine figures in all, one on each side wall at the step entrance, one on the north wall; and three on each of the east and west walls. The figures were similarly dressed in sumptuous regalia – large feathered headdresses, loincloths or skirts, elaborate sandals, and many pieces of jewelry and ornamentation. They all held the so-called "manikin-scepter"<sup>10</sup>. Ruz stated that in the other hand, each held a round personified shield with features of the sun god. All were facing north, with one exception; and he was on the north wall looking west. The two at the stair entrance had almost completely disintegrated. Dripping limestone formations, similar to stalactites and stalagmites found in caves encrusted almost everything in the room and partially hid the features of these figures.

#### *The Architecture and General Appearance of the Chamber*

Ruz was very much impressed with the technology that was used to construct this chamber. Figure 9.5 is a drawing of the schematics of the chamber. It was done so well that for many centuries it stably supported the weight of the pyramid and temple above it. (Ruz Lhuillier 1970a:112). It was oriented on a north-south axis, 17 degrees NE of magnetic north. It measured 8.90 meters and its width varied from 3.75 meters in some places to 2.85 meters in the central section and only 1.80 at the entrance. The arched ceiling was 3 meters high at the back, 6.50 meters in the middle, and 5.05 at the door. There were five thick black polished stone beams embedded in the ceiling of the vaulted arch that acted as crossbeams (Figure 9.6). They had yellowish-looking veins throughout their surfaces. The stones that composed the walls and vault had also been polished. But now, after all these centuries, the floor of the chamber was encrusted with a thick limestone layer deposited by water seeping through the pyramid's outer surfaces.

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<sup>10</sup> The term "manikin scepter" was first coined by Herbert Joseph Spinden in his 1913 book pages 50-52, *A Study of Maya Art* to describe a ceremonial object often seen in Classic Maya art that is held by the king.

After taking careful measurements and assessing the location of the exterior and interior stairs, they determined that the room's vault was positioned slightly west of the larger temple's transverse axis. The floor of the room was approximately 24 meters beneath the floor of the Temple sanctuary and two meters below the level of the outside plaza.

Over the last three work seasons, as crews were digging the rubble out of the stairwell, they noticed a delicate stone and stucco tube that began at the top of the stairs and continued all the way down the southern edge of the entire staircase, then ran along the corridor, and ended at the edge of the monolithic stone altar in the chamber. Ruz described it as "a serpent made of lime" and then he wrote that he thought its purpose was for the "living" to maintain a spiritual communication with the deceased; thus they began calling it a "psycho duct" (A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:97).

Most of the space within the sacred room was taken up by a very large horizontal stone sitting atop an enormous monolithic block. It continued to distract Ruz and the crew, drawing their attention to its elaborate and unique carving (A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:96). Ruz and his associates thought that the entire structure might be an elaborate altar.

### *Offerings Found*

The following offerings were found in the chamber:

*Offering I* – Scattered on top of the carved horizontal slab, they found a series of objects and fragments, all located in the mid-north and central regions of the lid. They included the following items:

- Objects numbered 1 through 9 were flat-shaped celts made from slate. Holes had been created in their narrow ends and at first, Ruz thought that they may have been part of a collar. They were of different sizes, ranging from 10.3 to 15.7 centimeters long, all about 3.7 centimeters wide and 3 millimeters thick.
- Objects 10 to 130 (except # 118, 127 and 128) were 118 pieces of jade, and were probably from a mosaic that had been broken and scattered over the carved

- monument for one square meter. Ruz stated that he did not know the mosaic's original form. Some of the pieces were recognizable as parts of a human face such as eyes, eyelids, nose, lips and chin. There were also parts that had sun god characteristics such as square eyes and hooked pupils that were engraved on the small jade plaques.
- Objects 118 and 127 – these were small pieces of mother of pearl that were also from the mosaic.
  - Object # 128 was a small piece from a tiny pearlescent seashell.

In addition to the numbered fragments above, there were many other pieces that were much tinier lying about on the lid. To keep track of them, they were gathered and classified based upon the region of the lid where they were found. Some of the objects still had red paint on and under them. Ruz would eventually try to piece these objects together and realize that they were parts of royal ceremonial belts that are seen in many Maya carvings.

*Offering II* – An offering of five clay vessels was found on the floor at the foot of the large stone block. Four were grouped together and the fifth was a slight distance away. They were completely encrusted with limestone due to water seepage and were stuck to the ground. Ruz described these objects:

- Objects 1, 2 and 3 – Three tripod plates, with slightly concave bottoms, divergent walls, and everted edges. They had small cone-shaped legs. Their composition was creamy brown clay and had black or red sepia painted motifs. Ruz thought that the designs were geometrical, but since they were hidden by an encrusted limestone layer, he could not be certain until after cleaning. Their diameters ranged from 28.7 centimeters to 33 centimeters with a total height that ranged from 5.5 centimeters to 5.8 centimeters.
- Objects 4 and 5 – These were semi-cylindrical vessels with flat bottoms and flared walls. They appeared to be a brown clay color, but they also had a thick limestone layer on them, so the color was still undetermined. The diameter of one of the vessel's mouths was 15.4 centimeters and the other was 15.5 centimeters. They were both 14 centimeters high.

*Offering III* – Again on the chamber floor, under the stone block and between its southern middle supports they found two stucco heads also encased in calcareous salts<sup>11</sup> (Figure 9.7). Ruz assumed that both heads had been taken from the stucco reliefs that adorned many of Palenque’s buildings in ancient times. He did not speculate from which building they came. He described each one:

- One was a stucco head of a young man with a long flattened forehead, in typical Palenque style measuring 45 centimeters high and 17 centimeters wide. The head’s long hair was tied together with a band that contained closed and slightly open lotus blossom buds. They hung slightly forward. Some of the locks were kept in place with a pin made from shell. The bangs were cut over the temples and it is possible to see the occipital tonsure<sup>12</sup> which was so common in the reliefs of Palenque. The head had pierced ear lobes and it was possible to see the slight remains of red paint on parts of the face.
- The other sculpted stucco head Ruz found was 29 centimeters high and 21 wide. The features were not as refined, strong and virile as the other. For this reason, Ruz thought that it might be the head of a woman. He noted that the two heads contrasted with each other and that they were reminiscent of the scene displayed on the Tablet of the Slaves – with the two presiding persons being male and female. He noticed that the hair was clipped over the temples in a staggered ladder style and on the forehead the hair was cut in a manner that looked like turrets. There was a band of jade plaques in the hair and Ruz thought it symbolized the concept of “day” or “sun”. Also in the hair was a four-petaled flower, narrow strips of what he thought was leather, and small ornaments that were used to hold the hair. Like the first head, the ears were pierced.

### *Altar and Buttresses*

As described previously, the assemblage in the vaulted chamber consisted of a monolithic stone block with legs and an elaborately carved horizontal slab (Figure 9.8). But in addition, there were six buttresses in the chamber whose function seemed to be to support the stone block and the carved horizontal slab. One was a huge slab laid

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<sup>11</sup> Years later, it would be determined that both of these heads represented the likeness of the occupant of the tomb, K’inich Janab’ Pakal I and that the severed heads might have been part of a termination ritual to release the king’s spirit.

<sup>12</sup>Ruz is referring to the practice of head flattening.

horizontally on the south that bumped up against the large sculpted altar lid and on the north end there was another massive vertical stone. These buttresses consumed most of the space in the chamber up to the level of the carved lid (Ruz Lhuillier and Mason 1953:97). Ruz reasoned that the stone buttresses might have been lateral supports to ensure the integrity of the block (Ruz Lhuillier 1952h:11; A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:97).

The rectangular block that the carved altar lid rested upon measured approximately 3 X 3.10 meters, and they would later discover that it was 1.10 meters thick (it had been hollowed out), weighing an estimated 20 tons (Ruz Lhuillier 1970a:113). Its south corners seemed to be either rounded or broken. The sides of the block were hidden behind the stone buttresses; however it was possible to see some of the carvings on them. They displayed figures with familiar looking Maya features such as headdresses. On its northern side, the stone block displayed shallow cracks that had been patched with lime in ancient times. As previously stated, the huge block was sitting on top of six supports, four of which had carved images on their outside faces. They were made of well-cut stone and those at the four corners were bigger than those in the center. Some were decorated with carved faces, one had a human head emitting speech scrolls and the other two had hieroglyphs whose meaning Ruz could not determine at this time.

The discovery of the chamber came just 20 days before the end of the first 1952 season on July 5th. Because they had made no attempt to lift the carved horizontal stone from atop the large block, they continued to call the assemblage "the altar". Their first opinion was that it was used for ceremonial purposes. They reasoned that the ancient people of Palenque had hidden it away at the bottom of a pyramid in order to keep it from falling into the hands of the enemy, thus blocking the stairway to protect and hide this most holy of places. (Ruz Lhuillier 1952h:14; 1970a:113). Ruz likened it to an abandoned chapel (A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:96). That opinion would change dramatically four months later.

Ruz stated that even though they wanted to investigate it further, the rainy season had arrived in Palenque and “water ran down the walls and down the stalactites, and the constant dampness was too much for us” (A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:97). They ended their work on July 5<sup>th</sup>, and between the first and second seasons, Ruz presented a paper and published two articles in which he discussed the altar and the symbolic iconography of the carved lid. He presented his paper at the Thirtieth International Congress of Americanists held in Cambridge, England, August 18-23 (Ruz Lhuillier 1952f) and the articles were published in the magazine *Tribuna Israelita* (Ruz Lhuillier 1952a) and in *México de Hoy* (Ruz Lhuillier 1952h).

In addition to making presentations and writing articles, Ruz also wrote to Rockefeller. On July 21<sup>st</sup> he sent a letter to him telling him about the discovery of a "secret crypt" in the Temple of the Inscriptions.

*This discovery is a very important one, not only because the crypt contains magnificent bas reliefs (the carved altar is a unique piece and probably one of the most valuable of Maya art), but also because it is the first construction of this kind to have been found in the interior of a pyramid on this continent. As you know, the essential difference between the Egyptian and American pyramids was that the latter were always considered a simple base for the temples, while those of Egypt had enclosed chambers that were used as sepulchers* (Ruz Lhuillier 1952g).

He explained that they were not sure if the altar contained a tomb, but in any case finding this altar changed the way that scholars understood the function of a Maya pyramid – that in addition to being a temple, it can also have an inner ceremonial chamber. He sent Rockefeller an album with photos and told him that the Mexican government had sponsored the excavations after Rockefeller ceased funding, and again he invited him to come to Palenque.

The following month, Rockefeller responded by thanking Ruz for the letter and for the pictures, which he greatly enjoyed (Rockefeller 1952). He told him that he had

learned about Ruz's discovery of the carved monument from the U.S. papers. He promised again that he would visit one day.

### **THE SECOND 1952 SEASON – OPENING THE TOMB**

Ruz and his crew were extremely anxious and curious to know the purpose of the large stone block and its carved top. They did not want to wait until the 1953 season to solve the mystery of the block and its real nature. With this in mind, they returned to Palenque on November 15, 1952 for a special 37-day season. The purpose was to determine if the altar was one solid block of stone, i.e. an altar, or if it was hollow inside. The reasoning was that if it was solid there would be nothing to investigate under the carved stone. If this was the case, then it was not advisable to lift the lid and possibly damage a carving of extraordinary value.

It was with this situation in mind that they began using a hand auger to drill holes into the side of what they thought was probably a one-meter-high massive table altar (A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:97). The northeast and southwest corners were the easiest places to access because the lateral buttresses obstructed the other sides. Holes were drilled into the corners horizontally and at different heights.<sup>13</sup> A few days later, at the northeast location, they drilled at a depth of 1.75 meters in the middle of the stone block and since they still did not find a hollow cavity, they stopped. When they drilled on the southwest side, they reached a depth of 1.05 meters and finally hit a hollow spot. Later, in his book *The Civilization of the Ancient Maya*, Ruz wrote that discovering that the altar was hollow “moved me almost as strongly as the discovery of the crypt itself” (1970a:114). He instructed his workers to insert a wire into the hole and as they removed it they saw that it had red particles on it. They widened the opening and directed a light inside and saw a wall of what Ruz described as “red paint”. Ruz knew that the presence of the “paint” was another indication that this might be a tomb. He observed that in Maya

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<sup>13</sup> The person drilling these holes may have been a master stonemason from Oxcutzcab, Yucatán named Juan Chablé (Stuart and Stuart 2008:7).

and Aztec cosmogony, red is associated with the east and usually is present in tombs and is sprinkled upon human remains. He made the decision that the carved lid must be raised.

In his article in his 1952 *Anales (1953)*, Ruz did not give any details about how they were able to raise the five-ton carved lid from atop the stone block. He simply wrote that on the 27<sup>th</sup> of November they lifted the carved tablet using car jacks positioned on top of tree trunks that were placed at each corner of the large stone block. He also wrote that it took 24 consecutive hours of cooperative hard work from many colleagues and workers. The details of that cooperative work reveal much about the excitement of the moment, his colleagues and about Ruz himself.

How did a handful of men working in a hot, humid, isolated jungle environment and in a very confined space lift a five-ton horizontal slab? To piece the story together, I relied upon writings that Ruz completed after the 1952 event and upon accounts written by others who were present. When Ruz realized that the block was hollow, he rallied all the resources that he could muster before attempting to lift the large stone block. According to his friend, the historian and folklore specialist José Servin Palencia, Ruz and Ruz's good friend Dávalos in México City began calling colleagues at INAH asking them to come and assist Ruz in the difficult and delicate task of raising the heavy lid. Servin wrote that he received a phone call<sup>14</sup> from Dávalos, requesting that he come to Palenque with several other people because there had been an amazing discovery. He did not tell him the details, but only that he needed to bring his photographic supplies, including lots of film and equipment (Servin Palencia 1981:11).

Another person summoned was the physical anthropologist Arturo Romano Pacheco. Years later, in an interview with Antonio Bertrán, a reporter with the newspaper *Reforma*, Romano said that Ruz had called him and asked him to come to Palenque and to "bring

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<sup>14</sup> Servin writes that this happened on Saturday, November 29<sup>th</sup> (Servin Palencia 1981:11), however according to Ruz, it was November 27<sup>th</sup> when they raised the lid.

all your equipment" (Bertrán 2002b). Romano owned two 35 millimeter Leica cameras and he had worked for Ruz before when Ruz was excavating at Chichén Itzá<sup>15</sup>. Romano also coauthored the *Appendix* to the 1952 *Anales* (1953) where he and Eusebio Dávalos, after a preliminary *in situ* examination, described the skeletal remains in the sealed tomb of the Temple of the Inscriptions. The *Appendix* stated that the person in the tomb was "an adult male, of about forty or fifty years" (Dávalos Hurtado and Romano Pacheco 1954:107). See Appendix F for a copy of this document.

A group of friends gathered together for the trip and the next day they left México City on the first available plane for Villahermosa. From there they boarded another plane that took them to Palenque. The last leg of the flight lasted 35 minutes. The following people were on board: Alfonso Ortega Martínez, the Secretary of the INAH, Eusebio Dávalos, the director of the National Museum of Anthropology (Servin Palencia 1981:11), José Servin, photographer, historian and specialist in folklore, and Gustavo Durán de Huerta who was a journalist (Bertrán 2002b). Arturo Romano and Carlos Pellicer<sup>16</sup>, the noted Mexican poet, arrived by plane a little later with the luggage. Romano remembered that the plane was very small and he was terrified of flying. They landed on a gravel field, at a small airport three kilometers north of the town of Santo Domingo de Palenque. Then they all got into a jeep that took them to the site (Servin Palencia 1981:11) where they went to the camp to see Ruz.

Servin wrote that he will never forget the look on the faces of Ruz and Sáenz when he first had a glimpse of them sitting at the camp dining room table. As they sat there, elbows on the table and chins resting in the palms of their hands, they looked very tired, down-cast and sad, not noticing the arrival of their colleagues. As the day progressed,

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<sup>15</sup> In addition to the task of taking photographs, he said that he was eventually assigned the role of general "handyman". He had to keep the power supply and the hydraulic pump operational. They also gave him the job of taking care of the supplies, and thereafter, of supervising the operations of the archaeological camp (Bertrán 2002).

<sup>16</sup> At the time, Pellicer was the head of the Tabasco regional museum (Romano 1980, 1989).

they all began to understand the magnitude of the problem that Ruz faced. He told them that the budget for the project had been completely depleted and that work would need to be suspended on Saturday afternoon, after the weekly payroll was done. This was his second Palenque season for the year 1952 and consequently he had pushed his meager seasonal budget to its limit.

I believe that Ruz had at least two reasons for bringing his friends to the site. One was his need for their free labor, since he had run out of money, and the other was to let them experience the exhilaration of entering the tomb chamber and be a part of the discovery, thereby making the case that the project needed to be continued and funded.

Ruz tried to explain to his friends what he had found – the long dark stairway into the belly of the pyramid, the bones of the sacrificed youths, the secret chamber with the carved lid, and the hollow stone box under it, but they wanted to see for themselves. He took the group down to the bottom of the stairs and showed them. Servin wrote that that the group was astonished to a point of being speechless (Servin Palencia 1981:12). During the visit, Ruz was able to gain future funding assurances from Alfonso Ortega, the Secretary of INAH, and began making plans during their evening meal regarding the things that needed to be done the next day (Servin Palencia 1981:13).

In situations such as this, Ruz's ability to direct and delegate tasks always emerged. He began dividing up the jobs, giving each person an assignment based upon his individual specialties (Servin Palencia 1981). However, he gave the historian and photographer Servin the supervisory job of finding and cutting *barí*<sup>17</sup> tree trunks in the Palenque forest. The trunks had to be cut into four proportionate sizes, rolled down the stairs (Figure 9.9) and then they would be used to help lift the heavy lid. Ruz wrote

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<sup>17</sup> This wood is from a tree with the scientific name of *Calophyllum brasiliense* and one of its common names is “barí”. It is a hardwood native to the area and is easy to manipulate. The bottom portion of the trunk is branch-free, a characteristic that would have been an asset in this case, since the workmen would not have to spend precious time trimming the branches off the trunk.

*They sawed four short, thick trunk sections, brought them along a path deep in mud, carried them up the steps of the pyramid and lowered them by ropes down the inside stairway to the crypt. These logs, standing on end, served as solid supports for the jacks. And as the carved cover slab protruded sufficiently over the sides of the underlying stone box, it was possible to place a log and jack under each of the four corners (A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:97). (Figure 9.10)*

Evening approached and they were finally ready to begin the process of lifting the lid. In his excitement Ruz had lost all track of time and in the dark artificially lit chamber it was hard to know what time of day it was. However Ruz's foreman Agustín Álvarez told him:

*“Six o'clock, patron,” said Agustín. “And the men have worked twelve hours without eating. Hadn't we better knock off until tomorrow?”*

*“We're going to work till we get to the end of this!” I told him firmly. “Send for some tortillas, beans and coffee for all of us.” (A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:97)*

After eating, they returned to working with the jacks. They were anxious to get into the tomb cavity so that they could quickly consolidate the bones and make drawings (Servin Palencia 1981). Servin remembered "As the work of hoisting the slab began, I have in my mind's eye, the picture of Ruz standing up, directing the very careful and slow ascension of it, holding both arms up like the gesture of a conductor" (1981:13).

The lid slowly rose, inch by inch. Underneath the carved monument, they were surprised to find another cavity that was sealed by a highly polished stone embedded with four holes capped with plugs. The cavity was carved in an oblong and curvilinear manner that ended in what Ruz calls the “tail of a fish” or an Omega (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d)<sup>18</sup>. Each time they jacked up the lid, they placed a board under it in case one of the jacks failed to hold. As soon as the space was about 38 centimeters wide, which was enough room for Ruz to get under the lid, he said “I can't wait any longer, boys,” and took two of

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<sup>18</sup> Later, Ruz wrote that the shape was of a stylized womb, thus the person in the tomb was returning to mother earth, the source of all life (Ruz 1979:114). He also later restated that it was in the shape of a fish. In my opinion, this inner chamber is shaped like an inverted vase, similar to the one found in the hieroglyphic inscriptions.

the plugs out, shined his flashlight in one hole and looked through the other. He wrote “a few centimeters from my eyes – was a skull covered with pieces of jade” (Ruz Lhuillier 1970a:115; A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:97).

*My first impression was a mosaic of green, red and white. Then it resolved itself into details– green jade ornaments, red painted teeth and bones, and fragments of a mask. I was gazing at the death face of him for whom all this stupendous work – the crypt, the sculpture, the stairway, the great pyramid with its crowning temple – had been built, the mortal remains of one of the greatest men of Palenque! This was a sarcophagus, the first ever found in a Maya pyramid (A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:97)*

According to Ruz, by placing ropes through the holes in the second lid, they lifted it off in a manner that must have been similar to the way that the ancient Maya priests had put it in place (1970a:115). They rested this second lid upon the northern buttress. Then the funerary container and its contents could be clearly seen. See Figure 9.11 to view a photo from *Life Magazine* where Ruz and others are peering into the tomb. The cavity had been carved so that all around the edges of the larger cavity there is a sort of ledge measuring about ten centimeters wide, allowing the nine-centimeters-thick stone cover to rest without disturbing the corpse below. When closed it was almost hermetically sealed<sup>19</sup>. The inside of the cavity was polished and painted with what Ruz called “red paint”, but according to Dávalos, the physical anthropologist who examined the bones, the substance was probably cinnabar (Dávalos Hurtado and Romano Pacheco 1954). The carved-out area measured 1.98 meters long, 0.95 meters wide, and 0.36 meters deep (Figure 9.12).

The skeleton belonging to the occupant of the tomb was much deteriorated due to the high humidity, and Servin wrote that he and others expeditiously went about conserving the bone (1981:13). However, to Servin’s disappointment, Ruz took him aside and asked

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<sup>19</sup> Since limestone naturally absorbs water, a coffin made of limestone is sure to absorb moisture, so the limestone may have contributed to the deterioration of the body of the deceased, even if it was sealed. It is interesting to note that the word sarcophagus comes from Greek words that mean “flesh-eating”.

him to do an important job for him.<sup>20</sup> He wanted him to immediately go to the temple called the “House of the Lion”<sup>21</sup> and gather up whatever pieces he could find lying on the floor of its downstairs chamber. The discovery of the tomb at the bottom of the Inscriptions’ stairs was causing Ruz to re-examine his theory about the purpose of the other chambered stairs found inside some of Palenque’s temples. Now he began to realize that they were not for defense, as he had previously proposed, but instead they led to funerary chambers. The Temple of the Jaguar had one of these chambered stairs; therefore looking closer at what little remained on the floor of the chamber could reveal if it also had been used for a burial. If it had been a tomb, it had been looted, perhaps even in ancient times.

Servin reluctantly said that he would do this, but in reality he hated to leave the tomb chamber, afraid that he might miss some of the fast moving developments of this important discovery. He giddily told Ruz that it would be his “infinite pleasure”, but what he really wanted to say was “no”. Ruz smiled and told him that he could refuse, especially since he was not really one of Ruz’s employees. Instead he obeyed and was fortunate enough to be able to bring back "a dozen small pieces that I put in a small cellophane envelope" (Servin Palencia 1981:13).

The physical anthropologist Arturo Romano, who brought his photographic equipment as requested by Ruz, continued to work with his cameras in the chamber until December 21<sup>st</sup>, the end of the field season. (See Figure 9.12 and 9.13 for some of his work). He had many problems with producing good photos in the chamber, including trying to get the cameras to focus and dealing with the explosions of his flash bulbs as water dripped down on them from the ceiling (Bertrán 2002b). He used both black/white and color film, but the color rolls had to be sent to the United States for development and

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<sup>20</sup> Servin looked back on this moment with humor and affection in his contribution to *Homenaje a Alberto Ruz Lhuillier* compiled by UNAM in 1981

<sup>21</sup> This temple is also sometimes called the Temple of the Jaguar.

he was under great distress for an entire month while he worried over whether or not the film would be returned. In the end, the photos came back without incident and all the pictures turned out well<sup>22</sup>. According to the reporter, Bertrán Romano stated that Ruz had asked Romano to make three copies of each picture because they "might be useful someday" (2002b).

### **TOMB DESCRIPTION**

Ruz wrote a very general summary of a "spot" study that was done on the osteological remains by the physical anthropologists from the National Museum of Anthropology, Eusebio Dávalos and Arturo Romano. Their study was included in the *Appendix* of Ruz's *Anales* article, and as discussed earlier, I have included the document as Appendix F of this dissertation. They believed that the skeleton belonged to an adult male who was tall in stature and had a stout build. They reported that his approximate age was between 40 and 50 years<sup>23</sup>. He was buried with jewels and was placed in a red-painted shroud. The shroud was no longer evident, but the red pigment had survived and was still attached to the bones and to the jewelry. After the *in situ* study of the bones, it was decided that only selected personal accoutrements of the occupant of the tomb, along with the occupant's skull, were to be taken from the tomb for further study Dávalos and Romano (Tiesler and Cucina 2006:7)<sup>24</sup>.

#### *His Jewels*

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<sup>22</sup> These are the celebrated color photos that were taken of the red bones of the tomb occupant, Pakal.

<sup>23</sup> Many years later, the reported age of this ruler was disputed due to epigraphic evidence that indicated that he lived to the age of 80.

<sup>24</sup> Tiesler and Cucina also wrote that 20 years later, Dávalos and Arturo Romano's report was extended and verified and it contained the same conclusions as the first study. They stated that the age estimate was partly based upon the fact that the wear on the teeth was very slight (Tiesler and Cucina 2006:7 & 8). The occupant's fragmentary skull was finally returned to the tomb in 1978 by Arturo Romano (Tiesler and Cucina 2006:10).

Before the jewels were removed, the archaeologists took photographs and made scaled drawings, including one of the entire skeleton with the jewels attached to it (Figure 9.14). The following is a list of all of the pieces found and their locations<sup>25</sup>:

1. A mosaic mask made up of 200 pieces of jade was present. The eyes were made of shell and the iris of obsidian. The pupils were represented by a painted black dot. A majority of the pieces were found lying on the left side of the skull and it was possible to see the remains of a frame of stucco that held the jade together. They believed that the mask was made by shaping it piece-by-piece onto the face of the deceased. It is likely that this person was shrouded first, before the creation of the mask. Over time, the mask moved away from the face through the process of decomposition and the fabric of the shroud was destroyed. Only fragments of it were attached to the face. The artist Alberto García Maldonado was able to reconstruct the mask<sup>26</sup> by referring to his archaeological notes regarding the location of each piece. When finished, its dimensions were 24 by 19 centimeters.
2. A deep green, jade pendant representing a “*zotz*”<sup>27</sup> or a bat, found among the fragments of the skull, probably from a diadem. Its length was 2.8 centimeters.
3. A pair of short round spools that held hair, found in the frontal region of the skull. These would have been used to style hair in a similar manner as was seen in relief images at the site. Their length was 1.3 centimeters.
4. The remains of a diadem which was made of 41 jade discs of various sizes having widths measuring 1.3 to 2.4 centimeters.
5. Five objects that appeared to be deteriorated little pearls covered by a thick coating of an unidentified substance.
6. Lying very near each ear of the deceased subject, were several related objects made up of the following:
  - A square plaque of jade that was shaped like a flower on one side; the other had a carved hieroglyphic inscription. There was a calendar date of 9 *Xul* on it, but that alone was not enough to determine an exact date. It measured 5.5 centimeters.
  - A round cap that fit exactly into the back of the square jade plaque mentioned above, with a diameter of 2.8 centimeters.
  - A ball of resin attached to a pearl positioned inside the circular cap mentioned above with a diameter of 1 centimeter.

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<sup>25</sup> The numbers in this document do not correspond to the artifact catalog numbers.

<sup>26</sup> Almost 50 years later, the reconstruction of the mask was revised by Laura Filloy Nadal based upon newer restoration techniques.

<sup>27</sup> The current accepted spelling of this word is “*zodz*” according to Barbara MacLeod (personal communication).

- An elongated jade cylinder with a fragment of a bone needle eight centimeters long.
  - A bead shaped like a long flower that had upward turned petals and was 3.5 centimeters long.
  - Two large artificial pearls, created by taking two small shell sections and cutting them so that they fit perfectly together. Then they were filled with a limestone paste that acted like glue to keep the two shell pieces together. On their smallest end, tiny holes were made so that they could be hung. One was glued transversely and the other longitudinally. They each measured 3.6 centimeters.
7. A necklace made of 118 jade beads of various sizes and shapes: round, flattened, in the form of flower buds or open flowers, cylindrical little pots, pumpkins, melons and a snake head that might have been used as a necklace clasp.
  8. A round deep green jade bead that had been placed in the mouth of the deceased at the time of burial.
  9. A bib or breast plate that was made-up of nine strands of 21 tubular beads. They were almost completely *in situ*. The bead size ranged from 1 to 4.8 centimeters.
  10. On the mouth and under the mask of the deceased, a rectangular frame made of pyrite plates. Pieces of shell were placed in the corners of the frame and the entire assemblage was painted with a layer of stucco and red paint. Ruz noticed that this same mouth frame was seen on the faces of the stucco figures on the chamber walls. The one they found measured 11 x 8 centimeters.
  11. A bracelet found partly *in situ* on the right forearm with more small beads on the wrist; this consisted of 200 small jade beads.
  12. A bracelet found partly *in situ* on the left forearm with more small beads on the wrist; this consisted of 200 small jade beads.
  13. Two nose ornaments both made of jade, one in the shape of a boot and the other in the shape of a flower. One of these pieces was found under the base of the skull and the other was stuck to the left side of the face. It was 2.5 centimeters long.
  14. A jade ball, found in the left hand with a diameter of 3.5 centimeters.
  15. A jade cube, found near the tips of the fingers of the right hand and measuring 3.5 centimeters.
  16. Jade rings, either on the phalanges or between the bones of the hands. Three of those on the left hand were fluted or had smooth surfaces and two were grooved.
  17. Three of the five rings on the right hand were ribbed; one was smooth and one was carved in the shape of a squatting male with his face projecting forward.
  18. An almost perfect jade ball found at the end of the tip of the left foot with a diameter of 3.5 centimeters.
  19. A hollow jade bead carved in the shape of a flower, found at the tip of the right toe and with a diameter of 6 centimeters.
  20. A carved jade anthropomorphic figurine with several tiny holes on its edges, possibly for the purpose of sewing it to fabric. It was found below the pubic bone and its head

was directed toward the feet of the skeleton; hence it was upside down and it was probably sewn on the loincloth in that manner. Its length was 6 centimeters.

21. A large anthropomorphic jade figurine, found at the end of the left foot. Ruz believed that it possessed sun god characteristics. Its length was 9 centimeters.
22. Three bone needles, one at the throat, one at the right shoulder and the third on the left shoulder, possibly used to tie the body shroud. These were in the process of disintegration. They also found and collected traces of an organic material that had red striations as well as traces of dust, paint and perhaps rotten fabric.

### **THE SARCOPHAGUS'S HIEROGLYPHIC INSCRIPTION**

As was mentioned previously, there were carved hieroglyphs on the side of the sarcophagus lid (Figure 9.15). The section of the report about the inscription was written before Ruz knew that a tomb was under it, so within the report, he still referred to it as an altar. It had no Long Count dates that would anchor the Calendar Round dates carved upon it. According to archaeologist Michael Coe (1999:194), when Ruz saw the Calendar Round date of 8 *Ahaw*<sup>28</sup> on the edge of the lid, Ruz started calling the deceased occupant "8 *Ahaw*"<sup>29</sup>. Ruz's student Mercedes de la Garza (2004:13) also wrote that Ruz called the occupant of the tomb by this same calendar name, however she states that Ruz used the terms "*Uoxoc Ahau*"<sup>30</sup>.

This glyph date was carved in a very prominent spot on the lid. It was the first glyph on the left, on the south side, a side that would have been seen first as one entered the chamber. Perhaps it was simply luck or Ruz's keen sense of intuition that caused him to call the deceased by this glyph name, but many years later it would be discovered that *Waxak Ajaw* was indeed the occupant's birthday in the 260-day Maya sacred calendar.<sup>31</sup> That discovery was made possible after Tatiana Proskouriakoff deciphered the hieroglyph

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<sup>28</sup> The complete Calendar Round date referred to here was 8 Ahaw 13 Pop, which was later determined to be the Gregorian date of March 26, 603.

<sup>29</sup> In Spanish, this name would have the prefixed numeral "ocho".

<sup>30</sup> Today *Uoxoc* is usually written "Uaxac" and in the Yucatecan Maya dialect it is spelled "*waxak*" (8).

<sup>31</sup> The 260-day Maya sacred calendar is part of a Calendar Round date.

for the word “birth” (1960); this was the glyph on the lid edge located immediately following the Calendar Round date of 8 Ajaw 13 Pop.<sup>32</sup> Drawing upon his knowledge of other Mesoamerican cultures, Ruz had good reason to believe that 8 Ajaw could have been the occupant’s birth name. In some cultures, such as the Aztec and the Mixtec, it was the custom to name the child by the date (coefficient and day-name) when they were born (Boone 2007:29; Terraciano 2004:151).

In total, Ruz counted fifty-four carved hieroglyphs on the edge of the lid, with twelve on the south edge, six on the north and eighteen on both the east and west. Only the Calendar Round dates could be deciphered. They were as follows:

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<sup>32</sup> The Maya word “*K’anjaw*” is now used instead of “Pop”.

Table 3: List of Calendar Glyphs on the Edge of the Sarcophagus Lid as written by Ruz<sup>33</sup>

South side:	8 Ahaw	13 Pop	East side:	5 Caban	5 Mac	West Side:	3 Chuen	4 Uayeb
	6 Etznab	11 Yax		7 Cib	4 Kayab		4 Oc	13 Yax
North side:	2 Cimi	14 Mol		9 Manik	5 Yaxkin		1 Ahau	8 Kayab
				7 Ahaw	3 Kankin		13 Cimi	4 Pax
				11 Chicchan	3 Kayab			
				2 Eb	0 (or 10) Ceh <sup>34</sup>			

Ruz thought it curious that the date 1 Ahaw 8 Kayab on the west side of the lid was sandwiched between two other Calendar Round dates. He commented that this was a highly irregular way for the Maya to express Calendar Round dates. He also thought that the 11 Chicchan<sup>35</sup> 3 Kayab date was a mistake; perhaps it was supposed to be 4 Kayab. He inventoried some of the other Calendar Rounds at Palenque that corresponded with the ones found on the lid, hoping to find some kind of pattern or clue. The table below represents the dates that he noted from other Palenque inscriptions:

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<sup>33</sup> Here Ruz spelled the calendar dates according to the commonly accepted linguistic convention that was developed in the colonial era, but a majority of Maya epigraphers no longer utilize this convention. In addition, Ruz did not use any glottal stops when he wrote Calendar Round dates. The use of glottal stops is now a common practice in modern epigraphy and linguistics. The stops are usually expressed with an apostrophe.

<sup>34</sup> The notation of 0 (or 10) in a Calendar Round date is highly unusual and I do not know why Ruz wrote it this way.

<sup>35</sup> This day in the Calendar Round is now written “Chikchan”

Table 4: Inventory of Palenque Calendar Glyphs Corresponding to those on Edge of Lid

<b>Calendar Round Day</b>	<b>Calendar Round Month</b>	<b>Long Count</b>	<b>Ruz Comments</b>	<b>My Notes</b>
8 Ahau	13 Pop	(9.8.9.13.0)	From the stairs of Palace, Building C	<i>Pakal's Birthday</i>
6 Etznab	11 Yax	(9.12.11.5.18)	Temple of the Inscriptions Tablet, according to Eric Thompson	<i>Death of Pakal</i>
7 Ahau	3 Kankin	(9.7.0.0.0)	Temple of the Inscriptions Tablet, according to Eric Thompson	<i>Period Ending During Kan Bahlam I</i>
1 Ahau	8 Kayab	(9.10.0.0.0)	Temple of the Inscriptions Tablet, according to Eric Thompson	<i>Period Ending for Pakal</i>

The latest date on the lid was 9.12.11.5.18, 6 Etznab 11 Yax, which was 3,132 days or 8.7 years away from the katun ending on 9.13.0.0.0.<sup>36</sup> Thompson believed that the “altar” was dedicated on 9.13.0.0.0 in order to celebrate the katun ending (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d:94). Ruz finally deferred to the experts regarding the accurate interpretation of the dates and the glyphs. But after discovering that a tomb lay under the carved lid, he applied common logic to the task of understanding the glyphs and stated that somewhere in the room there should be glyphs that tell the date of birth and death of the person buried there (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d:94). He went on to conclude that most likely those glyphs would also describe some of the occupants’ accomplishments and exploits, since he was a major figure at Palenque. He reasoned that the 13 Calendar Round dates recorded on the sides of the carved monument probably told the fundamental facts about the great lord that had been buried in the tomb, although “it would be impossible to define the exact time in terms of absolutes and of course even more impossible to relate them to actual events” (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d:94).

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<sup>36</sup> There is only one instance of this Long Count date for the Temple of the Inscriptions and it is found on the West Tablet.

*Symbolic scene* (Figure 9.16)

Ruz began his written analysis of the scene on the top of the lid by observing that it is surrounded by a rectangular frame, and inside the frame are the following elements: on the east and west, there are nine glyphs representing celestial bodies, including the Sun, the Moon, Venus, and perhaps Saturn, Jupiter and Mercury. On the north and south are three images of human heads interspersed with other glyphs. Some of the other glyphs he thought represented God C of the North Star and another he called the four-petaled flower of the sun. The heads were framed by medallions similar to those found in the eastern Palace gallery<sup>37</sup>. This cartouche reminded Ruz of the outline of the sign "zero "or "maturity."

He observed that in the center of the carving was a young man with a skirt or a loin cloth that was fastened by a belt with a skull at the abdomen. The tips of a loincloth were flipped up between his legs. He wore a turtle pectoral or maybe an armadillo necklace, earrings, a nose ring, bracelets and a headband. He had a cranial deformity and his hair was twisted up in several loops. His body was in a seated position, but it looked as if he was either thrown backward or he had fallen backward.

He noted that the reclining young man sat upon a very large mask that he interpreted as an "earth monster", a frequently seen beast that displayed typical Maya art motifs such as macabre faces with de-fleshed jaws and noses. He described its eyes as the large eyes of the sun god, with a four-flower-petal shape on its forehead as well as a motif that he thought had the value of "final" in the calendar glyphs. There were four objects that supported the man's body – the cross-section of a snail shell and a sign similar to the modern percent (%) sign, both of which Ruz believed were associated with death. He proposed that the other two objects were probably images of a seed kernel, or possibly a flower or an ear of corn. A beard adorned the chin of the "earth monster" and right above

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<sup>37</sup> Today, this is known as House A.

that was a big fleshless mouth, showing fang-like teeth. The jaw bone of the beast extended upward toward the man and seemed to have a tight grip upon him.

Ruz noted that the ornate cross motif above the seated man was identical to the central image on the Tablet of the Cross. He stated that it had the same characteristic mask of the rain god and perched on top of the cross was the same quetzal bird. He observed that wrapped around the cross was the undulating two-headed snake and out of its mouths came little characters that looked similar to those of the manikin-scepter, but were probably little “*Chacs*”, Maya Rain Gods. Ruz also noticed the stylized and jeweled snake heads poking out of the arms of the cross that symbolized the sky, the source of water, which is an essential element for maize and human life. Another essential deity, the sun, appeared in several places on the relief.

He commented on the various motifs that seemed to float around in the background and inside the frame where there is free space. Two of the larger ones looked like shields with mosaic faces that make up of the features of the sun god. He thought that some of the other motifs represented the flow of blood, as is seen in the Aztec iconography where water was symbolized as jade discs. There were several more symbols – a plate made of bone, and jade discs with and without scrolls. Dispersed throughout the scene were eleven sets of disks in three rows hanging together vertically. He also noticed two floating glyphs representing the calendrical value of “zero” or “maturity”. One was located to the left at the base of the cross and the other was on the right side, above the head of the snake. He interpreted the last as “middle period” (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d:96).

Ruz eloquently explained further:

*The celestial banner around the scene gave it a cosmic context, elevated to the category of sacred. The beast from the earth symbolizes the implacable destiny of man and all living things; the elements of his headdress are united with the concepts of death and life...because the land has a dual role: to receive the remains at the end of life and then to give rise to plant life (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d).*

He wrote that the cross often represented the tree of life, but in other cases it was a symbol of the corn plant; he emphasized that these two interpretations have significant overlap as ancient Maya symbols. Not only is maize needed for humans to live, it is the goal of existence, and reverence for it is evidenced by the Maize God, one of the ancient Maya's most important deities. Ruz noted that according to the *Popol Vuh*, the creation book of the K'iche' Maya, humans were made by the gods from corn and corn is the substance necessary for humanity to continue to exist.

Before the raising of the lid and the revelation of the tomb beneath, Ruz had thought that the carved monument was a ceremonial altar top. He had suggested that the scene represented the sacrifice of human life, a frequent theme in Mesoamerican and Aztec religion. Images of human sacrifice and decapitation in ancient Maya culture were visible in the Dresden Codex, the Temple of the Inscriptions, and in the frescoes of Bonampak,<sup>38</sup> thus Ruz saw a clear association between decapitation and the maize cult. He interpreted the images of heads on the tomb supports, on the carved stone block, and the two stucco heads that were found under the stone block as symbolic sacrificial offerings. He also noted that one of the carved heads had the number eight upon it, a symbol he associated with the corn god. In addition, he saw blood symbols displayed on the sarcophagus lid. He believed that the human remains deposited at the entrance to the chamber were clear evidence of human sacrifice, even though he also believed that the practice was not as prevalent in the culture of the ancient Maya as it was among in the Aztecs.

He continued his analysis by pointing out that the young man in the image was teetering between life and death. He observed the tree of life or the symbol of maize, water descending from the sky represented by drops and other suspended symbols, and also the sun and the resplendent quetzal. Death was symbolized by the earth monster and underworld motifs. The young person, represented humanity, was captured in the jaws of

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<sup>38</sup> Giles Healey, a photographer and archaeologist working for the United Fruit Company, discovered these murals in 1946.

the fleshless monster, and from the time of conception he is the prey of death. The entire scene intentionally focuses on this character, whose position is one of falling backward, because life is a precarious fall towards death. He wrote “But the assembled iconography also displays the continuity of cosmic life and its continuation after death - that life springs from death, as can be seen by the stylized tree or corn plant in the form of a cross, the icon of resurrection or of eternal life” (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d:97)

At this juncture, Ruz did not realize that the person depicted on the lid was the same as the one in the tomb. Even as late as 1970, Ruz did not believe that the "youth" on the sarcophagus lid was the same person who occupied the tomb. He wrote of the image “If this were a tomb of the European Renaissance, we would say that this figure represented the buried person inside. But the religious essence of Maya art is so strong that it is more likely a symbol, perhaps of man in general, that is, humanity, or perhaps the god of corn, as well, since he is commonly represented as a young man” (Ruz 1970:117). I do not know if Ruz knew about the connection between Pakal’s “maize god” skirt at the time he wrote this passage<sup>39</sup>.

1973 was the year when scholars realized that the person in the tomb was depicted on the lid and was referenced in the inscriptions on the edge of the lid. For the first time, epigraphers were able to read the glyphic name of the Palenque king inscribed on the edge of the lid (Coe 1999:205-207). The connection between the image of the seated figure and Pakal was made by Linda Schele after she looked at other carved scenes at Palenque where he was named (David Schele 2011 personal communication). By comparing these images, she realized that the profiles represented the same person.

## CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSIS

After reviewing the data that he had collected, Ruz proposed that the first step taken by the ancient builders in constructing the secret chamber was the creation of its footprint

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<sup>39</sup> This maize-god skirt has been acknowledged by present-day scholars (Schele and Mathews 1998:116).

in the clay soil where they installed the limestone slab floor. The Temple of the Inscriptions was built into a hill, and Ruz thought it probable that the limestone for the supports, for carved stone cavity and its carved lid was all mined from the base of that same hill before the building was completed. After these stones were carved and put in place, the chamber and the staircase were built simultaneously. When the stairs reached a certain height, the temple and its floor were installed.

Ruz speculated that the construction of the entire pyramid and temple had been orchestrated by the person who occupied the chamber, or if he had not finished it before he died, someone else completed it. Ruz proposed that there were two purposes for the buttresses in the chamber: 1) to make the sarcophagus stronger “not because it was necessary, but because the person to be buried wanted the sepulcher to be indestructible” (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d:102), and 2) to assist the burial attendants in maneuvering the giant cover. This assistance was necessary because the carved cavity was almost inaccessible if one were standing on the floor of the chamber, since the cavity was 1.50 meters from the floor. The buttresses also solved the problem of what to do with the five-ton lid while they needed to keep the tomb open. They could move the lid to the side on top of a buttress while a funeral procession carrying the body made its way down the stairs and into the room. Afterwards, the attendants could roll the lid into place.

Ruz thought that the offerings found on the floor of the chamber were placed there after the burial. Subsequently, human sacrifices were made outside the chamber to provide companions for the deceased dignitary on his journey into the afterlife. He wrote that perhaps one was the deceased’s wife or members of his kin. Then, as they labored to block the staircase, they simultaneously deposited offerings at the bottom and then at the top of the stairs. Again he mentioned the hollow “snake modeled in stucco” that seems to originate from the coffin” and which follows the steps up to the temple floor at the top, serving “as a conduit for the magical spirit of the deceased and for priests to remain in

contact with him” (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d:102) He speculated that the man in the tomb was a great priest and leader who was revered by the people as a deity.

At this time, Ruz did not want to establish a burial date based upon the inscriptions, since he could see that the glyphs contained Calendar Round dates, without associated Long Count dates.<sup>40</sup> He knew that other inscriptions at Palenque had Long Count dates that ranged between 9.10.0.0.0 and 9.13.0.0.0. Yet there is evidence that he was able to come to conclusions about some of the other dates on the lid, because in a 1953 interview with Mason, Ruz stated that one of his workers, Guadalupe Pech, asked him “Can you read that writing, chief?” (1953:97). Ruz replied that he could only read the date glyphs and he told him that one of them fell on A.D. 603<sup>41</sup> and another was A.D. January 27, 633.<sup>42</sup> Ruz also told Pech that this last date – January 27<sup>th</sup>, was Ruz’s birthday. Pech replied “Then certainly what that stone says is that you would come someday to discover what is buried down here; it’s a prophecy” (A. Ruz Lhuillier and A. J. Mason 1953:97). It is interesting to note that the text of this inscription has now been deciphered and the January date refers to the celebration of a Period Ending, not a birthday, and yet it is still a remarkable coincidence that the date was also Ruz’s birthday.

It was Ruz’s opinion that the jades found were from the Classic Period and that the ceramic vessels were of forms similar to those from the *Tepeu* Period,<sup>43</sup> as defined by ceramic chronologies established in early excavations in the region of Petén, Guatemala.

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<sup>40</sup> Calendar Round dates, such as these are not exact dates, but allow epigraphers and historians to choose from range of possible Long Count dates. Then they use other data to verify their choice.

<sup>41</sup> Here, Ruz is referring to the Gregorian date corresponding to the Maya Calendar Round date of 8 Ajaw 13 Pop. Ruz did not know this at the time, but this date was the birth date of K’inich Janab’ Pakal I, the occupant of the tomb.

<sup>42</sup> The Gregorian date that Ruz mentioned here was the Maya Calendar Round date of 1 Ajaw 8 K’ayab’. The inscriptions refer to a Period Ending date associated with Lady Sak K’uk’.

<sup>43</sup> This term describes a pottery tradition established by R.E. Smith (1955) for Maya lowland ceramics that dated from around A.D. 600 to 900. They correspond to the Palenque ceramic phases of the Balunté, Murciélagos and Otolum that were established later by Bob Rands.

He estimated that the burial probably took place at the end of the seventh century or near the beginning of eighth. He expressed hope that there might be more date glyphs and other clues on the legs of the carved cavity that would furnish additional clues about the burial date, but they must first remove the buttresses so the images could be seen.

### **IMPORTANCE OF THE DISCOVERY**

Ruz was of the opinion that the significance of the discovery was multifaceted. The chamber itself was a magnificent example of architectural achievement for the ancient Maya. From its size, its location and the construction techniques used, he knew of no comparable ancient American construction. He could see genius and talent in the details of the structure created by the gifted people of Palenque. He marveled at innovations such as vents in the ceilings of the stair landings so that air and light could come into the stuffy stairway, stone beams to make the arches stronger within the staircase and the chamber, the placement of crossbeams in the chamber ceiling that spread the heavy load, and the manipulation of huge stones within a small space.

Found inside the vault were masterpieces of art in the form of stucco reliefs and an exceptionally intricate carved funerary monument. He believed its equivalent had not been found on the American continent. Everything in the chamber was worth noting: its location, its dimensions of fifteen cubic meters, its entire weight of about twenty tons, and its splendidly carved stones that both covered and supported the peculiar fishlike carved cavity. And then there was the richness of the regalia buried with the deceased. He noted that the images on the stucco wall reliefs of the “Maya priests” allowed scholars to better understand the attire that they wore, and it added to the knowledge of their religious beliefs. In addition, the jewelry found on the body of this revered man allowed scholars a view of the kinds of ornaments a Maya priest might wear. The creativity and artistic talent of the Maya jewelers was evidenced by the workmanship of the funerary mask, made up of hundreds of pieces of jade.

Ruz, looking at the larger picture, felt that the discovery had sweeping implications. It changed how people should view the American pyramid. It was not always just a foundation built to support a temple. While it is true that in most cases, Mesoamerican pyramids did have solid foundations, there were exceptions to this rule. Sometimes they held surprises--for instance, the tombs inside the Monte Albán pyramids, the Tomb of the High Priest at Chichén Itzá, and the ossuary at the same site which had an artificial hole in its temple floor leading into a natural cave. There were two pyramids at the site of Hormiguero<sup>44</sup> in the State of Campeche containing interior staircases that led to small chambers. He then cited the Temple of the Jaguar in Palenque with stairs that led from the temple sanctuary to a chamber below. He asked if these cases were rare, or were they the norm. He thought that the discovery of a monumental tomb inside a pyramid at Palenque should lead investigators to inquire whether other Maya pyramids might also contain colossal tombs.

He noted that a large pyramid with a sumptuous tomb understandably brought to mind the similarities with the Egyptian pyramids. However, it was hard to seriously link the origin of the American pyramid to those of the Old World.<sup>45</sup> He cited several reasons why: there is the problem of vast geographic separation and the lack of evidence for other developmental similarities for these two civilizations, i.e. the only thing similar is the pyramid tomb. The largest problem was one of time. “The Egyptian pyramids and the ‘Ziggurat’ in Mesopotamia stretched back for millennia even before the ancient peoples of Mesoamerica started to build these artificial hills” (Ruz Lhuillier 1954d:105). And the stepped pyramids of the Khmer of Southeast Asia were built after the Classic Periods of Teotihuacan, Monte Albán and the Maya.

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<sup>44</sup> *Hormiguero* means anthill in Spanish.

<sup>45</sup> In an interview with Mason (1933:95) Ruz also mentioned the similarities the tomb shared with those of Southeastern Asia, Cambodia and Indo-China as well as rumors that the person in the tomb might have been Cambodian.

He acknowledged that there were striking similarities between what the public is now calling the “royal tomb” of Palenque and the tombs of the pharaohs. In both cases, tremendous resources were used to design and build a grand pyramid. The ancient people overcame many serious supply and construction obstacles such as the location and extraction of materials, transport of them to the site, and the planning and implementation of all the details of construction. Ruz imagined that such a building effort would have used large amounts of resources, both human and material. He also wondered what other important tasks were delayed by those societies in order to build a monument that would last for several centuries. He thought that it would have taken thousands of men working for several decades at the expense of community resources, both material and spiritual.

He believed that a culture possessing those kinds of resources must have had an advanced economy, one that could sustain both its urban and rural populations. In its hinterlands the people were producing food for themselves, their priestly class and their warriors as well for the thousands of workers who were laboring over the construction of the pyramid tomb. The existence of the grand tomb also implies the probable existence of a theocratic political system with a leader who was strong enough to forge a centralized governing body that demanded obedience from its population. Along with this centralization, there was likely a deeply-held belief that the king-priest was of divine origin. The indestructible tomb was built to protect him from death, because the king was also a god and the lives of the people depended upon the survival of their gods. The people cooperatively and collectively engaged in this superhuman task, not thinking of how much work and sacrifice it represented, because they had properly prepared their king for passage into the other world. In the end they knew that their society would reap the rewards. It is remarkable to note that Ruz was somehow prescient when he made this interpretation (MacLeod: 2012, Personal Communication) because hieroglyphs written on the Tablet of the Inscriptions reflect this same idea, and yet the Tablet was not deciphered until several years later.

Ruz believed that it was little wonder that the agrarian and spiritual people of Egypt and of the Maya were able to develop advanced sciences. He listed academic fields and pursuits such as astronomy, mathematics, hieroglyphic writing, calendar systems, astrology and agricultural innovations. For Ruz, it was evident that all this knowledge eventually became concentrated in the hands of the astronomer-priests. From there, the political system evolved into one of control by priest-kings and then finally control by god-kings.

Ruz also observed a remarkable similarity in a spiritual sensibility between the relief of the sarcophagus lid at Palenque and the icons used by Egyptian pharaohs. In Egyptian mythology there was an important god named Osiris who oversaw agriculture, the forces of nature and of vegetation. He was reborn every year as a result of the flooding of the Nile River. He was represented by a tree called "zed". Ruz wrote

*In ancient Palenque, the god who is symbolized by the cross, a tree or a maize plant probably arises from the ground each harvest. In both cases it is the same idea stemming from the depths of the human spirit, giving hope for life eternal, a symbol of resurrection and eternity representing the 'remedy of immortality bestowed upon mankind' as told in the words of Diodorus of Sicily in the Syrian myth (1953:106).  
Author's translation*

## Chapter 10: The Seasons after the Discovery of the Tomb<sup>1</sup>

### THE 1953 SEASON

As stated above, Ruz sent Rockefeller a letter in July telling him about the discovery of a "secret crypt" in the Temple of the Inscriptions. In December 1952, before the 1953 season started, Ruz sent him a telegraph message with the following words: "sumptuous burial chamber discovered inside the Temple of the Inscriptions". Ruz renewed his invitation to Rockefeller to come to Palenque (Ruz Lhuillier 1952b).

From 23 July to 23 September 1953, Ruz's only funding source was from INAH's Directorate of Prehispanic Monuments. Because he had received no funds from Rockefeller<sup>2</sup> that year, there was no 1953 correspondence in the Rockefeller archives or in the archives of the Institute for Andean Research. Also, for reasons that are unclear, the reports for the 1953, 1954, 1955 and 1956 seasons were not published in the *Anales del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía* until 1958.<sup>3</sup> He listed the archaeologist César Sáenz and artists Hipólito Sánchez Vera and Alberto García Maldonado as his collaborators that season. Ruz lamented that he had received the lowest funding from INAH since the 1949<sup>4</sup> season. Despite this situation, he noted that he was

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<sup>1</sup> Unlike previous chapters where I have presented Ruz's excavation work using his *Anales* and his *Informes de Trabajo*, some of the following project summaries come from informal progress reports filed in the archives of the AMNH that Ruz sent to his supervisors.

<sup>2</sup> During the month of July, before Ruz began his 1953 season, Rockefeller was appointed United States Undersecretary of the newly created Department of Health, Education and Welfare, so he was very preoccupied with other issues.

<sup>3</sup> I speculate that this delay was due to the extra work and stress Ruz experienced after discovering the royal tomb in 1952. During this time, he was also trying to raise private funds to continue the work, so he was giving many speeches and receiving frequent invitations to visit other parts of the world to talk about his finds (Ruz Buenfil 2011). Compounding all this was the fact that between 1953 and 1958, he worked at several other archaeological sites in Yucatán.

<sup>4</sup> As far as I have been able to discern from the record, his lowest level of funding from INAH up to this point was actually in 1950.

able to accomplish substantial conservation and exploration work (Ruz Lhuillier 1958a:13).

The camp building was still under construction so the work crew devoted some of their time to its final completion. Their highest priority was the placement of screens on the windows, the corridor and the doors. They started the season late in 1953; therefore they were working in the rainy season – favorable weather for the breeding of mosquitoes and other harmful pests. They were also able to build a new cement-walled water reservoir.

Another of the many accomplishments attributed to this season was the end of the completion of the reconstruction of the roof of the Palace Tower (Figure 10.1). This was based upon the architectural data that they had accumulated since 1949<sup>5</sup>. Other activities included the search for possible tombs in the Temple of the Cross and Temple of the Foliated Cross, but they found nothing. The Cross temple is one of the highest at the site; therefore Ruz had reasoned that it probably had an earlier structure under it. He had read in Désiré Charnay's 1866 book that there was an underground entrance into the Temple of the Cross, but Ruz proved this to be incorrect (Ruz Lhuillier 1958a). He surmised that Charnay was confused about the names of the buildings and was actually referring to the Temple of the Inscriptions when he wrote his account. Ruz thought that it may have been Charnay who broke the limestone slabs that cover the top of the Temple of Inscriptions stairs.

Ruz's crew discovered cache offerings in the floors of the Cross and Foliated Cross temples. Some of the items found in a cache from the Temple of the Cross were fossilized fish bones. In the Temple of the Foliated Cross, they found a brown clay offering bowl with painted decorations. Inside it was a red clay vase and a fossilized shark tooth from the Tertiary Period. He believed that the fish bones and the tooth were

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<sup>5</sup> See Chapter one under the subtitle of "The Palace Tower" for a more in-depth discussion about this reconstruction.

objects of ritual power, or perhaps they were representations of the "xoc", a mythical whale shark that was considered a water monster.

The crew investigated the Temple of the Jaguar and saw that it was built into the rock face of the hill it sits upon. In a 1952 incident that I described in a previous chapter, his friend and fellow archaeologist Sevin was instructed by Ruz to gather the small fragmented pieces of debris from the dirt floor of an inner chamber and bring them to him. This year, after examining them, Ruz wrote that there was no indication that a tomb had ever been there although it could have been built as a tomb and never used. Whatever the reason for its construction, it was the only other building at Palenque to date that bore resemblance to the Temple of the Inscriptions shrine – not in terms of its size, but in its design and concept.

### **Temple of the Inscriptions**

They reinforced the portico of the Temple of the Inscriptions to make it stronger, and worked on the restoration of its façade and placed slabs in the floor of the sanctuary. This last task was done to reduce the amount of water seeping down into the stairway of the pyramid into the crypt and ruining the wall stuccos (Ruz Lhuillier 1958a:97).

He believed that the buttresses inside the chamber were built immediately after the completion of the tomb, due to an obsessive need to make the crypt stable and indestructible. He also deduced that the stucco reliefs on the walls were made after the buttresses were installed. Ruz removed the buttresses because they obstructed the view of the carvings on the stone crypt. In addition to those carvings, there were others that had been incised upon four of the six crypt supports.

After they cleaned off the thick limestone coating that covered the floor of the chamber, they could see that it was made from a huge rectangular slab that had been precisely fitted. Ruz then turned his attention to the ornately carved lid. Since the discovery of the tomb, the heavy stone rested only upon six logs of wood placed there by

his archaeologists. In order to continue to hold the lid open and to ensure its stability they created a permanent supporting structure. It consisted of three sections of iron girders deeply embedded in the walls of the chamber. Placed upon them were four iron plates, creating a metal platform bed upon which to safely rest the stone. These were painted with rust inhibitor. With this in place, the stone sat horizontally at 0.85 meters above the stone block sarcophagus; and both the ornately carved lid and the stone block were well lit. Ruz noted that the light and the angle allowed visitors to see the carved tablet from the entrance to the chamber. It was also easier to view the stone block under it and the fish-shaped<sup>6</sup> cover that held the skeleton (Ruz Lhuillier 1958a:100).

#### *Bas Reliefs of the Sarcophagus*

As explained earlier, they removed the buttresses around the sarcophagus so that they could more easily see the reliefs carved on all sides. Afterward they were able to see all around the block, enabling the artists Hipólito García Sánchez and Alberto Maldonado Vera to trace the carvings onto glassine paper. Subsequently they made “*microfotostáticas*”<sup>7</sup> – copies that Ruz included in his report (Figure 10.2). The highlight of the season was the discovery of these reliefs, which he described as individual plants emerging from the earth. He noted that these images fit very nicely into his previous interpretation of the image on the sarcophagus lid. Earlier he had proposed that it represented the life cycle of plants and corn as well as the symbolic resurrection and immortality of man.

The motifs found on the supports were almost identical, but with a few small differences. Running below them was a horizontal strip that Ruz thought was the day sign “*Caban*”. He interpreted the strip as a symbol of the earth. It had openings along it that

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<sup>6</sup> In the author’s opinion, the shape is exactly like the Maya glyph T686, an image of a vase turned sideways.

<sup>7</sup> I believe that Ruz is referring to what used to be called the Photostatic copy, but a more modern term would be “Xerox copy”.

appeared to sprout people who were visible only from the waist up. There were three on the east and west sides and two on north and south. He observed that all the figures had similar branches with flowers and fruits sprouting from them, but the fruits were different. He wrote that even though he was not a plant specialist, he gave provisional names for each based upon the fruit images. Below is his list:

- Lower East Side - looking from left to right - guayaba, *jícara* gourd<sup>8</sup> and avocado.
- West Side - looking from left to right - guayaba, avocado and *anonácea*.<sup>9</sup>
- North Side - looking from left to right. cocoa and *cocoyol*.<sup>10</sup>
- South Side - looking from left to right. *cocoyol*<sup>11</sup> and cocoa.

The characters wore headdresses richly decorated with bird feathers except for the one on the east side in the center. That headdress contained the image of what Ruz called a “tigre”.<sup>12</sup> Most of the figures had the long plumes of quetzal feathers, jade disc diadems, earrings, necklaces, breastplates, thick beads, bibs, bracelets, and belts. Carved between each of these figures were pairs of hieroglyphs. He wrote that these paired glyphs were not calendar signs, nor did he think they represented the names of individuals because two of the coupled glyphs were redundant. In this case, his logic was flawed because, as his colleague Heinrich Berlin would demonstrate a few years later (Berlin 1959; Mathews and Robertson 1985), these paired glyphs did indeed represent the names of the persons depicted on the sides of the sarcophagus block. In the case of those

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<sup>8</sup> Linda Schele believed this image to be a sapote fruit (Schele and Mathews 1998:124) not the *jícara* gourd.

<sup>9</sup> Schele also believed this fruit was the sapote fruit (Schele and Mathews 1998:124), not the *anonácea* (a fruit that has spikes upon it).

<sup>10</sup> Schele believed this fruit to be from the nancé tree (Schele and Mathews 1998:124), scientific name *Byrsonima crassifolia*, not the *cocoyol*.

<sup>11</sup> Same comment as the footnote above for this fruit.

<sup>12</sup> Tigre is the common Mexican term for jaguar.

that were duplicated, they were the glyph names and profiles of the father and mother of the occupant of the tomb, K'inich Janaab' Pakal (23 March 603 – 28 August 683) (Guenter 2007).

#### *The Reliefs on the Supports*

Four corner supports and two middle supports had been placed under the sarcophagus block. Each of the corner supports had images on their outer sides – four in all, but they were hard to see since they were coated with crusty watery limestone. In total, there were four carved images and each consisted of a human face and hieroglyphic pairs. He did not believe any of the hieroglyphs were calendrical except for a glyph that he thought was either 3 Ben - or 3 Cimi. Interestingly, he could see black charcoal guidelines, but the lines were not followed consistently. He thought that they had been carved after the buttresses were put in place and conjectured that it must have been difficult to render the carvings in such a tight spot. The artist would have had to twist his body in an unnatural position as he lay down and worked from a position on the floor. Ruz believed this might explain why the carvings were of an inferior quality as compared to those from the sepulchral block.

The crew next turned their attention to the stucco reliefs on the walls of the chamber. As they cleaned these stuccos, the artists realized that it was better to leave some of the wet limestone coating in place, because the stucco underneath had become soft and the only thing holding some parts in place was the coating. Ruz amended his first report in 1952 in which he had recorded that the reliefs displayed a procession of nine priests. After the stuccos were cleaned of their stalactites and most of their limestone coating, he could see that three of the figures were seated; therefore it could not be a procession. Ruz's artists drew all the details of every character at a half-size scale. He included these drawings in his report.

#### *Jade Mosaics Found on Top of the Lid*

They began studying the many pieces of jade and shell that had been found scattered on top of the carved sarcophagus lid to determine what they represented. However, the reason for their placement was an even bigger mystery. As was described in the previous chapter, there were several hundred pieces and many were small flakes. His crew had made notes about where the medium and large pieces were found and his technicians created a coordinate system based upon the measurements taken from the sides of the lid. Despite these efforts, their artist García Maldonado was only able to recognize a few pieces that seemed to be parts of human faces and a few typical ancient Maya religious symbols. After studying the pieces for a very long time, they were finally able to reconstruct one complete mosaic - the face of a person with the very distinct features of an old man.

With more time, they were able to reconstruct two additional but partial human faces. Ruz decided that some of them represented an incomplete mosaic of the sun god face, because it had the usual large eyes. In this case, it was enhanced with pieces of jade inlaid into carved shell (Figure 10.3). There were also pieces that could have been the sun god's hooked nose.

He concluded that some of the pieces were parts of an ornamental belt consisting of three human heads, a circular shield (also with the face of the sun god), and a "manikin scepter" that the occupant of the tomb might have carried. This type of regalia was the same as seen on all stucco figures that decorated the walls of the crypt. He made note that they also found nine slate pendants in the shape of "hachas", which in English means "axes". We now call these artifacts "celts" (see artifacts below the mosaics for the faces made of jade in Figure 10.3). For an unexplained reason, the ancient attendants of the tomb who prepared the chamber threw the pieces on top of the funerary monument just

above the cruciform motif instead of putting them into the crypt with the body. This explained why they were so scattered<sup>13</sup>.

At other ancient Maya sites Ruz had seen images of figures with the same attire as that of the figures on the walls of the chamber. Their belts usually had an assemblage made up of small human heads; dangling from each head were three celts. The materials he found on the lid confirmed that the person in the tomb would be dressed approximately the same as the modeled stucco figures on the walls.

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<sup>13</sup> The information Ruz supplies here gives no indication that he was aware of the ritual behavior of destroying and scattering sacred objects. This behavior was later documented in writings by ethnographers studying the living Maya and by other archaeologists who found similar ritual behavior at other ancient Maya sites. See Becker 1992, 1993; King 1995; Chase and Chase 1998; and Mock 1998.

## THE 1954 SEASON

On March 31, 1954 Rosa Covarrubias wrote to Nelson Rockefeller.

*I don't know how you will receive this, but last night I attended a lecture by Alberto Ruz, our archaeologist of Palenque. The lecture was on Palenque, and it was marvelous, with colored slides and movies of the latest finds. The last year's discoveries are the most important in Mexican archaeology.<sup>1</sup> A burial tomb like the Egyptians and a formidable person in situ, with all his jewels, the face covered by a mosaic jade mask. The stone covering the tomb is a spectacular work of art (Covarrubias 1954a).*

She told Rockefeller that seeing the presentation made her feel guilty, because she had encouraged Rockefeller to stop funding the project and subsequently he had ended his assistance to Ruz at the end of the 1951 season. She did not say why she had encouraged him to end it. In addition, the Alemán administration never fulfilled the funding promises that it had made to Ruz and now after the 1952 election, the Mexican government had changed leadership. The new president Adolfo Ruíz Cortines had very conservative ideas about money (Covarrubias 1954a). He instituted a balanced budget for México and brought forth an era of austerity (Stacy 2003:718), unlike the previous administration's practice of over-extending the budget.<sup>2</sup> Rosa told Rockefeller that there was little remaining for archaeology or art.

She reminded him that at one time he had offered to continue funding Ruz at \$6,000 per season, but she had encouraged him to stop sending the money. She explained, "I talked you out of it, but since circumstances have changed would you be willing to

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<sup>1</sup> Rosa apparently was confused about what year the tomb discovery was made. It was at the close of 1952 and not the "last year".

<sup>2</sup> Cortines had owned his own business and was a bookkeeper and a clerk. He got into politics and eventually became the governor of Veracruz. His predecessor, Alemán had overspent and overpledged Mexican government funds causing the Mexican economy to suffer. Cortines was determined to set the Mexican economy right by implementing austerity measures. He was respected for his honesty and frugality. Other factors also played a part in the downturn in the economy. For instance, when the Korean War ended in 1953 it impacted the demand for raw materials and prices dropped. There was a drought in 1953, farming output dropped and so did tourism. In 1954, the peso was devalued from 8.6 pesos per American dollar, to 12.49 (Herring and Herring 1968).

continue with the exploration?” She told him that Ruz is now desperate with a budget of only 40,000 pesos for the whole season. In addition, she informed him that Ruz promised to give her a job at the site and it had a great deal of appeal to her at that time because “...Miguel has drifted away these last two years and I think that a vacation would be a good thing for both of us. Personally, I am very unhappy and an opportunity of this kind could pull me out of a very unhappy situation (Covarrubias 1954a).” She told him that he needed to make a decision quickly because the next season would begin on April 20, only 20 days away.

Apparently Rosa’s letter got Rockefeller’s attention, because he soon asked Vera Goeller, his secretary to research the past events regarding the Palenque funding. She summarized them in a memo to him dated April 2nd<sup>3</sup> (Goeller 1954). The events she listed began in 1947 and ended in 1951. The last entry states that on October 9, 1951 Rosa sent a letter<sup>4</sup> urging Rockefeller to discontinue the support, telling him that the Mexican government could continue the support. Rockefeller replied in agreement.

Meanwhile, in correspondence from Ruz dated April 8, 1954 to his friend and archaeologist friend J. Alden Mason, we learn that Ruz had just completed a four-week speaking tour to the states of California, Oregon, Washington and Utah.

*I am very happy about this outing during which I gave ten lectures in English on Palenque, the Culture and Art of the Maya, Some Problems in Mesoamerica, and on Colonial Architecture in Yucatán, all accompanied by color illustrations. It seems that the conferences were well-liked, and for my part, I am very satisfied with the attention I received there and the interest that was awakened by the themes that were discussed. I wanted very much to expand my tour to the Eastern States, but I hope*

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<sup>3</sup> A two day turn-around for this exchange of letters traveling from México City to New York City seems implausible in today’s world, so I asked the Maya scholar and linguist Nick Hopkins (who worked in México during the 1950s) about how this could be feasible. He replied “A 3-day turn-around time for a response doesn’t surprise me. In the 50s, there was direct and daily air service [from} Mérida to New Orleans, the old PanAm route everybody took to get to Yucatán. And everybody used Air Mail, which was then different from regular mail, even more than Priority Mail is now, when first class mail all goes on planes. Remember...that there was also twice-a-day delivery in the US, so mail got delivered as soon as it showed up, not the next day or two”. (Nick Hopkins, 2011 personal communication).

<sup>4</sup> I do not have this October letter.

*that in the not too distant future, I can organize another tour where the State of Pennsylvania is included* (Ruz Lhuillier 1954a). Author's translation

On April 21<sup>st</sup>, Ekholm wrote to Ruz, telling him that he received a \$6,000 check from Rockefeller<sup>5</sup> for the 1954 season and that the funds were being sent at the request of Rosa Covarrubias. He asked Ruz for a short work plan that would tell them how he planned to use the money, reminding him of the original agreement that the money be used for scientific purposes only. For an unknown reason, he did not mention or deduct the usual 10% retainage.

One week later Ruz replied and told him that he had already heard from Rosa and she had told him the good news about the funding. The work was scheduled to start in one week, but Ruz stated in a letter that he still had an issue with the IAR agreement clause restricting expenditures to solely scientific work. This objection stemmed from the fact that he felt that he needed to use a large percent of it for reconstruction and preservation instead. In the following passage, we see evidence of Ruz's high ethical standards and his desire for attention to detail.

*.... as you know, any work for exploration in buildings for scientific purposes must be done in conjunction with immediate conservation work. In some cases it is simple consolidation, but in other cases it is more important to do reconstruction work, which is the case with Palenque due to the tremendous destruction of the monuments. Therefore we cannot separate the scientific side of the work in Palenque from the work of preservation in the buildings that are being explored* (Ruz Lhuillier 1954b). Author's translation

He observed that he would be receiving \$40,000 in pesos from the Mexican government and \$75,000 in pesos from Rockefeller (after the \$6,000 grant went through currency exchange). He felt that he could not justify spending more on investigation activities when conservation was his main concern. He suggested that one-half of the

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<sup>5</sup> In addition to the funds he received from Rockefeller, he received a small amount of money from someone he named as Mr. Howard Leichner, who was visiting the site and decided to give Ruz money to help with the preservation of the burial crypt in the Temple of the Inscriptions (Ruz 1954 Diario de Yucatán). I have been unable to determine more about the identity of this person.

Rockefeller funds be used for investigation and the other half would be added to the Mexican government funds, shifting the major proportion of funds towards more conservation. As requested by the IAR, he included a draft project plan for the upcoming work:

1. A survey of the entire archaeological zone, with an emphasis on the central section as well as on data attained in previous years<sup>6</sup>.
2. A detailed topographic survey of the Palace
3. A topographic survey of the Temple of the Inscriptions and its cuts, with the precise location of the crypt
4. Additional exploration and conservation of the following buildings:
  - a. Temple of the Cross
  - b. Temple XVIII, located south of the Temple of the Enramada Cross<sup>7</sup>
  - c. The small temple<sup>8</sup> between the Enramada Cross and Temple XVIII
  - d. Temple XIII, located west of the Temple of the Inscriptions
  - e. Temple XII<sup>9</sup>, located west of the Temple XVII
5. A study of the ceramics; stratigraphic exploration in the plazas, mounds and monuments; and then the study of the materials

Three days later, Ekholm sent the \$6,000 to Marquina reminding him that (1) the funds were to be used for archaeological investigations, especially for the scientific aspects of the work and (2) progress reports to Rockefeller would be very helpful. At the time that he sent the funds, I do not believe that Ekholm knew about Ruz's previous letter in which he requested permission to use more of the funds for conservation, but Ruz may have seen this reminder as a negative response to his request for flexibility on use of the funds.

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<sup>6</sup> There is a question about whether this "survey" map was ever drawn, however Ruz published a map of the site in his book on the Temple of the Inscriptions published in 1973, page 16.

<sup>7</sup> This Temple is now called "The Foliated Cross".

<sup>8</sup> I am uncertain as to which temple he is referring to because Temple XVII is between the Enramada Cross and Temple XVIII.

<sup>9</sup> I believe that the writing of the letters "XII" is probably a typo because Temple XII is not near Temple XVII.

After the season started, Rosa sent Rockefeller a very pleasant and descriptive letter on May 26, 1954. She wrote,

*Dear Nelson:*

*Will you believe it, this is the first time I've seen Palenque? I can't tell you how wonderful it is. It is probably the most impressive of all the ruins, as the jungle closes in on all sides. Tall mountains form a backdrop and the monuments face a sea of jungle as far as the eye can reach. Monkeys howl all day long and in the morning toucans and myriads of other birds play in the trees in front of the camp.*

*First I must thank you in the name of all the people working on this project. With the arrival of your contribution twenty people were [working] and the number is now 70 (?) workers and four technicians. It is not easy to work here. The humidity is terrific, but the small Maya men seem never to tire. A beautiful river flows in front of the ruins and when work stops, they make for the river like children at play.*

*If you think it is easy to climb seventy steps with a sack of cement or lime, try it sometime. The ruins are in fine condition. Everything can be seen rather easily...No one knows how many there are exactly. Everybody works with caution of the dreaded Fer de lance and rattlesnake. Wasps are in every crevice (Covarrubias 1954b).*

She told him that they went down into the Temple of the Inscriptions tomb with its slippery wet stairs, a distance of 70 steps<sup>10</sup>. There was much water seepage and the archaeologists were trying to stop it by creating reinforced concrete walls and putting concrete on the temple roof. She told him that the tomb temple resembled the pyramids of the Egyptian kings, except that Palenque was better because of the “marvelous stone tablet covering the tomb”. All the jewels found in the grave were on exhibit at the Bellas Artes in México City. “I could go on forever raving about the location of Palenque. All in all it is proving more exciting than we dreamed, when you first had the idea to work here.”

She also told him that by the time Ekholm was able to send the funds to INAH, they had grown from 50,000 pesos (6,000 US dollars) to 75,000 because of the increase in the

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<sup>10</sup> In reality, there were 46 steps that led down into the tomb.

U.S./México exchange rate. She was taking many photos and all the archaeologists were waiting anxiously for Rockefeller to visit. A large plane regularly landed at Villahermosa and from there a smaller one departs for Palenque, and then it is only a car-ride of 20 kilometers into the ruins.

*Progress Summary for the 1954 Season*

On August 30 Ruz wrote to Eduardo Noguera, Director of Prehispanic Monuments, and included a progress report for the 1954 season (Ruz Lhuillier 1954c). The season lasted from May 10<sup>th</sup> to August 22<sup>nd</sup>. Listed in the report as his assistants were the senior archaeologist, César Sáenz, the archaeological practitioner Eduardo Contreras, student Ikor Larrauri and artist Hipólito Sánchez. They again worked in the Palace, the Temple of the Inscriptions and the Temple of the Foliated Cross. They also explored what Ruz called “minor” buildings that had recently been uncovered, more specifically Temples XIII, XVIII and XXI. In later years, it would be determined that these three structures were not as minor as was first believed.

After clearing away the brush south of “the Plaza of the Sun”<sup>11</sup>, they found a group of buildings seen only on the 19<sup>th</sup> century Maudslay map<sup>12</sup> (Ruz Lhuillier 1954c). Ruz described the beginning of a new survey and map of the “main section of the ceremonial center” with an emphasis on the Palace and the Temple of the Inscriptions.<sup>13</sup> In the Palace they investigated the room attached to the west side of the tower. He also stated in his report that they found the walls of an earlier structure below the Palace.

The painted and molded image of what they thought was a wild boar was discovered on a stucco frieze was discovered in the southwest patio near the Tower (Figure 10.4). In House H, they discovered a possible sweatbath. Figure 10.5 (upper picture), displays the

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<sup>11</sup> This plaza is now commonly called “The Cross Plaza”.

<sup>12</sup> Perhaps he is referring to Temples XIV, XV and XVa.

<sup>13</sup> There is no evidence that this map was ever completed, since it was not published in any of Ruz’s subsequent reports. However the one he published in his 1973 book on the Temple of the Inscriptions may have been a copy of this map.

holes in the floor of this “sweatbath”. In that same patio, they found a carved stone which they believed served as the seat of a latrine and there was a hole (Figure 10.5, lower picture) with a slab located several feet below it. This patio was the same one where Miguel Ángel Fernández discovered a similar structure, but a few feet to the south. They speculated that the newly discovered structure was a facility for “las mujeres” and the one discovered by Fernández was for “los hombres”.

The south and west sides of the base of the Temple of the Inscriptions were explored and they detected elements of the original construction. Because of this knowledge, they believed that they were able to restore it faithfully. The ancient builders must have added buttresses to reinforce the lower corners of the pyramid. The south side of the temple was supported by rock. Where the temple and the rock joined, there was a cut that paralleled the wall of the temple. It was conjectured that the cut was a drain to carry the water away from the temple. They cleaned out the debris from the drain and deepened it so that it functioned better (Ruz Lhuillier 1958b).

They explored the pyramid body of the Temple of the Foliated Cross and found the remains of the *alfardas* that were originally positioned on both sides of the stairs that led into the temple. A fragment of one of them had been discovered years earlier and they were reunited. The carving contained an inscription that included one calendar date. Each time Ruz discovered a calendar date, he carefully made note of it, since one of his main goals while exploring the site was to document chronology. During the exploration of the body of the pyramid, they found several large ceramic cylinders with elaborately modeled faces upon them (Figure 10.6). Some bore the images of deities that had overlapping masks and some were anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figures, all equipped with large headgear. He did not know their purpose<sup>14</sup>. They did not seem to be urns or braziers and they had no slip. Their height was between 0.80 and 1.10 meters. He

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<sup>14</sup> Later it would be surmised that these ceramic pieces were structures to hold incense burners and were dubbed with the Spanish name “Porta Incensarios”.

suggested that they might be ceremonial drums, an idea first put forth by Frans Blom,<sup>15</sup> who explored and mapped Palenque in the 1920's (Blom and LaFarge 1926).

They examined Temple XIII, located on the west side of the Temple of the Inscriptions, and found a burial covered with two slabs that had been looted in Prehispanic times. The burial was filled with stones and the only things remaining in it were pieces of bone, teeth and jade.

He noted that most of the temples at Palenque have a design that includes a temple on top of a tiered pyramid, a portico with three doors, and a sanctuary having two small rooms on each side. But Temple XXI was different. It contained only one corridor, opening to the south and north. There had been alfaridas on either side of the staircase and only one was well-preserved. It appeared to Ruz as though the carved figure on it was a kneeling priest.<sup>16</sup>

#### *Temple XVIII and XVIIIa*

Temple XVIII and XVIIIa were two very dilapidated “twin” temples that sit side-by-side and are almost exactly alike (Figure 10.7), but they only explored Temple XVIII, the one to the north. Ruz explained that Franz Blom had explored it in the 1920's, and then twelve years later Enrique Berlin<sup>17</sup> discovered ninety stucco glyphs on the building's floor that had fallen from a frieze on the wall. During the present season Ruz's staff found thirty-five glyphs and he was of the opinion that they now had them all.<sup>18</sup>

This was also the season in which they found the door jambs that go on either side of the entrance to the Temple. In the porch floor there were three graves whose interior was

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<sup>15</sup> Ruz does not reference where this idea about the drums was written by Blom.

<sup>16</sup> This tablet is popularly called “Tablet of Temple XXI” and is said to represent K'inich Janab' Pakal I (Mathews 2007:13), the same person buried in the Temple of the Inscriptions' tomb.

<sup>17</sup> See one of the subsequent chapters of this dissertation for more information on Berlin and Temple XVIII.

<sup>18</sup> At an unknown date the Mexican poet Carlos Pellicer took the stucco glyphs and cemented them into an arrangement based upon the similarity of the glyphs to each other (Alfonso Morales, 2011 personal communication). The panel he created is on display at the site museum.

walled with limestone slabs lying longitudinally to the axis of the temple; two of them were unlooted (Figure 10.8 and Figure 10.9). Between each of the graves were small stone-walled boxes that contained clay pots, teeth and bones. I believe this to be Ruz's and Sáenz' first encounter with the ritual practice of reusing human skeletons and bones at Palenque and that they did not know what to make of it<sup>19</sup>. All that remained of the skeletons inside each tomb were small bone fragments. He noticed that the inside walls of all three tombs were painted red. In total, they recovered over one hundred pieces of jade, beads of different shapes and sizes, long tubes, discs, flowers, earrings, celts, an engraved plaque that measured 12 x 8.5 centimeters, and a tiny human head with the face of the sun god. They also found fragments of pyrite, shell and jade (which must have come from a mosaic), two earthen bowls, three earrings, and a shell with an incised hieroglyphic inscription (Ruz Lhuillier 1958b). All the evidence suggested that these were important elite burials, but there is no mention of this possibility in the report.

In the Palace, they completed the reconstruction of the tower and replaced sections of the entablature, friezes and vaults. In the Temple of the Inscriptions, they reconstructed the façade and the roof crests and worked on the south and west sides of the sloped pyramid. In the temple, they rehabilitated the stone floor to keep the rains out of the center of the pyramid where the burial chamber was located. "With the same purpose, we filled in the spaces between the stones in the chamber of the aforementioned crypt. At the end of the season, it was noted that water runoff in the crypt had significantly diminished" (Ruz Lhuillier 1954c:4).

Other work briefly described in the report was the restoration of the floor, sanctuary, roof and crest of the Temple of the Sun, the restoration of the roof and the sanctuary of the Temple of the Foliated Cross, and the consolidation of the architectural elements for the base of the Temple of the Foliated Cross as well as Temples XIII, XVIII and XXI.

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<sup>19</sup> However they had seen secondary burials in the Palace floor.

## THE 1955 SEASON

On January 27, 1955 Ruz wrote a three and one-half page letter to Ekholm explaining what he had done with the previous funding and the matching amount that INAH had put into the project. In summary, the letter had a tone of frustration and defensiveness for the following reasons: 1) his desire to demonstrate to Ekholm and Rockefeller that México had put in 50% of the funding; 2) the difficulties of putting an optimum work plan together in an environment where the timing and funding amounts were inconsistent; 3) his need to balance preservation/reconstruction with scientific exploration; and 4) his very urgent desire to get information out to the public about discoveries at Palenque. The following paragraphs are more detailed information regarding these four points.

He told Ekholm that matching figures that he had sent previously did not include the money that INAH contributed toward the wages paid to the technicians involved in the field work and research. He pointed out that during the years from 1952 and 1953, where there was no donation from Rockefeller, “the Institute allocated amounts totaling approximately \$165,000.000 pesos, plus the salaries of technicians, in other words, a sum almost equal to that expended when there were donations from Mr. R.” (Ruz Lhuillier 1954e). Below are the figures that he included in his letter to Ekholm.

Table 5: Comparison of INAH and Rockefeller Funds for the Palenque Project

Year	INAH (Pesos)	Rockefeller (Pesos)	Totals	Rockefeller Funds (U.S. Currency)
1949	30,000.00	70,354.14	100,354.14	10,000.00
1950	20,000.00	41,040.00	61,040.00	5,000.00
1951	115,000.00	38,880.00	153,880.00	5,000.00
1952- 53 <sup>20</sup>	165,000.00	0.00	165,000.00	0.00
1954	40,000.00	75,000.00	115,000.00	6,000.00
Totals	370,000.00	225,274.14	595,274.14	26,000.00

He also explained that in the future, he did not think that he would be able to supply a 50% cash match to Rockefeller’s money in a similar manner as in the years 1951 and 1952, because during those years he had received special aid from the Mexican president. But now those resources were gone.

Ruz received a letter from Ekholm on January 14, 1955, that I do not have in my possession, but it was referred to by Ruz in his January 27<sup>th</sup> response letter to Ekholm as discussed below. I surmise that within that first letter there was a passage that Ruz perceived as an implication that his project preparations needed improvement. I write this because contained in that January 27<sup>th</sup> letter there was a reminder from Ruz to Ekholm of the considerable planning efforts Ruz made at the onset of the project. At that time, he had been told that he would receive 10,000 American dollars each year for five years, only to discover after he had put a plan together that the funds would only be available for three years. And the funding was for \$10,000 the first year and then for the subsequent two years it was reduced to \$5,000 per year. “For this reason...I had to reduce my scope for the work plan because it was impossible to carry out the original project” (Ruz Lhuillier 1954e). Ruz informed Ekholm that for the sake of good planning

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<sup>20</sup> There is no breakout in the records I have for these years.

he needed to know the amount of money that he could expect and the number of years that he would receive it. Ideally, he would like to have a formal agreement between INAH and Mr. Rockefeller defining the money and the time limitations as well as work plan expectations. He wanted the IAR to be the intermediary that would draw up such an agreement.

The third reason for Ruz's frustration was the issue of balancing rehabilitation/conservation with exploration. He reminded Ekholm that during the 1950 season the president of México came to visit and announced that he would set aside special funding for the site. This money was to be used to save the buildings of Palenque that were still standing. Because of this, Ruz's plans for the 1952 season<sup>21</sup> changed drastically and more funds were spent on preservation than on exploration. He strongly believed that restoration should be a higher priority than exploration and he told Ekholm that he had expressed this feeling to Ms. Rockefeller when she visited the site.<sup>22</sup> He wrote that

*...we need to consistently restore the main buildings of the central section – in other words, the Palace, the Temple of the Inscriptions, the Count, the Sun, the Cross, the Foliated Cross, the North buildings and the ball court. As you know, conservation work costs much more than exploration and overall we estimate that our budget allocates roughly 30% to research and 70% to preservation. This means that it would require not only the entire government subsidy, but a significant proportion of the private donation (Ruz Lhuillier 1955c). Author's translation*

The fourth issue in his letter was about his desire to let people know what was discovered at the site; he stated that this could be accomplished by means of a site museum. He informed him that all the artifacts discovered since 1925 had been placed in a wooden hut with a roof of cardboard. It had no more space and the public had no access

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<sup>21</sup> The reader will notice that there is a two-year gap between the time that the President promised the funds and Ruz's actual receipt of some of those funds.

<sup>22</sup> I do not know when this visit by Rockefeller's first wife Mary Todhunter Rockefeller took place, but it apparently was before and very near March 18, 1955, the date of the letter in reference.

to it. A location for a new one <sup>23</sup> was proposed to INAH and there was an offer by the governor of Chiapas to contribute half the cost of construction. This amounted to approximately 3,000 dollars; the other half might come from INAH.

Another way to spread the word about Palenque's attractions could come in the form of a published book containing information about all the work accomplished. Even though all his season's reports are published in the INAH *Anales* periodical, he believed that a joint "exposición" sponsored by IAR and INAH would be beneficial (Ruz Lhuillier 1954e).

Three months later, Ruz wrote to Rockefeller telling him that he was sending an album of the photos to him that were made during the excavations of 1954 (Ruz Lhuillier 1955c). He wrote that Ms. Rockefeller had informed him about how hard it would be for her husband "to make a trip to the land of the Maya" at this time<sup>24</sup>. Ruz wrote that he and his wife wanted to convey their "fondest remembrances to your wife".

Sometime in 1955, Ruz applied for a Guggenheim fellowship to research and write a chapter for an edited book that was being compiled by Alfonso Caso. It was to be a history comparing the ancient cultures of the Totonacs and the Huastecs to the ancient Maya culture. This information comes to us from a reference letter dated March 30, 1955, from his friend and colleague J. Alden Mason to the president of the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, Henry Allen Moe. Moe asked Mason to "write his judgment on the ability of the applicant" (Mason 1955). Mason explained in the reference to Moe that Alfonso Caso, "the dean of Mexican archaeologists" had asked Ruz to write this chapter of the book, even though Ruz was not very familiar with the Totonacs and the Huastecs. However, he explained, Ruz had outlined a very good plan for the investigation and general work. Mason elaborated on Ruz' academic qualities:

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<sup>23</sup> This bodega was to be attached to the camp and museum building.

<sup>24</sup> By the year 1955, Rockefeller had left the position of United States UnderSecretary of Health, Education and Welfare and was appointed by Eisenhower as Special Assistant to the President for Foreign Affairs.

*Alberto Ruz L. is a mature and well-known Mexican archaeologist with at least fifteen years experience in archaeological investigation in that country. Recently for a number of years, he has been in charge of work in the Maya region for the Mexican government. He has a number of publications in archaeology to his credit. He writes very well (in Spanish or French), in a more popular vein than most archaeologists, and with esthetic and artistic feeling, without varying from solid scientific fact and accepted theory. As the work is to be published in Spanish, of course a person controlling that language perfectly is requisite (Mason 1955).*

Mason wrote of the justification and need for a book of this type, stating that although there are many recent books on the Maya culture, there are few that compare the Maya to others. Furthermore he stated that very little has been written about the ancient Totonacs and the Huastecs.<sup>25</sup>

It was already April and Ruz still did not know if he would receive funding from Rockefeller this season. It was urgent that he put his project budget together. On April 5, 1955 Ruz sent a letter to Ekholm telling him that he had not received a response from the letter he sent him in January about the Rockefeller funds. He told him that he needed to know if he would be receiving the funds and if so, at what level (Ruz Lhuillier 1955a).

Ten days later, Ekholm wrote to Rockefeller summarizing the work done at Palenque over the last few seasons (Ekholm 1955a) and he informed him that Ruz had asked if the IAR would be able to fund his project again. He went on to write that since the people at the IAR are only the middle-men in the project, he was contacting Rockefeller to get the answer. He wrote:

*All evidence points to the fact that Ruz has been using the money he has received to the best advantage in uncovering new things at Palenque and in repairing the standing buildings so that they can be preserved intact. Personally, I have complete confidence in Ruz' integrity and as a very able archaeologist.*

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<sup>25</sup> Following up on this request for funding, I should mention that in a letter dated April 28, 1955 Kidder wrote to Ekholm telling him that he had seen Moe in Philadelphia and Moe told him that they were giving a Guggenheim Fellowship to Ruz whose proposal was to "take part in a general work sponsored by Caso on Middle American Archaeology". There is a possibility that Ruz did not accept this scholarship due to some of its U.S. residency requirements. To my knowledge the proposed project - a chapter in Alfonso Caso's book - was never published.

*Some time ago I had the pleasure of discussing with Mrs. Rockefeller her trip to Palenque, and I was glad to hear that she was impressed with the site and the quality of the work that has been done. She realized, of course, that much remains to be done and expressed an interest in knowing how we might plan an even more profitable program of excavations (Ekholm 1955a).*

Ekholm reminded him that one of the issues regarding INAH was the possibility that Rockefeller's "donations to the work at Palenque might result in the Mexicans directing to other purposes funds which they might have otherwise directed there" (Ekholm 1955a). He stated "I have no doubt that such is the case to some extent and said so to Ruz." Ekholm passed the information to Rockefeller that had been given to him by Ruz about the project income from 1949 to 1954.

Ekholm pointed out that since INAH had paid all the salaries of the archaeologists and the technical people involved in the excavations, the Mexicans have "more or less" matched the funds that Rockefeller had contributed. He reminded him of the large volume of work that had been done and then delicately asked him if he would be able to continue funding into future years. He wrote that "Ruz has said that he would like best to make a definite plan for a certain period of years so that he can know further in advance what he is going to be able to complete" (Ekholm 1955a).

One of the reasons for Rockefeller's commitment delay may have been attributable to his wife's desire to also fund the project. I suspect this was the case because on April 28, 1955 Rockefeller sent a letter to Ruz telling him that he would talk with Ms. Rockefeller about the possibility of a 3-year commitment. Added to this complication was the fact that the Rockefellers were living part-time in New York and part-time in Washington due to Nelson's appointment to very important posts in President Eisenhower's administration. Ekholm told Ruz that nothing was firm yet; however he expressed optimism about future funding (Ekholm 1955d).

Approximately two weeks later Ekholm finally received a letter from Rockefeller telling him that he and his wife were sending \$6,000 for the Palenque project. In addition, they agreed to contribute the same amount in the years 1956 and 1957 (Rockefeller

1955). Seven days later Ekholm wrote to Marquina and Ruz separately informing them of the good news. In his letter to Ruz he wrote that he wanted to visit him in Palenque soon.

Not realizing what was transpiring in New York, Ruz sent a letter to Ekholm (Ruz Lhuillier 1955d) expressing again his frustration over not having a commitment on the Rockefeller funding. He pointed out that the most favorable season for excavation was April to June and that they should have already started working at Palenque several weeks prior. Adding to his frustration was the fact that INAH was not able to release funds to him either. He reminded Ekholm that in order to plan a large project such as this, it was necessary to know the amount and duration of the funds ahead of time so that when he arrived at the site he would know exactly what can be done. He remembered that he had been in this dilemma before. The incident took place just as he was about to leave to work at Palenque in 1948. That was when he found out that he would have three times as much money as he had been told previously.<sup>26</sup>

*Under the current conditions, that is, without knowing when I'll have funds from the Institute [INAH] and Rockefeller (and if so how and when), and without a research project defined, I wonder whether it would be preferable to postpone the start of the explorations to the 1956 season, in order to take the time necessary to study and plan all its aspects (Ruz Lhuillier 1955d)*

Still he stated that he was ready to begin the work anytime, if necessary. In the last sentence of the letter, he thanked Ekholm for the recommendation that he had given him for the Guggenheim Fellowship.

The next day, May 18<sup>th</sup>, Ekholm wrote to Marquina and told him of Rockefeller's commitment for a three-year project which would begin this year. He informed him of his conversation with Mrs. Rockefeller who "was greatly impressed with the site and the kind of work that has been done there". According to the letter Ms. Rockefeller visited the site in the winter of 1954 (Ekholm 1955e). Ekholm informed Marquina that once

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<sup>26</sup> Here Ruz is referring to what happened during his first year of work at Palenque, when he suddenly discovered that Rockefeller was helping fund the project; however this oversight was not the fault of Ekholm, but more likely was the responsibility of INAH.

again the IAR would retain 10% of it and would exercise "a certain supervisory control over the spending of its funds".<sup>27</sup> He explained that the Rockefellers had requested Ekholm make a trip during this season's work so he was going to schedule it in the next few weeks, when it was convenient for Ruz. The check was going to be on its way to him within the next two days.

That same day, Ekholm sent a letter to Rockefeller acknowledging the 6,000 check (Ekholm 1955f). He informed him that he had talked with the IAR steering committee and they had approved Ekholm's trip to Palenque, and that it should happen within the next few weeks "while Ruz is at work there, in order to confer with him at length about the project as a whole." In this way, he felt that he could offer assistance, help make the project go more smoothly, and thus demonstrate the interest of the committee to Ruz. The IAR would be "stipulating the same conditions upon which we agreed in 1948" where the money was to be used for scientific purposes. He told him that Ruz had objected to this because he felt that more money needed to go toward stabilization instead of toward "scientific purposes". Ekholm believed that it was all a communication problem and that if he went to the site, they could reach a better working agreement and get the problem straightened out. As will be seen below, Ekholm also had additional reasons for a visit to that part of México.

Again that same day, Ekholm wrote to Ruz sending him a copy of the letter that he had sent Marquina (Ekholm 1955e). He told him that he was very happy about Ruz's request that he visit the site. After meeting with Ruz at Palenque, Ekholm planned to go to Comalcalco and other sites nearby because he hoped to excavate in that area during the winter and it would greatly benefit him to become familiar with the vicinity. He planned to fly to Mérida and then take the train to Palenque. He asked for other suggestions about how best to get there and what equipment he should bring.

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<sup>27</sup> When Marquina read this statement in Ekholm's letter, he mistakenly interpreted it to mean that Ekholm wanted Ruz and INAH to send regular expenditure reports to the IAR. This misunderstanding would surface two months later as seen in an exchange of letters between Ruz and Ekholm.

In a letter written the next day, Kidder thanked Rockefeller for his contribution and pledge of support for the Palenque project (Kidder 1955b). He stated the following about Ruz: "There could not be a better man for that very important job. He is, as I suppose you know, half French and he combines the brilliant intuition of many Mexicans with the continental ability to do hard detailed work."

Kidder next wrote to Ekholm, congratulating him on selling the program to Rockefeller<sup>28</sup>. He related that he thought the Palenque trip was not only a good idea, but a necessity because of the obligation that the IAR had to supervise the work (Kidder 1955a). He was glad to hear that Ekholm would be working in this region and told him that if he went through México City he should get in touch with Henry Berlin who knew the region well.

Ekholm sent \$5,400 of the funds to Marquina and wrote a letter to Ruz, acknowledging Ruz' frustration over the funding delay this year. He apologized for the part he played in the situation (Ekholm 1955g) and suggested that the work be limited this year, with fewer people, since it was so late into the best part of the excavation season. He thought that by limiting the season, Ruz would have more time to formulate better plans for the next two years. He told him that he saw no reason why the funds could not be carried over to the next year, but he had already sent Marquina the funds, so that option was too late for the IAR to carry it out. He renewed his request to visit Palenque sometime in June, if possible, and he would wait for Ruz's response before making plans. In early June, Marquina acknowledged the receipt of the check sent by Ekholm and stated that he had no problems with the wording of the MOA<sup>29</sup> or with Ekholm's visit to the site (Marquina 1955).

In mid-June, Rosa wrote to Mary and Nelson Rockefeller (Covarrubias 1955), telling them that she was still in México City, waiting for word from Ruz so that she could go to

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<sup>28</sup> This statement by Kidder indicates that he knew nothing about Rosa Covarrubias' role in convincing Rockefeller to begin the funding again.

<sup>29</sup> This is a reference to what Marquina erroneously thought was a request by Ekholm to receive expenditure reports.

Palenque to work. Unaware of the funding delay issues, she told them that Ruz had been experiencing trouble getting the project organized, but now he was ready to leave Mérida for México City. "He is beginning the move right away and asked me to arrive a week later. I guess that there was not room in the Camp...for everybody." She also wrote "I want from the bottom of my heart to thank both you and Nelson for the camera and the extra money". She and Miguel were now living apart, and Miguel told her that he had no money to give her; yet she had seen him with a woman at the theatre the previous night. She had heard from Marquina that Ekholm would be arriving in México City the next week, so she thought that she might be able to go with Ekholm to Palenque, since that was also his destination. Rosa told them that when she arrived in Palenque, she would keep them informed of any news and events (Covarrubias 1955).

About a month later, after Ekholm's visit to Palenque was complete, he sent a letter Marquina dated July 21<sup>st</sup> apologizing for not being able to see Marquina while he was in México City, even though he had tried many times (Ekholm 1955b). He wrote very favorably about Ruz: "I was greatly impressed with the efficient manner in which Ruz has organized the project and with the amount of work that he has been able to accomplish". He stated that he would write a report to Mr. Rockefeller in the interests of encouraging future funding. More importantly, he suggested to Ruz that the study of Palenque ceramics and their ancient regional context receive a higher priority than was presently given and Ruz agreed. It had been two years since Robert and Barbara Rands had performed the Palenque ceramic work, presumably because they were both completing their university student obligations, with Robert receiving his doctorate in 1952<sup>30</sup> and Barbara finishing with a master's degree in 1954.<sup>31</sup> One has to wonder whether Ekholm was thinking of the Rands again when he advised Ruz that in order to perform this ceramic work, they would need a specialist – one that might not be so

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<sup>30</sup> Robert Rands graduated from Columbia University. The title of his dissertation was *Some Evidences in Classic Maya Art*.

<sup>31</sup> The title of her master's thesis was *The Ceramics of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Chiapas, México*.

easy to find in México. To help fill this need, he told him that he would be “on the lookout” for such a person trained in this area of expertise.<sup>32</sup> Ekholm stated that he would be very happy to receive progress reports on Ruz’s project and asked for a two year work plan. He wanted to spend two days at Comalcalco in Tabasco and he was able to contact Noguera about performing investigations there the next year.

The following day on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, Ruz received a letter dated June 6th from Marquina. In it Marquina asked Ruz to begin sending monthly vouchers to IAR, just as he did to INAH. Ruz immediately wrote to Ekholm, telling him that if he (Ruz) had known that this was a new requirement of the IAR when Ekholm was at Palenque, they could have discussed this accountability issue (Ruz Lhuillier 1955b). His words had a touch of defensiveness when he stated that he had been very responsible with the funds. Again Ruz’s displayed his integrity and character when he wrote

*On this issue I want to clarify that since the first season (1949) I have handled the Rockefeller funds with the same care as those of the Institute, seeking documentation on each and every one of the costs incurred with the corresponding vouchers and with the same requirements as in the official documentation. Author’s translation*

He complained that some of the bills were paid after the season was over, so he asked if Ekholm had any objection to his paying these bills after the season was over. When Ekholm read Ruz’s letter, he immediately sent a clarification letter to Marquina, telling him that this was an embarrassing communication problem and that he did not want any monthly accounting reports. He ensured them of his confidence that INAH and Ruz were using the money appropriately, and that since the funds were from a private source there was no need for these kinds of reports. On September 19<sup>th</sup>, after the season was over, Ruz drafted an update for Noguera. A copy of it was then forwarded to the IAR (Ruz Lhuillier 1955e). The following is a summary.

The season started on July 13 and lasted until September 10<sup>th</sup>. Others involved in the work were the archaeology students Jorge Angulo, Víctor Segovia and Bernard

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<sup>32</sup> As luck would have it, the next year Robert Rands received a scholarship from the Guggenheim Foundation to study the ceramics at Palenque and to conduct regional surveys.

Golden. The artist Hipólito Sánchez was also there for the season. Perhaps because this report was an informal draft, he did not mention the names of César Sáenz or Eduard Contreras who according to the *Anales* for 1955 were also present.

The work in the Palace took place in House C (Figure 10.10). They preserved and/or reconstructed the lintels, the vaults, and the stucco friezes. In the Temple of the Inscriptions they did the same with the three carved tablets located on the south side of the sanctuary; they also completely restored the floor of the porch. The artists copied the carved panel that held a total of 600 glyphs<sup>33</sup>.

In the Temple of the Cross they cleared out all the accumulated debris in the portico and then made holes in the floor, looking for possible offerings. They consolidated the building's architecture and its supporting basement. In the Temple of the Foliated Cross, they studied the profile of the stairs leading up to the temple and then reconstructed what appeared to be the stair's original location and form.

Temple XXI (Figure 10.11) is located south of the Temple of the Sun. Ruz noted again, as in a previous year, that it was not designed like most of the other temples at Palenque because it did not have a portico that gave access to a sanctuary flanked by two lateral rooms. It had pillars that were placed down the middle of an interior room creating two parallel hallways. It was accessed on the north by a staircase and a single wide front entry in the middle of the façade. There was also another central doorway in the back of the temple that led nowhere. There were no walls separating the two hallways; instead there were two wide pillars, similar to what Ruz had seen at Chichén Itzá. In the center of the temple there was a small tomb at the bottom of four steps that led down below the floor. The tomb was empty and had been hidden by debris that fell from the roof.

He wrote that in the Temple of the Count they had accumulated enough information about the building to restore it, including its corners, the staircase with *alfardas*, the three terraces of the pyramid, the body of the basement and its buttresses. They excavated three

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<sup>33</sup> This panel is now commonly called "The Inscriptions Tablet".

sealed, longitudinally aligned tombs in its sanctuary floor. However, there were only a few scattered bones inside each one. Each also had offerings of ceramics and jade. They believed that the presence of a rat's nest and rat bones in the floor suggested the possibility that rodents had eaten the human remains.<sup>34</sup> In one of the tombs they found traces of fabric that had covered the dead bodies before the tomb was sealed. "Not only was the impression of the fabric found in the lime, but the completely mineralized tissue fragments were present. It melted into the air, but we were able to take pictures of these pieces" (Ruz Lhuillier 1955e:4) (Figure 10.12). The building was in alarming condition at the beginning of the season, but they were able to completely rebuild the base of the temple and reinforce its support columns. They also put concrete lintels in the three entrances of the portico in front of the sanctuary.

The North Temples, numbers I through V, stand upon one long platform pyramid. They were all in a very bad state and had never been explored (Figure 10.13). Ruz investigated three of the structures (II, III and IV) and partially consolidated them. He did not explore temples I and V due to their extreme dilapidation. Temple II was designed in the usual Palenque style with three openings in its portico, a sanctuary and two adjacent rooms on each side. The frame of the building was fairly intact, so they put concrete lintels above the three entrances. They consolidated its base, three of its corners and the *alfardas*. It was determined that Temple III was built after Temples II and IV and that it was a duplicate of Temple I. Its roof was formed with four *aguas*<sup>35</sup> like the tower of the Palace, and its roof comb was almost completely gone. At the foot of the upper stairs, an offering had been buried made up of grinding stones with their respective *manos*. Temple IV is like Temple II, but in worse shape, since it had no pillars that would have supported the portico. Inside Temple IV's sanctuary, a large excavated hole was found and inside it was a very rough outline of what might have been a furnace

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<sup>34</sup> In subsequent years, Ruz would change his opinion about this conclusion.

<sup>35</sup> I believe that the Spanish "aguas" might be translated as "water drains" in English.

(Figure 10.14 and 10.15). He wondered if it was a “pre or post-Hispanic” (Ruz Lhuillier 1958c:195) construction. There were also pieces of a decorated clay cylinder similar to those found at the Foliated Cross the previous year. It had been crushed by the collapse of the roof. Two carved stones were found, one in the jamb of the sanctuary and the other in the wall. In the foundation that supports Temples III and IV they found a burial pit sealed with a stone slab containing tiny bits of bones and a bowl painted “in a negative technique and in a style not Maya, apparently from Central America” (Ruz Lhuillier 1955e:6).

Temple X (Figure 10.16) is located southwest of the Temple of the Count. Its staircase was made from very large yellow well-cut limestone blocks. Its platform consisted of “well-carved stones, some of which have retained carved images of priests” but they were so scoured by erosion that they were barely recognizable as figures. Ruz was able to see traces of its platform corners on the southeast and southwest. He could see the steps, the remains of the walls and what was left of the pillars, but the entire temple structure had collapsed. They detected that originally it had been a long narrow single room, with five entrances on the south – another unique interior design for Palenque.

This year they did not have a specific objective regarding the finding of pottery. However, all the discovered fragments were washed, marked and stored in marked bags. Among these fragments were several that appeared to be from the Petén *Tzakol* period<sup>36</sup> (Early Classic) as seen from their shape and decoration. He observed that ceramics from this chronological period were not abundant at the site. They also continued to add their finds to the artifact catalog<sup>37</sup> that was created at the onset of the excavations in 1949

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<sup>36</sup> This report was written before Robert Rands developed a specific pottery scheme for Palenque (see Rands 1974), so here Ruz was using the chronology developed for Uaxactún, Guatemala.

<sup>37</sup> In 2010 I was told by Palenque archaeologist Martha Cuevas that as of October 2010, Mexican authorities at the Archivos Técnicos were not able to locate this catalog

which was “illustrated with photographs and drawings, in which they record all necessary data on the objects, their origin and other references” (Ruz Lhuillier 1955e:7).

The last thing listed in the report was the receipt of a second monetary gift from Mr. Howard Leichner that allowed them to build the walls of a new site museum and part of the walls for an attached bodega (Figure 10.17). In the report, Ruz described the progress of the work and the manner in which the walls were being constructed.

After the season was over, Ruz sent a letter to Ekholm in late September; included with it was a preliminary two-year work plan.<sup>38</sup> He also told him that he was sending a collection of plants to him that Ekholm had requested previously.<sup>39</sup> The plants came from the Chichén Itzá area and were labeled with their Maya names.

Ruz then addressed Ekholm’s request that Robert and Barbara Rands work at Palenque again. He stated that he had no problem with this, but before they arrived, he wanted them to have their own financial support for the entire time they would be present<sup>40</sup>. He said that the only thing that he could offer them was a place to stay, their food and salaries of the workmen that they needed. He also stated that he wanted them to work on the ceramics even after the field season was over, preferably in Mérida. I believe that the problem of finances for the Rands was resolved when Robert Rands was given a grant for the 1956 year to perform ceramic work at Palenque and its hinterlands. The grant was from the Guggenheim Foundation.

Interestingly, Ruz was also to receive research funds from the same foundation<sup>41</sup>, but for the year 1955. In the last part of his letter to Ekholm, Ruz asked him for his assistance. He told him that he had received word from the Guggenheim Foundation that

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<sup>38</sup> This work plan was not found with the letter, so I am unaware of its details.

<sup>39</sup> More explanation about these plants is given on the next page.

<sup>40</sup> This statement about their financial situation was not explained in the letter.

<sup>41</sup> Via email, I contacted the foundation to ask about the history of Ruz’s grant, but I learned from Assistant Secretary Mary Kiffer, that there is no record of Alberto Ruz Lhuillier ever applying for or receiving a grant from them; however I have proof that he applied, as was written in earlier sections of this thesis.

he would receive the education grant that he had applied for previously, but in order to receive it, he must perform his research in the United States. He asked if Ekholm could check into this requirement by asking the Foundation if it would be possible to postpone the receipt of the grant since he could not work in the United States while continuing to work at Palenque.

One week later, Ekholm responded by telling Ruz that he would be very happy to receive the collection of plants Ruz was sending and that they would be added to the collection he had previously brought back from Palenque (Ekholm 1955h). He stated that the purpose of the collection was to perform a study of the mortars, but he offered no other explanation. He also related that he would tell Rands the good news about being permitted to work at the site next season. Ekholm understood that there was a need to keep the ceramic collection in México, but stated that it would make the job harder. He told him that he had spoken with the people at the Guggenheim Foundation and they insisted that a majority of the work be done in the U.S., although they would permit some of the research to take place in México. On a more positive note, he wrote that a delay in receipt of the funding was acceptable to the Foundation until Ruz could get the details worked out<sup>42</sup>.

In mid January 1956 Ruz sent the Rockefellers a letter and an album of photos taken of the 1955 season (Ruz Lhuillier 1956b). He included pictures of the excavations in the Temples of the North, the Temple of the Count, Temple X, the Temple of the Cross, the Foliated Cross and Temple XXI. Five tombs were found – three in the Temple of the Count, one in the terrace of the North Temples and another in Temple XXI. With one exception, all these tombs contained jade offerings, obsidian, flint and bone. During their investigations, they found many pieces of modeled stucco; one represented an animal head with a human footprint in the eye (Figure 10.18). Ruz jokingly commented that the “surrealists will like this” (Ruz Lhuillier 1956b).

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<sup>42</sup> I cannot help but wonder if Ruz came to some kind of an agreement with the Guggenheim Foundation that Ruz’s grant be given to Bob Rands the next year, but I have no proof that this happened.

During next season, he hoped to begin work in April.<sup>43</sup> He invited the Rockefellers to come during the excavation and then wrote "My wife and I have the fondest remembrances of yours and Mrs. Rockefeller's brief stay with us" (Ruz Lhuillier 1956b)<sup>44</sup>.

At the end of January Ekholm informed Rockefeller that he would be away at Comalcalco for four months, and if the Rockefeller office had occasion to send funds to the IAR for Palenque while he was gone, his assistant Junius Bird would handle matters (Ekholm 1956). He delivered other updates such as the news that Ruz and Ekholm planned to visit each other while they worked at Palenque and Comalcalco respectively and that Robert and Barbara Rands were making plans to work at Palenque again. He told him that Ruz planned to begin work in April, but that the date was tentative since INAH usually does not send out its allotment until late spring.

### THE 1956 SEASON

According to a passage in *American Antiquity's* "Notes and News" (Proskouriakoff 1956:223 ), the 1956 season at Palenque was delayed "due to intensive work of consolidation of buildings at Uxmal, where Alberto Ruz Lhuillier, assisted by César Sáenz [sic] and Hipólito Sánchez, [are] expected to finish the northern range of the Monjas quadrangle before leaving Yucatán." It was also noted that Gordon Ekholm, who was working at Comalcalco from March until June, was accompanied by three other archaeologists, including Robert Rands. After finishing that work, Rands began working at Palenque once again (Proskouriakoff 1956:223).

The following is a summary of Ruz's *Anales* report (Ruz Lhuillier 1958d) from that season. It lasted nearly three months, from August 13th to November 4<sup>th</sup>. He was

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<sup>43</sup> As the reader will discover on the next page, Ruz did not begin the season until August.

<sup>44</sup> In a letter to Marquina from Ekholm that I listed in an earlier section, this visit by Ms. Rockefeller was in the winter of 1954 (Ekholm 1955e), but I do not know if this happy event took place at Palenque or at the Ruz's home in Mérida.

assisted by the archaeologists Heinrich Berlin and Ponciano Salazar and the artist Hipólito Sánchez Vera. He stated that he was also aided by Dr. Robert Rands, now based at the University of Mississippi and supported by a scholarship from the Guggenheim Foundation. Ruz noted that the project funding sources this year were from INAH, the Government of the State of Chiapas and Nelson Rockefeller as well as a small amount from a woman he lists as only “Ms. Bullington” with no other explanation about what she contributed or anything about her identity.

They continued to work on the construction of the museum and an attached bodega for the storage of existing and future artifacts. They finished its walls and its concrete roof (Figure 10.19). In the display rooms of the museum, they put in a sun roof to let in daylight and placed a marquee on the facade. They acquired wooden doors, windows and shutters and made them ready for placement.

Their archaeological work included reconnaissance, stratigraphic explorations, building explorations, consolidation and reconstruction. Regional surveys were conducted at ancient sites in the hinterlands of Palenque, in order to obtain ceramics and establish the possibility of ancient regional contact. The exploration and conservation work took place in the Palace, the Northern Group, the Temple of the Count, the Pyramid of the Inscriptions, and in Temples X, XI, XIII and XVIII-A. With the help of the Minister of Water Resources, work also progressed on the rehabilitation of the aqueduct.

Since 1949, their energy had been directed toward rehabilitating and consolidating the most dilapidated buildings in the central part of the site. Because of these efforts, several structures were temporarily saved from destruction. Ruz believed that continuing this kind of work was imperative and urgent, especially the job of reconstructing and waterproofing roofs and terraces for the Palace, the North Group and the Temple of the Count. He believed that the key to preventing more water leakage into the Temple of Inscriptions’ crypt was to continue reconstructing and consolidating the base of the pyramid.

Among the highlights of the season's explorations was the trenching of the large staircase on the north façade of the Palace. They verified overlapping structures and four phases of construction (Figure 10.20). He stated that it was important to continue the exploration of the old Palace substructures and to find the pottery associated with each phase so that they could determine if part of the structure was built by the Maya or some other culture. Interestingly, they had discovered a niche in the middle of the said staircase whose purpose was unknown. The niche contained fill made up of many modeled stucco fragments, broken sculptures and sculptured slabs, indicating that the niche was constructed very late in the chronology. Ruz thought that the presence of this fill indicated that the site's buildings were already in a state of destruction when the niche was built. Also in the very middle of the niche fill were a large number of pieces of *manos* and *metates*. Ruz reasoned that perhaps this was evidence of intense domestic occupation of the Palace that dated from the period when the buildings were being destroyed.<sup>45</sup>

During the season, they excavated Temple XVIII-A in order to find more hieroglyphs such as those found in Temple XVIII, the twin temple next to it. They found no more hieroglyphs; instead three tombs were uncovered. The graves contained only bits of human remains that were not sufficient for any anthropological study, even though in the case of Tomb 2, it was still sealed. Again he speculated that this strange situation was due to the presence of rodents getting into the tombs and eating the bones.<sup>46</sup>

Ruz tried to understand why graves were being placed inside the Temple of the Count and in Temples XVIII and XVIII-A. It was hard for him to imagine that the temples were

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<sup>45</sup> In earlier chapters, I explained how Ruz thought that people from the coast had perhaps invaded Palenque after the Classic Period.

<sup>46</sup> As written previously, in subsequent years Ruz would change his opinion about this conclusion.

built only for the purpose of housing graves<sup>47</sup>. At least one of the graves was built at the same time as the temple, so the person buried there must have had some significance. In an effort to explain the numerous bones found in the stone boxes between the burials in the floor of Temple XVIII, he speculated that perhaps when these ancient people finished constructing a building, a ritual burial was required. Therefore, these persons in the tombs were buried with jade jewels and ceramics as a propitiatory offering to the gods of the temple. He further stated that in cases where no dead bodies were available to fulfill the ritual need, they might have been able to relax the rules and use a few skeletal remains taken from an older burial. Because of the presence of the jewels and ceramics in these tombs it was likely that they were royal burials, but Ruz did not acknowledge this. In his report, Ruz was unknowingly describing the ancient Maya custom of “ensouling” a building by burying the dead in its floor.

While exploring Temple XVIII-A which is immediately adjacent to XVIII, Berlin found a vertical tube that ended just below the floor of the building’s sanctuary (Figure 10.21). He proposed that it was a “psycho-duct” similar to that found in the Temple of Inscriptions – a proposal that was proven to be true during the 1957 season when they investigated and excavated it.

Another season accomplishment was the work completed by technicians of the Ministry of Water Resources who dredged the major waterway at the site.<sup>48</sup> They were working in that part of the stream closest to the spring which is the stream’s water source. Unlike lower parts of the stream, there was no evidence that this section had ever been vaulted. However the section had collapsed, so it was hard to be sure. He hoped that the

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<sup>47</sup> I am not sure why this was a quandary for Ruz, since two years before he had found an entire temple built to house the dead body of a Maya king in the Temple of the Inscriptions.

<sup>48</sup> Ruz does not name the waterway, but it was the “Otolum”. This is a freshwater stream that originates from inside the hill where the site sits. It flows northward adjacent to the Palace building and then tumbles down several escarpments.

Ministry would be able to assist them until the dredging and reconstruction of the “aqueduct” was complete.

Ruz included in his report the preliminary chronological sequence tentatively proposed by Robert and Barbara Rands that had been based upon all pottery discovered at the site since 1949. The Rands’ report attempted to fit the ceramics into the Uaxactún chronology, one that had been used by almost all archaeologists working in the central lowlands of the Maya area (Sharer and Traxler 2006:78). However as the work progressed they realized that they would need to develop a chronology tailored specifically to the ceramics at Palenque, because

*...the pottery of Palenque differs markedly from that of better-known localities in the Maya area. Survey has shown that even a scant 20 miles from the site the apparently contemporaneous ceramic assemblage has undergone a pronounced and quite surprising change (Rands and Rands 1957:140).*

It was not until 1967 that Robert Rands would finally publish an equivalency table<sup>49</sup> showing how his first chronology correlated with the one he developed specifically for Palenque (Rands 1967:117). The following is Ruz’s summary of the ceramic findings using the older sequence (Ruz Lhuillier 1958d:298):

- 1) They found no Pre-Classic Period pottery associated with the building construction; furthermore, pottery from that period was very scanty at Palenque.
- 2) There was a period of occupation at the end of the “old classic” (*Tzakol III*) or at the beginning of the “recent classic” (*Tepeu I*<sup>50</sup>) as was generally identified and found under earlier constructions or in masonry.<sup>51</sup> Using Carbon-14 dating,<sup>52</sup> they

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<sup>49</sup> He derived the names for his five ceramic phases from the names of the arroyos that flow through the site

<sup>50</sup> This term describes a pottery tradition established by R.E. Smith (1955) for Maya lowland ceramics that dated from around A.D. 600 to 900. It corresponds to the Palenque ceramic phases of the Balunté, Murciélagos and Otolum that were established by Bob Rands in 1967.

<sup>51</sup> Ruz wrote this before the discovery of Temple XVIII-A sub which was the earliest tomb found at Palenque to date and which had pottery from the Early-Classic period.

established a date ranging between 408 and 658 C.E. for some of the pottery found in the southern part of the Palace and other pottery from a platform located northeast of the archaeological camp building, near the old site access road.

- 3) They determined that the most active and longest of any of the occupation periods was the “middle and recent classic” (*Tepeu II and III*), a period that was associated with all the buildings discovered and explored by Ruz at Palenque up to that time.

The regional surveys conducted by Robert Rands at Nututun, Sulusum, Calatraba, Aguacate, El Barí, Chinikihá in Chiapas, and Trinidad, Las Delicias, Tierra Blanca in Tabasco helped explain the cultural relationship between Palenque and the geographic region between the Usumacinta River to the north and east, the Grijalva River to the west and an indefinite line marked by the Chipaneca mountains to the South (see Figure 1.2). The sites of Nututun and Sulusum, whose locations were the closest to Palenque, contained pottery samples that matched the late-period Palenque pottery. Ruz believed that the sites along the Usumacinta River marked the edge of ancient Palenque’s influence, an influence that eventually became much attenuated and was eventually displaced by people who moved in from the coast of Tabasco. He saw evidence that Palenque’s influence certainly extended to the east at least as far as Chinikiha.

In México City this same year, an interesting turn of events took place when Ruz’s long-time friend, Eusebio Dávalos Hurtado succeeded Ignacio Marquina as head of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) (Durán Solís 2009:630). Dávalos would remain in that powerful and prestigious position for the next eleven years and he would be an actor in the events that lead up to Ruz’s resignation from INAH only two years later. During this time period Ignacio Bernal was appointed head of the Departamento de Monumentos Prehispánicos. The departamento was a subsidiary to INAH and Bernal succeeded Eduardo Noguera as its head.

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<sup>52</sup> The Carbon-14 analysis was performed by the Humble Oil Company in Houston, Texas.

## THE 1957 SEASON

It was February 1957, when Ruz wrote to the Rockefellers (Ruz Lhuillier 1957) once again, sending them a photo album for the previous season. He told them that there were no sensational discoveries, but that the album contained photos from some of the ceramic work that the Rands' had done at Palenque and in the surrounding area. They had collected twenty boxes of ceramics and planned to study them at the Mérida Museum. He also informed them that money was coming from the Mexican government to aid in completion of the site museum; he hoped to finish it this year. His next season would be his tenth at Palenque and his next writing project would be a synopsis of that work. He invited them to come to Palenque once again, adding that he had read with sadness about the death of Miguel Covarrubias.

In early March of 1957, Rockefeller replied, thanking Ruz for the photo album and for the invitation. He responded that "to visit Palenque is most tempting indeed and I must say it is one of the visits that I dream about -- a dream that I hope will come true in the not too distant future" (Rockefeller 1957). He also told him that he missed Ruz's presence at the opening to the Museum of Primitive Art in New York City. Rockefeller was president, trustee and founder of the museum from 1954 to 1975 (Unknown 2011).

Five days later, Rosa Covarrubias (1957b) sent a note to the Rockefellers thanking them for the sympathetic letter regarding the death of Miguel, her estranged husband. On the subject of Palenque, she told them that she had received a message from Ruz saying that he was waiting for the arrival of his grant funds before he could start work at Palenque. She wrote that Ruz "wanted me to go and work this season at Palenque. I want very much to go too. But court appearances<sup>53</sup> prevent me from going now, unless some arrangement can be made soon. If I am not able to leave soon, we can probably all go

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<sup>53</sup> Rosa was in the middle of a legal battle with various parties over Miguel's estate, since he died without a will (Williams 1994).

together<sup>54</sup> when you arrive because Nelson must see Palenque. Ruz will be working until the end of June". At the close of the letter she wrote that Ignacio Bernal had just called her with news that Rockefeller's grant had arrived and that Ruz would be leaving for Palenque that Monday. If she decided to go to Palenque, she would be sure to let them know.

*Summary of Explorations in Palenque: 1957(Ruz Lhuillier 1962a)*

His 1957 season lasted from April 29 to August 10. Those who aided him were archaeologists Francisco González Rul, Víctor Segovia, and Roberto Gallegos. González was only able to work for four weeks. The artist Hipólito Sánchez was there as well. Also during this season, Palenque was the destination for several famous persons, including the ex-President of the México General Lázaro Cárdenas, the Mexican Secretary of Finance, Carrillo Flores, the Mexican Secretary of Water Resources, Mr. Eduardo Chavez, the governor of State of Chiapas, Efraín Aranda Osorio, the governor of Campeche, Alberto Trueba Urbina, anthropologist Henri Lehman from the Museum of Man in Paris, and anthropologist Manuel Rivero de la Calle from the University of Santa Clara, Cuba. Professor Carlos Margain visited and was accompanied by his students from the National Autonomous University of México. Rosa Covarrubias was there with her friend Suzanne Flon, a French actress. Another visitor was the American film director John Huston and his friend and well-know jockey William Pearson<sup>55</sup>. There were many other visitors, including teachers and journalists. The museum and the attached bodega were completed that season except for the plumbing. According to Ruz, this last

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<sup>54</sup> What Rosa is referring to here is unclear but perhaps she was thinking that the Rockefellers might visit her in México City and afterward they would all go together to Palenque.

<sup>55</sup> Pearson, also known as "Billy" was a famous jockey and art dealer/collector. According to an article in *Vanity Fair* (Moss 2009), he paid Mexican farmers to hunt artifacts and was a friend of the artist Diego Rivera and the archaeologist Miguel Covarrubias. Artifacts that he didn't want, he would trade to his friends. The article states that when Pearson departed México in 1946, he admitted to having "four thousand pounds of national treasure" which he had illegally brought into the U.S. by giving someone at the border a can of chili peppers.

accomplishment was due to the efforts of Carlos Pellicer who obtained a special grant from the Mexican Secretary of the Treasury.

Explorations were initiated in Temple I of the North Group, the Ballcourt, the Palace, the Temple of the Inscriptions, and Temple XVIII-A. They inspected and checked the stability of the consolidation work completed last year for Temples II, III and V of the North Group; the Temple of the Count; the Ballcourt; Temple XIII; and the Temple of the Inscriptions and they were found solid. The Mexican Ministry of Water Resources, represented by Rodolfo Martínez, continued its efforts in the de-silting and strengthening of the aqueduct.

### **Conclusions from the 1957 Anales**

#### *The North Group*

In the previous season's report, Ruz had remarked that the five buildings of the North Group were quickly falling apart and that Temple I was beyond reconstruction. During this season, his crew was able to reinforce all but Temple I. While investigating what was left of Temple I, they were able to confirm that it was built in a similar manner as Temple III, and that it dated back in time to the construction of Temple II. They explored the fill in the lower portion of the pyramid platform and found pottery fragments and pieces of human bone in black clay soil on the hill. Some of the sherds had characteristics similar to those from the Preclassic *Mamom* and *Chicanel* periods of Petén in Guatemala, while others were like the polychromes from the Classic horizons of *Tzakol III* and *Tepeu I* and II<sup>56</sup>. He also noted that the only piece of plumbate<sup>57</sup> pottery found was a pitcher-shaped vessel. He believed that these remains indicated a very ancient occupation for Palenque, confirming that the Maya culture was there "before the time of flowering of Palenque,

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<sup>56</sup> This was written before Robert Rands developed a specific pottery sequence for Palenque (see Rands 1974), and instead was using the chronology developed for Uaxactún, Guatemala.

<sup>57</sup> This pottery type is classified as Early Postclassic in the Maya world.

which is known to have flourished during the middle Late Classic period, according to architectural and epigraphic data” (Ruz Lhuillier 1962a:90). However as of the 1957 season, they had found no pottery phases dating before *Tepeu* II and III in any of the buildings.

### *Temple of the Inscriptions*

They made substantial progress in the reconstruction of the stepped terraces that lead up to the Inscriptions temple and in reconstructing of the buttress at the base of the pyramid. After exploring the base on the eastern side of the pyramid they realized that the first tier on that side was higher up from the ground than on the north side. This is due to a dip in the ground on the east side of the pyramid. The ancient people found it necessary to add more rock foundation to the east side of the base of the pyramid to stabilize it. This meant that the retaining wall seen at the bottom of the pyramid on the northern side was put in place to reinforce the corner and to help keep the more massive eastern side from sliding down. Behind this wall, there was a cache of sherds and pieces of human bones in black clay soil. That soil was very different from the yellow dirt usually found against the rocky hill where the pyramid stands. Ruz proposed that the black soil, bones and pottery fragments had been brought in as fill from another location within the site during the pyramid’s first construction phase.

Temple XIII, located right next to the Inscriptions, was restored this season. Its base and what was left of its pillars and walls were consolidated (Figure 10.22). They also reconstructed the steps of the Temple of the Count to make access to the temple easier and to consolidate the eastern face of its pyramid.

### *Ballcourt*

They only had enough time to partially restore the ballcourt terrace that formed the back of the platform, but Ruz expressed his desire to restore the entire structure (Figure 10.23). He had been studying it since 1950, trying to determine its original configuration.

At the onset, he had thought that the stands<sup>58</sup> on either side of the court were horizontal, but in reality they seem to decline slightly toward the center.

### *The Palace*

The exploration of the terraces on the north side of the Palace, allowed investigators to better define the character of the older sub-structure they had found in 1949 and then rediscovered in 1956. After examining this section Ruz concluded that the sub-building had had a single corridor with openings that faced south and then later they were divided into chambers by transverse walls. They found no remains of a vaulted ceiling, and he postulated that the vault had probably been demolished when the ancient people needed to fill in the structure that would form the heart of the foundation for the Palace. The pottery found under the floor of this ancient structure was similar to that found in other buildings that had been explored so far at Palenque, and Ruz wrote that the “said structure can be attributed to a much earlier occupation of the site, probably by the same group of Maya that afterward constructed the rest of the ceremonial center.”(Ruz Lhuillier 1962a:87).

Ruz reminded his readers that twenty years prior Miguel Ángel Fernández had thought that he had found evidence of another building below the north side of the staircase and terraces. Fernández had even drawn a cross-section of it; however during Ruz’s 1949 explorations, his crew had determined that the earlier building could not have been configured as Fernández had proposed. Now in 1957 it was determined that there really was an earlier structure on that side of the Palace built before the construction of the galleries. They were now able to clarify the location of this structure and some of its characteristics (Figure 10.24 and Figure 10.25).

### *Aqueduct*

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<sup>58</sup> There is no agreement among scholars about whether the structures on either side of the Palenque- type ballcourt were used to seat an audience or to keep the ball confined within a certain area.

They rebuilt the east wall of the aqueduct and planned to continue to reinforce each newly discovered section in order to prevent landslides. The work of cleaning out and reconstructing the aqueduct was of great interest to all the crew. This year they finally understood that the structure was not built for the sole purpose of draining rainy season runoff from the “ceremonial center”, but that it channelized a spring which originated from underground.<sup>59</sup> They found a carved rock in the wall of the aqueduct (Figure 10.26) that most likely belonged in a building that had been destroyed, so the aqueduct might have been a later construction. Ruz judged from the carved rock’s matrix, its dimensions, the size of the hieroglyphs, and its smooth frame that it did not come from any of the bas-relief wall tablets so common at Palenque, but rather from a sculpted block. They had also found two comparable in size in the walls of Temple IV of the North Group (Figures 10.27 and 10.28)<sup>60</sup>.

#### *Temple XVIII-A*

One of the most significant discoveries of the season was that of a burial chamber under Temple XVIII-A by Ruz and Segovia.<sup>61</sup> Even though the scale of the tomb was small compared to that found in the Temple of the Inscriptions, it had several striking similarities. It was originally discovered in 1956 when Berlin noticed a masonry pipe in the floor of the temple sanctuary similar to the psycho-duct found in the Inscriptions’ tomb. Following this tube downward, Ruz and Segovia found a burial chamber containing an elaborate tomb. Although it contained no intricately carved sarcophagus, there were faint remains of painted murals on the walls. Just as was seen in the royal tomb of the Inscriptions, the important person was buried with jewels made of carved jade, although of an inferior quality to those of the personage in the Inscriptions Temple.

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<sup>59</sup> Even though Ruz states this, it’s hard to believe that they did not know about the spring before now.

<sup>60</sup> In 2007 David Stuart wrote in his web blog *Maya Decipherment* that these three blocks were from an early mosaic that originated during the tenure of K’inich Janab Pakal.

<sup>61</sup> The building under XVIII-A that contained a tomb is called Temple XVIII-A Sub.

They found the bones of three or four skeletons mixed in with the dirt and masonry at the tomb entrance. Unlike the Inscriptions tomb, the burial chamber of this “young priest” also contained the skeleton of a female (Figure 10.29).

Just like the tomb in the Inscriptions Temple, this newly discovered tomb was designed in conjunction with the temple. Ruz suggested that the “psycho-duct” running from the floor of the sanctuary to the tomb chamber would indicate that there is a functional relationship between the tomb and the temple. He reasoned that the temple must have been built for the purpose of holding the deified priest’s tomb and thus kept the cult that worshiped him alive. After finding two complete and well-preserved skeletons in this new tomb, Ruz stated that he no longer believed that missing and deteriorated bones were due to the action of rodents – a belief that he had expressed in previous reports.<sup>62</sup>

He ended his article stating that in the future, exploration at Palenque should be focused upon finding Preclassic and Classic pottery by searching platforms and trash mounds. He believed that the best place to look for this evidence would not be under the buildings that they had already explored or beneath those that were currently under exploration, but instead it should be sought in other parts of the zone, outside the zone, and perhaps at the base of the hill where the common people lived and settled.

On August 29, 1957, Rosa wrote to Rockefeller (Covarrubias 1957a) telling him that she had just returned from a tour of several archaeological sites including Palenque. While she was in Palenque, Ruz told her that he had several ideas for Palenque’s next season. She informed Rockefeller that when she had a chance, she would write down Ruz’s ideas and send them to him. Rosa also asked that Nelson tell Mary, his wife, that Rosa missed her companionship at Palenque, Chichén and Uxmal.

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<sup>62</sup> Ruz does not state other causes for this deterioration, but generally, it has been determined that there are environmental conditions unique to Palenque that destroy the remains.

In February 1958, as was his yearly custom, Ruz sent a progress report and picture album to Rockefeller for the 1957 season (Ruz Lhuillier 1958e). He told him about the work that was done in the Palace and in Temple XVIII-A Sub, where the new elaborate tomb was found. It was an important tomb that contained offerings of ceramics, jade and a mosaic mask made of jade, obsidian, shell and mother of pearl. He told him about the psycho-duct and described it as “a kind of tube that rises from the roof of the tomb in the direction of the sanctuary and that has an important magic role.” He wrote that the most important reconstruction was carried out in the Temple of the Inscriptions; however, he commented “...there is still much to do” (Ruz Lhuillier 1958e). He also related that he would like to use some of the grant money to produce a monograph of the work about the Temple of the Inscriptions, and immediately thereafter he planned to write a synthesis of the ten seasons of exploration of the site<sup>63</sup>. Once again he thanked him for his assistance and told him that there “is no doubt that without such aid we would not have been able to perform the intensive work at Palenque that we conducted in the course of the ten seasons” (Ruz Lhuillier 1958e).

### **THE 1958 SEASON**

In a letter dated March 10, 1958, Rosa told Rockefeller "Please do nothing about Palenque this year. Ruz does not want to work in the field, but [rather wants to] write. I will explain when I see you" (Covarrubias 1958). This letter mysteriously contradicts what Ruz had told Rosa nine months previously. I have no records that might explain Ruz's sudden change of heart and why he would not take advantage of the \$6,000 that Rockefeller had already pledged for the 1958 season, but as will be revealed in the following sections, circumstantial evidence points to an event that happened at Chichén Itzá, a geographic area within which Ruz had jurisdiction.

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<sup>63</sup> Most likely, Ruz was troubled about getting behind in publishing his last 5 *Anales* reports. The record shows that his 1953-1956 reports were not published until 1958, and his 1957 and 1958 reports were not published until 1962.

Since he did not request the Rockefeller money for his final year of funding, his only resource for this season was INAH. The funds were meager, so the 1958 season's work was brief and only lasted from August 18 to October 5. That time also included the two weeks it took to clean the zone – one week at the beginning of the season and one at the end. He only lists the name of José Elías Coba, an artist, as his professional assistant this year.

His crew made more improvements to the site museum, putting in toilets and constructing housing for the electric lights. They were very happy to show photos of the old shed compared with this new facility (Figure 10.30). They made wooden shelves from the old tables that had lined the walls of the storeroom hut where artifacts had been previously placed for exhibit. These new shelves were installed into the new museum bodega so that they could hold artifacts and fragments that were not chosen to go into the museum exhibit hall.

Ruz wrote that Carlos Pellicer, with the help of the staff from the museum at Tabasco arranged the collections in the museum exhibit. That exhibit opened September 28<sup>th</sup>. Among the people present at the opening were the Secretary of the Treasury Antonio Carrillo Flores, Ignacio Bernal from INAH, Secretary of Public Education, Carlos Pellicer, and representatives of the governors of the states of Chiapas and Tabasco. Local authorities and residents of Palenque were welcomed. Also present was Howard Leichner<sup>64</sup> who had made contributions that helped to initiate the construction of the museum.

Most of the work during this season was aimed at the restoration of Temple XIII and the pyramid base of the Temple of the Inscriptions. Ruz noted in his previous report, that it was most likely that the original construction of the Inscriptions Temple on the north side of the pyramid base had eight levels, and then three additional buttress levels were put in place on top of the eight. From the north side, after the original construction,

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<sup>64</sup> As stated previously, I have been unable to acquire any verifiable information about this person.

it would have looked as though there were only three tiers on the pyramid. During this season, he confirmed this suspicion when they dug into the northeast corner and found evidence of not just two, but three building phases for the pyramid terraces (Figure 10.31). However, these phases did not span several eras of time, but instead were successive phases of the same construction. He believed that the reason for the additional levels was to reinforce the base. This stemmed from the same cautious attitude that caused the builders of the tomb to place the reinforced buttresses on the sides of the sarcophagus. There was an extreme desire to make the structure strong enough to last for many centuries.

Ruz thought that this desire to reinforce the base might have originated from past experiences when the ancient builders saw the foundations of their temples disintegrate due to the clay soil and the landslides resulting from heavy and frequent rainfall. In the absence of better construction knowledge they used overlays and reinforcements of stonework to build something more durable.

After the ancient people constructed the eight staggered layers of the pyramid on the north and east sides, they began the second phase of construction intended to contain and reinforce the lower part of the pyramid, especially the east side where the ground level started several feet below the level on the north side. When Ruz's crew first discovered the buttresses on the south and west sides of the pyramid in 1954, they began to conserve them. Since they were in good condition, they would continue to give strength to the pyramid base as it continued to settle.<sup>65</sup>

He believed that these overlays were part of the original construction plan and he was challenged as to how to present them in his restoration of the building. Leaving the partial buttresses in place allowed the viewer an idea of how the building might have

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<sup>65</sup> I see no evidence in the Ruz reports that would indicate that the buttress on the west side went all the way up to the eighth terrace, although Schele and Mathews indicate this configuration in their drawing in *Code of Kings* (1998:97-98).

looked when it was finished in ancient times (Figure 10.32). There was no need to reconstruct the western half of the terraces on the north side because they were under the buttresses. Instead he partially repaired the second layer buttress and then reconstructed the terraces in the southwest corner because the buttresses did not cover them. Also, the builders did not cover the corners on the northeast side so the corners appeared to be inset.

He concluded his final Palenque report stating that the base of this pyramid had a different appearance than the rest of the structures at Palenque. With its three wide buttress terraces, its recessed corners and eight terraces under the buttresses, it had an appearance like the pyramidal bases in the Petén.

As stated previously in my summary of the Ruz legacy, after finishing his ten-year project at Palenque, Ruz left INAH and spent many years reflecting back on the data that he had found there, especially in the Temple of the Inscriptions (Izquierdo y de la Cueva 1992). In conjunction with this, one of his most recognized accomplishments was the contribution he made to our knowledge of funerary practices of the ancient Maya (Fitzsimmons 2009:2), which was a direct outcome of his work in the Inscriptions' tomb. Most of that research on the Inscriptions temple can be found in the book he wrote that was published in 1973 called *El Templo de las Inscripciones, Palenque*.

The systematic investigations and intensive conservation work that Ruz carried out in so many of Palenque's monumental structures are often overshadowed by the accounts and memories of the discovery of the royal tomb in 1952. This situation is partly due to the tomb's uniqueness in the Maya world, even today – a funerary temple with a long stairway into its heart that winds down to a secret vaulted chamber, and a tomb covered by a giant, elegantly carved sarcophagus lid. Also something to be considered is the risk that Ruz took to uncover the temple's secrets. How could a new world discovery be any more dramatic? A discovery like this is a Maya archaeologist's dream because of its mystery; its path to more knowledge, and the associated recognition that goes to the

archaeologist that finds it. Yet, it is also an archaeologist's nightmare because along with the discovery come many new responsibilities, such as the need to devote large amounts of time and money to the tomb's investigation – often to the exclusion of other needs and interests. In light of these distractions, it is remarkable that the discovery of the tomb did not cause Ruz to lose focus on his ultimate goal of investigating and conserving all the buildings in Palenque's central precinct and not just the Temple of the Inscriptions where the tomb was found.

I close this chapter with a statement of recognition and admiration for the unusual coalition that was formed between México's INAH, Nelson Rockefeller, and the Institute for Andean Research in order to accomplish the project. I believe it to be one of those rare instances where individuals were able to lay aside nationalistic pride and work together for the benefit of science, discovery, and restoration.

## Chapter 11: Beyond Palenque: New Career Directions

1958 was the last year that Ruz worked as an archeologist. It was also the year that he left his job as the head of México's Southeast archaeological zone (García Moll 1985). At Chichén Itzá, one of the sites under his jurisdiction, events were unfolding that would dramatically change his and his family's life. The details of those happenings are sketchy, but I was able to reconstruct what happened based upon information given to me by Alberto III, Ruz's oldest son as well as from a newspaper article that was published in the aftermath of the event, and from other written evidence.

At the beginning of the year 1958, Ruz was still the head of all the archaeological sites in Chiapas, Campeche, Quintana Roo and Yucatán. He had one last field season at Palenque which lasted from August 18<sup>th</sup> to October 5<sup>th</sup> of that year. As stated previously, Ruz told Rosa on August 29, 1957 that he had more ideas and plans for his Palenque excavations in seasons to come (Covarrubias 1957a). As stated in the previous chapter, six months later in March of 1958 (Covarrubias 1958), Rosa told Rockefeller that Ruz no longer wanted to work in "the field". Instead, she said that Ruz told her that he wanted to write. I suspect that something negative began to happen early in 1958 that caused him to have a change of heart about continuing to work for INAH. I believe that this change can be attributed to a drawn-out political struggle between two opposing sides, with Agustín Franco Aguilar who was the governor of Yucatán, the Barbachano family and a famous Hollywood director/producer on one side and with Ruz and INAH on the other (Ruz Buenfil 2010). This struggle revolved around Ruz's and INAH's refusal to allow Chichén to be used to film a television series pilot<sup>1</sup> called *The Phantom*, which starred a character from a U.S. comic book series.

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<sup>1</sup> If it had been successful, the series would have aired as a weekly U.S. television show.

I believe that sometime between March 30, 1958 and December 9, 1958<sup>2</sup> the American film-maker Busby Berkeley approached the Barbachano family about using the site to film the pilot. These two dates respectively mark the last time that Ruz signed his name to his informal archaeological report (1956 season) with the title of “*el Jefe de la Zona sureste*” and the first time that he signed his name to the next years’ report (1957 season), as “*el profesional ‘F’ en Ciencias Histórico-Geográficas*”.<sup>3</sup> This would indicate that he was no longer head of the zone. The reasoning is that sometime between these two dates Ruz must have resigned his position and the indication is that he did so under pressure. Documents in the INAH archives may one day resolve this ambiguity.

The name of the film director involved is not recorded in the Ruz documents, nor does my witness Alberto III remember it. However there are two written sources that reference a trip made by the Hollywood director Busby Berkeley in the late 1950’s to Chichén Itzá in order to scout locations to film a television pilot called “The Phantom” (Spivak 2011:260; Thomas 1973:32). Both sources disclose that the pilot was deemed a flop and it never sold. One of the other parties associated with these events was the Barbachano family. They were a powerful and wealthy force and until very recently held title to part of the land upon which the archaeological site of Chichén Itzá sits. They believed that they had a right to allow the filming to go forward. Money also may have changed hands between Berkeley and the Barbachanos, but for this there is no proof.

Alberto III told me that after his father read the film script, he consulted his boss and friend Eusebio Dávalos Hurtado, the Director of INAH. Ruz recommended against shooting the film at the site because he believed that the theme and content of the film were inappropriate. Dávalos concurred with him and supported the decision. What

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<sup>2</sup> Alberto III believes that it took place in 1959, but I attribute this perception to the fact that it happened at the end of 1958 and the result – a move to México City – primarily played out for him in early 1959.

<sup>3</sup> Ruz was several months behind in getting his archaeological reports completed, thus there is a one year lag in the dates for each report.

happened after that was most disturbing. The following is an account of the events told to me by Alberto III during an interview in 2010.

The Barbachanos and Berkeley appealed Ruz's decision to the governor of Yucatán, Agustín Franco Aguilar (1958-1964) and thus the governor also became involved in the power struggle. The governor sided with the Barbachanos and Berkeley, so he sent the state police to the site to ensure that the way was clear. When they arrived, the site's guardian, who had been told not to allow them in, blocked their entrance. At this point they beat him and left him in a ditch by the road. The man eventually lost an eye due to the abuse. Ruz lived in Mérida, and to get Ruz out of the way so that the crew could film, a story was invented that Ruz was involved in a hit-and-run accident with his car. The Mérida police arrived at Ruz's front door to arrest him. He told them that he would go with them to jail, but first he needed to take his kids to school, so he asked if he could take them there and the police could follow him. The authorities agreed. He loaded up the entire family and instead of taking them to school he took them on a crazy and scary ride through Mérida with the police in pursuit. His plan was to get to a lawyer-friend's house where he could safely leave his family and where he could also get legal representation. After driving directly into the friend's garage, he informed the lawyer about what was going on and from there they both went down to the jail. Alberto III remembers that his father was incarcerated for several days while the film was being made at the site.

The story of Ruz's arrest was published in the local newspaper *El Diario de Yucatán* and subsequently in a México City newspaper<sup>4</sup>. Eventually Dávalos and the INAH authorities saw the stories. The incident became a very big problem for the officials in México City since they did not relish a fight with Yucatán. Generally, Yucatán and its people have harbored the feeling that they were not really part of México. This sentiment has a long history that goes back in time to at least the Yucatán secession (1839-1843) when the people of this region attempted to break away from the central government in

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<sup>4</sup> I do not have possession of any of these newspaper articles, but instead have only Alberto III's remembrances.

México City. Thus, Dávalos found it necessary to act politically. He did not stand behind his friend Ruz or come to his rescue (Ruz Buenfil 2010), at least not at that time. The film was made and as the crew and the film were leaving from Progreso by boat, Ruz's last action as the director of the Zonas Arqueológicas del Sureste was to stop them in the harbor. This action angered the governor and the Barbachanos and consequently threats were made on Ruz's life.

Ruz, fearing for the safety of his family, packed up all their possessions within a ten day period. Anything that they could not pack they either sold or gave away. Saying goodbye to all their friends, they left the state. "So we actually had to run away from Yucatán and come here to México City" (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Both his parents had been employed by INAH and since they had to resign, neither parent had a job. They had no house and their situation was close to desperate. As Alberto III recalls, this was when his father at age 53 had his first heart attack. Their lifestyle changed dramatically from one of a rural Yucatán "paradise" to one of living in a third floor apartment, in a very large city, much colder than Mérida. They even had to change the way they dressed – wearing sweaters instead of sandals.

Another interesting piece to the puzzle is the action that INAH finally took against the governor of Yucatán after the incident. On January 12, 1959 it was reported by the *Diario de Yucatán*,<sup>5</sup> that Dávalos, acting on behalf of INAH, rescinded an agreement between the State of Yucatán and INAH that had been signed on March 1958, only eleven months earlier. The agreement had created the Instituto Yucateco de Antropología<sup>6</sup> that would be based in Mérida. The article stated that the agreement was being rescinded because of the State of Yucatán's failure to provide cooperation with

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<sup>5</sup> This report was a copy of a report that had originally been published in the *Diario Novedades* in México City.

<sup>6</sup> Its mission was to research, study, conserve, reconstruct and disseminate the cultural heritage of Yucatán.

INAH over “an incident” that took place involving former INAH employee and archaeologist Alberto Ruz Lhuillier. The article goes further to state

*The Institute refused to give permission to film an American movie that dealt with a ghost chasing the Maya<sup>7</sup> inside the ruins of Chichén Itzá and over its monuments because the Institute considered the plot shoddy. But the movie was filmed anyway, with the authorization of the state government (Unknown 1959). Author’s translation*

As with all life-shaking events, the aftermath of these events was not all bad. Since Ruz was without a job and was at home recovering from a heart attack, he had time to get to know his boys better (Ruz Buenfil 2010). Alberto III remembers that his father was home for almost one year and that this brought him and his dad much closer. In a very moving letter written to his dad after he died, Alberto III wrote:

*During those months, I learned a great deal about your revolutionary past in Cuba and your association with legendary figures such as Juan Marinello, Tony Guiteras, Calixta and Julio Le Riverand. It was also then that I heard about the times you had been imprisoned in Cuba, in the jails of the Machado and Fulgencio Batista regimes....During this time in México City, you also made contact with your old bohemian and revolutionary writer friends again – people who through their art, writing, and deeds continued to give me an education far beyond the walls of the classroom. (Ruz Buenfil 1991:xxi)<sup>8</sup>*

Sometime at the end of 1959 Ruz began working in UNAM at the Institute of History (de la Garza 2001:1). This is where he founded the Seminario de Cultura Maya, the Maya counterpart of the Seminario de Cultura Náhuatl which was a journal devoted to the study of the Aztecs. In addition, just as there was a journal called *Estudios de Cultura Náhuatl*,<sup>9</sup> a journal titled *Estudios de Cultura Maya* was created and its first volume was published in 1961, with Ruz as its editor-in-chief. He explained in the introduction to the

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<sup>7</sup> In reality, the film was not about a “ghost”, but about a masked character on a horse that had a dog side-kick. The newspaper was translating the word “phantom” literally.

<sup>8</sup> See Appendix C for the entire transcript of this letter.

<sup>9</sup> Its first issue appeared in 1959.

first volume that the similarity of the names of these two agencies and publications was because one of UNAM's goals was "to encourage the systematic investigation of two of the greatest indigenous cultures that are the root and glory of the Mexican nation" (Ruz Lhuillier 1961). Ruz remained the editor of *Estudios de Cultura Maya* until 1976; and during that time, the journal published articles written by some of the best-know scholars of the ancient Maya (de la Garza 2004). In 1970, the name Seminario de Cultura Maya was changed to the Centro de Estudios Mayas (Ochoa 1981).

Concurrently with the formation of this entity Ruz began his career as a professor at UNAM in the graduate division of the Department of History and Anthropology, College of Arts and Philosophy. This was also a great opportunity to further his education; he became a doctoral student at UNAM and graduated in 1965 (Bonifaz Nuño 1981). The topic of his dissertation was *Costumbres Funerarias de los Antiguos Mayas*,<sup>10</sup> which was published as a book in 1968, 1989 and 1991.

In 1964 Ruz began to formulate another academic center called the Comisión para el Estudio de la Escritura Maya (CEEM). This was the first working group ever formed whose purpose was to tackle the important job of deciphering Maya hieroglyphs. Some of the names of the members of this commission were María Cristina Álvarez, Maricela Ayala Falcón, Juan Ramón Bastarrachea, Daniel Cazés, Martha A. Frías, Leonardo Manrique Castañeda and Juan José Rendón.

Ruz needed start-up funds for this endeavor. Since INAH's budget had been reduced substantially,<sup>11</sup> Ruz approached his longtime friend and benefactor Nelson Rockefeller. In January 1965, he received funds from Rockefeller in the amount of \$2,500 (Boyer 1965) to help with this new effort. That same year, he also received funds from the Wenner-Gren Foundation (Ruz Lhuillier 1966) for the same purpose.

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<sup>10</sup> In English this was titled *Funerary Customs of the Ancient Maya*.

<sup>11</sup> I have no records that could inform me regarding INAH's original level of support.

Almost one year later, in the month of March, Ruz again sent a funding request to his friend, Nelson Rockefeller (Ruz Lhuillier 1966), this time to help fund the world's first glyph decipherment seminar.<sup>12</sup> It was to take place in Mérida but they had to overcome some very serious financial issues. Ruz wrote in his letter

*This year we are again meeting with serious economic difficulties because of the unexpected position of the National Institute of Anthropology and History, whose research funds have been curtailed, and we fear that we will soon be obliged to suspend our research.*

*This situation is all the more regrettable in view of the work that was done during 1965, a summary of which we enclose<sup>13</sup>, and of the first International Seminar on the Study of the Mayan language which we have scheduled to meet in Mérida, Yucatán, on December 4 to 10, 1966, in accordance with the enclosed notice. It is obvious that suspension of our research because of lack of funds will put us in an embarrassing position in connection with the International Seminar and its possibilities of success.*  
[Rockefeller staff translation]

Unfortunately, Rockefeller denied the request for additional funding (Boyer 1966), but the International Seminar did indeed take place from December 4 – 10 that same year. However the venue was changed to México City instead of Yucatán, due to the damage caused by a hurricane in the peninsula where Mérida is located. Alfredo Barrera Vázquez<sup>14</sup>, director of the Instituto Yucateco de Antropología e Historia helped Ruz organize it. Those in attendance would later become some of the most well-known and respected Maya epigraphers and linguists. Thanks to Nicholas Hopkins, we have a chronicle of what took place at the meeting since he not only attended and presented, but also published a review of the conference (1967). North Americans present were Nicholas Hopkins, David H. Kelley, Floyd Lounsbury, Michael Coe, George Stuart and

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<sup>12</sup> It is interesting to note that in Michael Coe's book "Breaking the Maya Code", there is no mention of this first serious attempt to get linguists and epigraphers together to try to decipher the Maya script, even though Coe knew about the conference because he attended.

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix G for a copy of this report.

<sup>14</sup> This man was also the husband of Ruz's second wife, Silvia Rendón.

Judy Kathryn Josserand. Ruz had plans to repeat the conference every year, but they only managed to meet the next year. According to Hopkins:

*After that things fell apart in México, following the Tlaltelolco massacre (October 1968); most of the Mexican anthropology students were involved in the movement. I think UNAM was shut down; at least people fled or kept their heads down... Cazés<sup>15</sup> went to France and didn't return until the 80s, Rendón<sup>16</sup> went to Oaxaca and became a rural schoolteacher, etc. (personal communication 2011).*

In 1973, while serving on the faculty of UNAM in their Department of Philosophy and Letters Ruz published the book *El Templo de las Inscripciones: Palenque*. The work was a compilation and analysis of all the investigations and restorations that he and his crew had performed in that temple for the entire project. It not only contains most of the drawings and photos of the temple that he included in his *Anales* articles, it also included many others that had not been published up until that time.

In 1977 Ruz accepted an appointment as Director of the Mexican National Museum of Anthropology and History. Two years later on August 25, 1979, he traveled to Montreal, Canada to deliver a lecture and died of a heart attack prior to the engagement (Bertrán 2002a; García Moll 2007). According to Alberto III, his father's wish was that his ashes be "taken some place near the Tomb of Palenque" (Ruz Buenfil 1991:xxvi). Soon after his death Ruz's ashes were entombed in a monument a few yards away from the Temple of the Inscriptions. In modern times, he is the only person who has ever been officially allowed to be buried at Palenque.

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<sup>15</sup> Here Hopkins is referring to Daniel Cazés.

<sup>16</sup> Hopkins is referring to Juan José Rendón.

## Chapter 12: Conclusions

Although summary accounts exist that describe the life of the man who discovered the famous tomb of K'inich Janaab' Pakal I at Palenque, Mexico, there are no detailed biographies. Nor are there any in-depth discussions about Ruz's ten year's work at the archaeological site where he oversaw the excavations of many of Palenque's most important architectural monuments. This study fills many information gaps in both areas, providing a richer understanding of the man and his work. The research contained in this dissertation is based upon the premise that if scholars who study archaeological history use both a micro- and macrohistorical approach to archaeological history, they will be more able to detect and better understand the personal and social influences present at the time of an excavation project. Part of this approach has been the inclusion of a synthesis of the political and cultural context within which the excavations took place, thus fostering an understanding of how these issues played out in this particular archaeologist's work. It was through this methodology that I was able to address Ruz's contributions to the history of Maya archaeology and assess his place in it.

Information contained in correspondence between Ruz, Rockefeller, Kidder, officials from INAH, Rosa Covarrubias, and Ekholm, has revealed many intertwined relationships between these institutions and individuals. On the one hand, these letters convey qualities of friendship, trust, and scholarship between individuals and agencies that were a model of cooperation. On the other hand they reveal frustration, mystery, ineptitude and mistrust among those same persons and institutions – qualities that illuminate the fallibility of human nature. The letters also document actual events that I was able to sometimes cross-reference with happenings documented in other sources, but many times they contained events that were not recorded in any other place. I was delighted to have found and included this correspondence in my report.

Through the use of many other sources, both published and unpublished, I have constructed a new image of Alberto Ruz: the man, the father, the husband, the

archaeologist and the scholar. My interview with his eldest son, Alberto Ruz III was essential to this story and through him I learned, among many other things, that Ruz's third wife, Blanca Buenfil Blengio was instrumental in the success of the Palenque excavations. Her skills as an administrator, secretary and typist were invaluable to the project. Through his son, I also learned of the undocumented incident in Yucatan where his father was framed and arrested. Subsequently Ruz left archaeology to begin a career in research and teaching. I have also included in this document information from very hard to find sources about Ruz's French and Cuban roots and his fight to free Cuba, the county of his forefather's, from American imperialism. I have also connected this information with his feelings toward scholars from the United States – some of whom would one day become his very dear friends, but others he would continue to resent due to circumstances surrounding the claims made about the age of the bones found in the famous tomb.

In regard to Ruz's work and his impact upon archaeology, I believe that there is no doubt that Ruz's scientific rigor had a major influence upon Mexican archaeology and its efforts raise its standards to a higher level. In addition, Ruz was a pioneer and a vanguard because he helped to refocus Mexican archaeology toward the investigation of the ancient Maya, a study not previously as popular within Mexican research as the ancient cultures of the Aztec, Zapotec and the Mixtec.

His discovery of the royal tomb at Palenque had several major secondary benefits. After the tomb's discovery he was asked to lecture all over the world and he became one of the best promoters of Maya archaeology during this period of time. In addition, his work on the funerary practices of the ancient Maya is some of the best ever published.

The discovery of the tomb and the inscriptions found on the edge of the ornately carved sarcophagus also sparked substantial curiosity among those who were studying ancient Maya writing. Their drive to decipher the beautiful but heretofore mysterious Maya script was spurred on by a desire to unlock the identity of the tomb's occupant.

Most of the restored buildings that we view and appreciate at Palenque are the result of Ruz's work. Reflecting again upon the Ruz legacy, I quote the immortal words that are carved upon a stone monument near the tomb of Sir Christopher Wren, in the Cathedral of St. Paul of London, the building's architect (2011:811). It reads "if you seek his monument – look around you".<sup>17</sup> Even though Ruz's mortuary monument stands solemnly in the central precinct of the site, his real and most lasting physical monument for generations to come is the site itself and the gleaming white temple restorations and consolidations that he performed there in the late 1940's and the 1950's. But Ruz's legacy is much more than just these physical memorials. The systematic and scientific work he did at Palenque was one of the best-available examples for other Mexican archaeologists to follow during and immediately after this period.

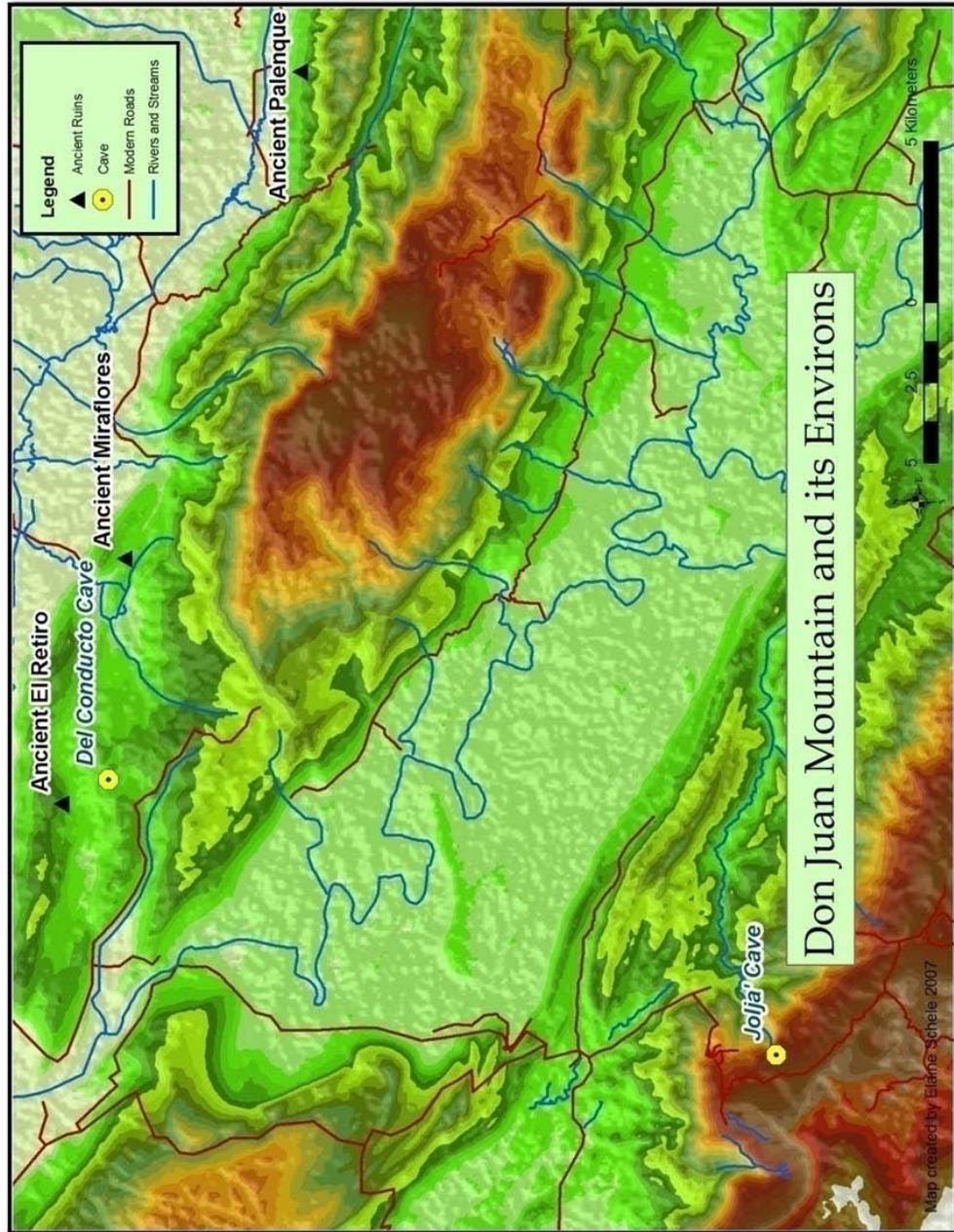
Perhaps even more significant was the impact that he had on México's attitude toward the importance of its ancient Maya heritage. When Ruz began his work in Campeche and at other Maya sites in México, Maya archaeology was mostly the purview of the North Americans. However, after his discovery of the famous tomb in the Temple of the Inscriptions, and after his ten years of work at Palenque, there was no doubt that the Mexican archaeologists were fully focused on investigations in the Maya area. The statement that "Maya studies had never been a Mexican forte" (Coe 1999) could now be laid to rest.

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<sup>17</sup> This epitaph is written in Latin and it reads "*Lector, Si Monumentum Requiris, Circumspice*" (translated as "reader, if you seek his monument – look around you).

## **Figures**

(In the interest of historical context, I have included the archaeologist's original figure number and description of figures where appropriate)



**Figure 1.1** Sierra de Palenque and Don Juan Mountain (Source: Elaine Schele)

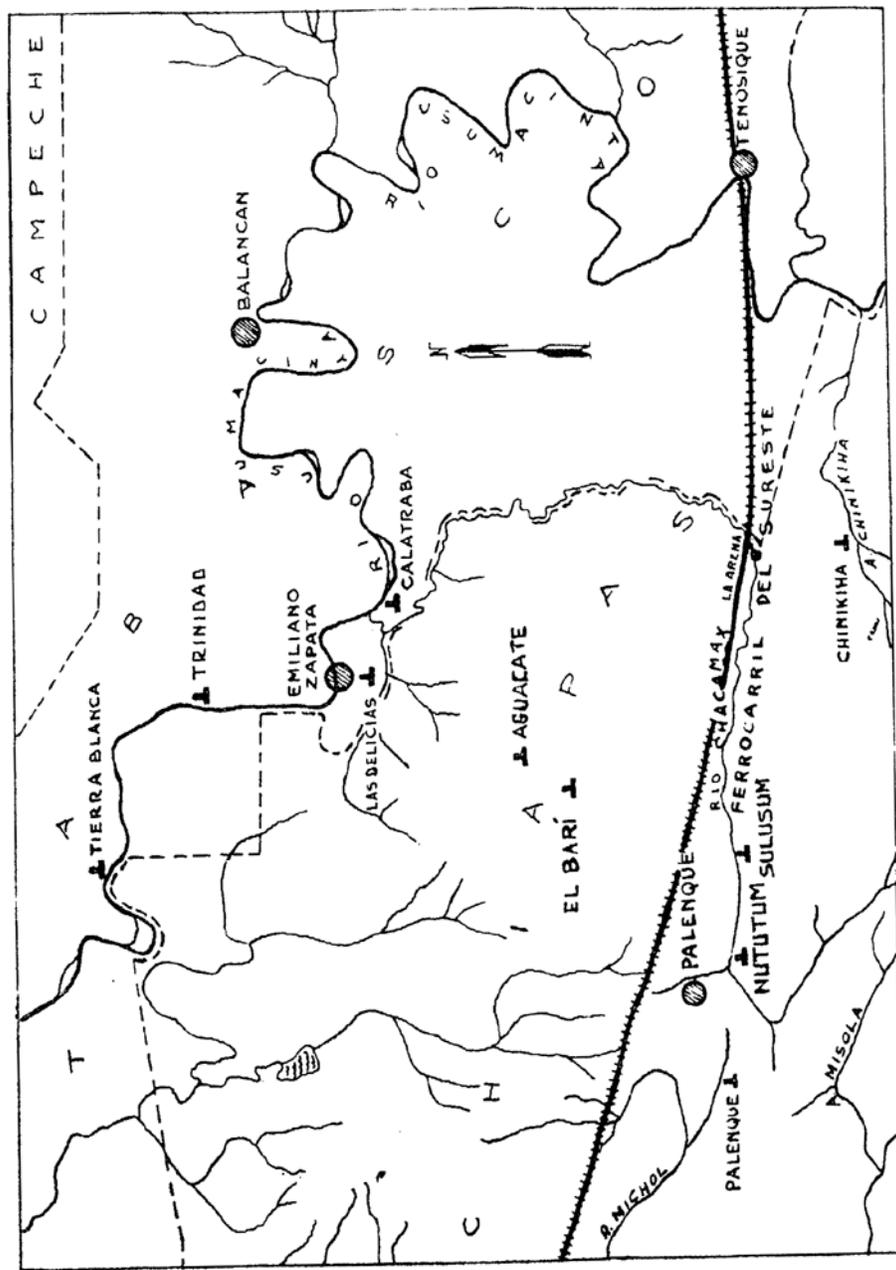
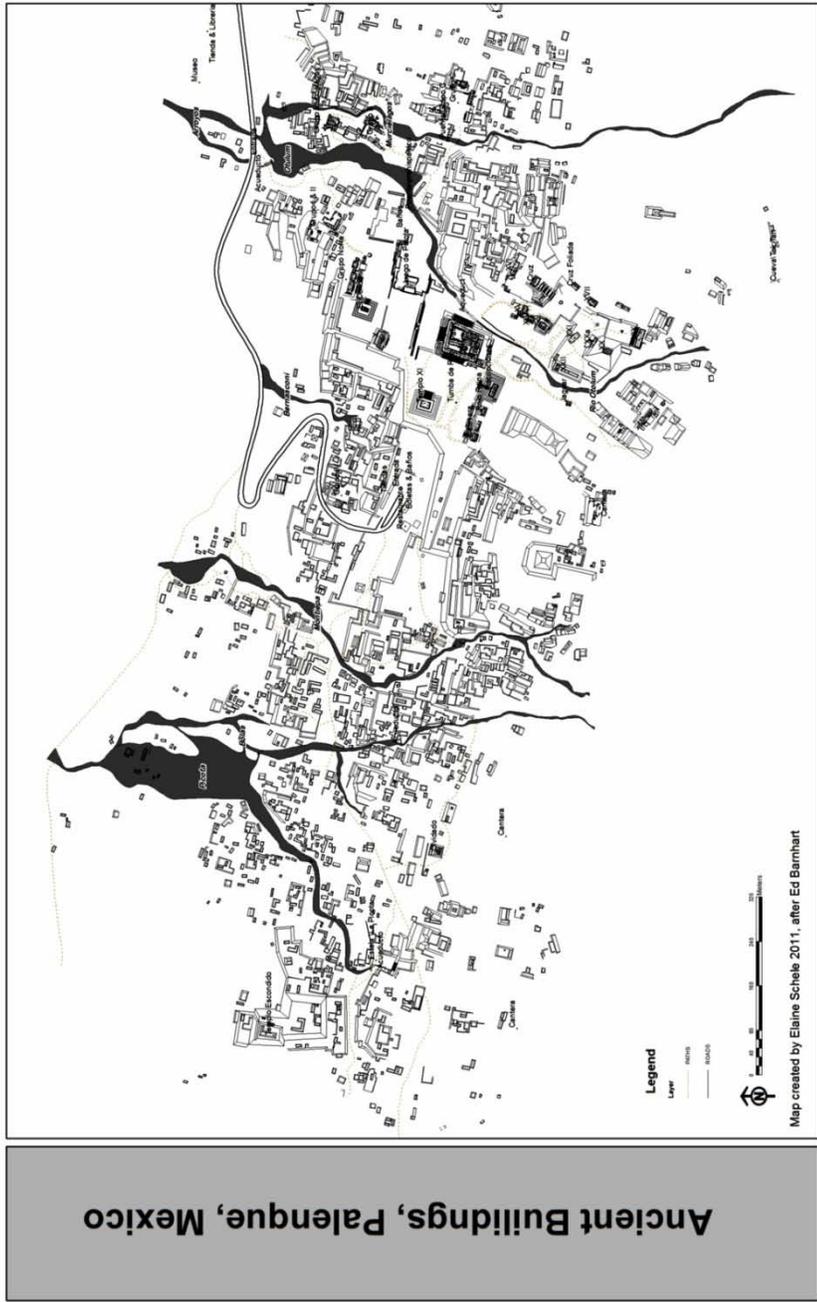


Fig. 7.—Mapa de los sitios en que se hicieron excavaciones estratigráficas y reconocimientos superficiales.

Figure 1.2 Rands' Rough Map - Regional Survey (Source: Ruz 1958:271)





**Figure 1.4** Map of Palenque Showing Springs (Source: Elaine Schele)

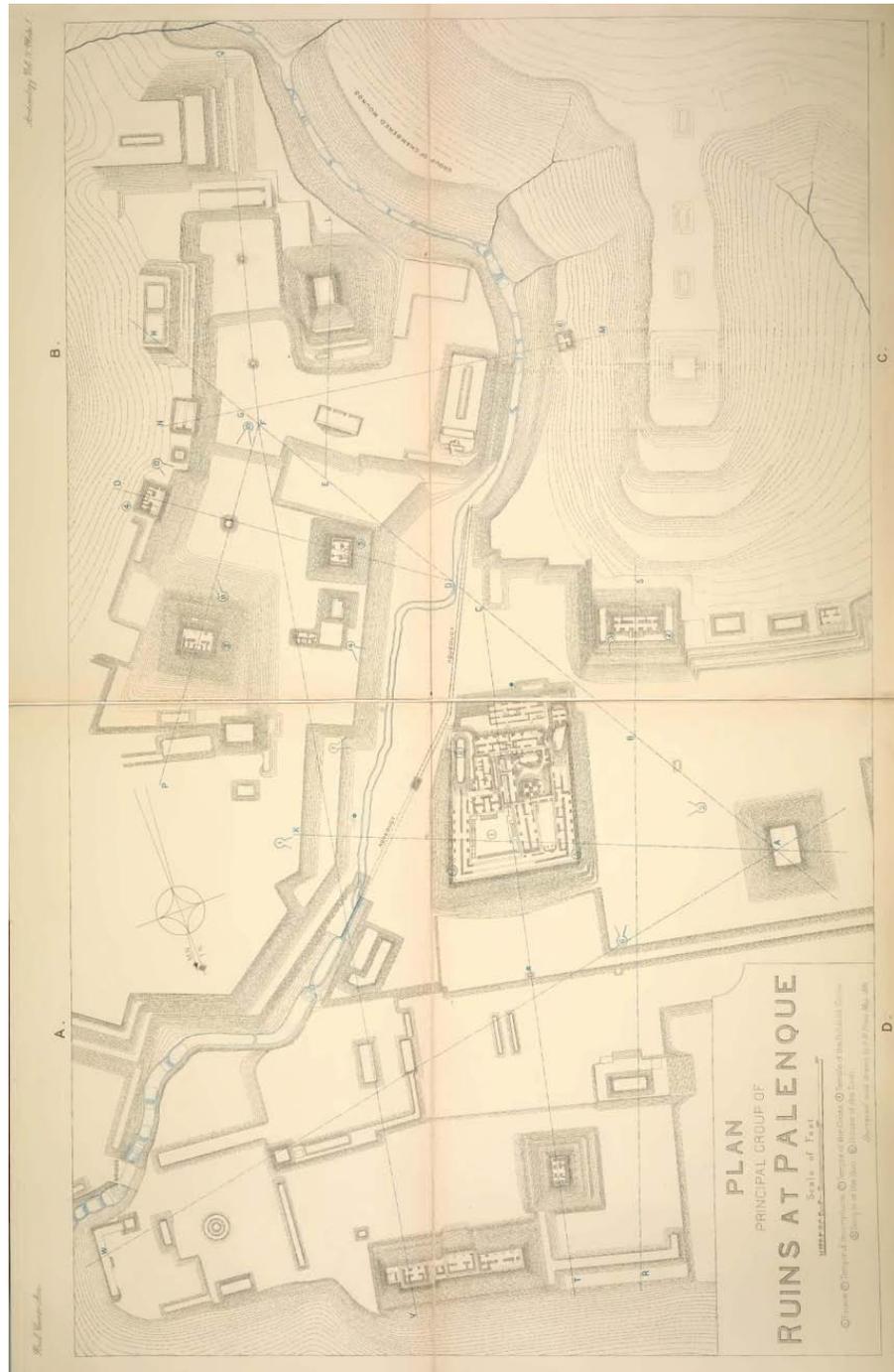




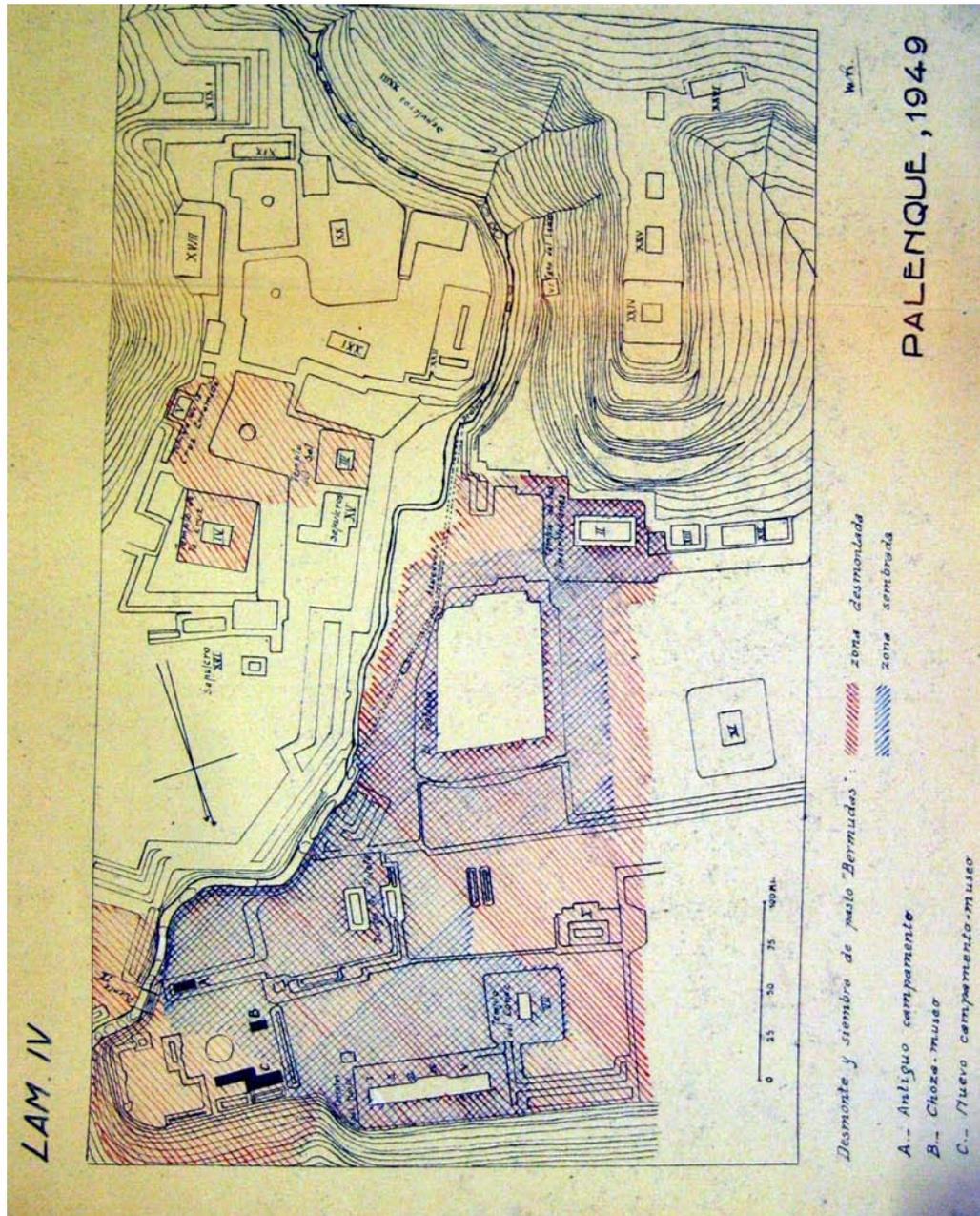
**Figure 1.6** From left to right, Golden, Angulo, Ruz, Segovia and Sanchez (Source: El Museo de Na Bolom)



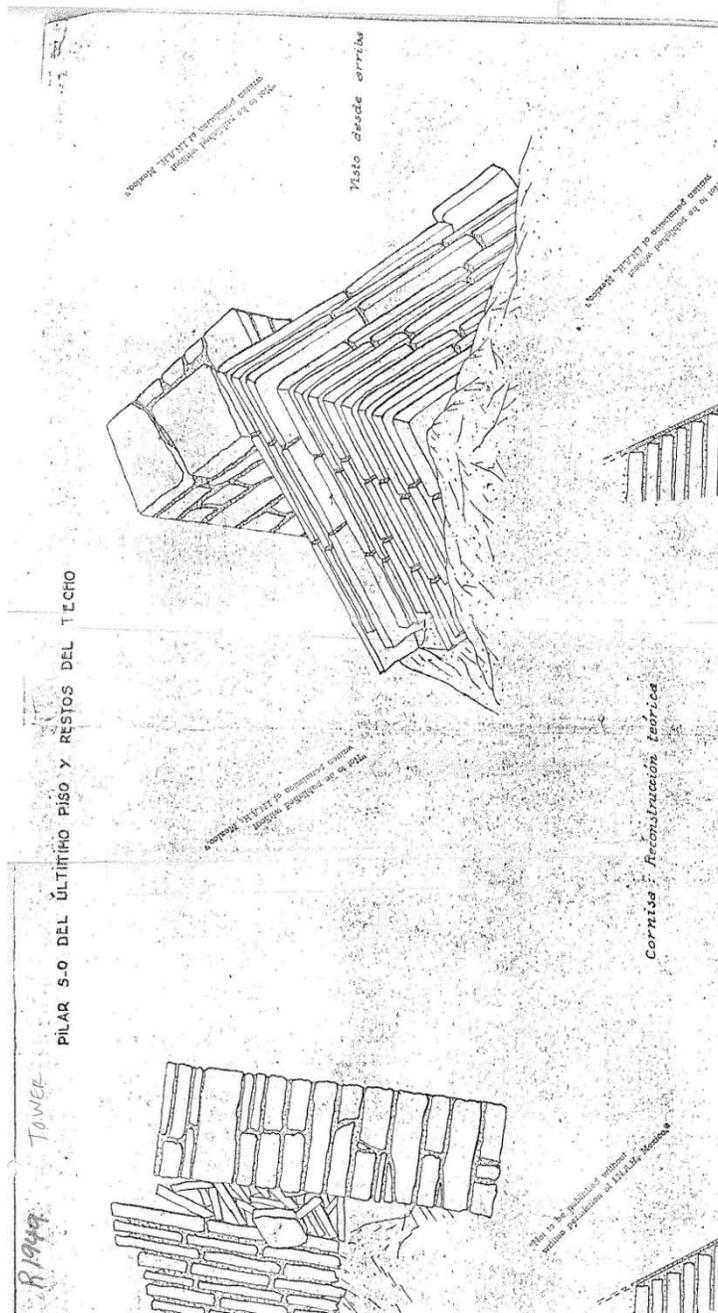
**Figure 1.7** Site Map of Palenque, México (Source: Ruz 1973:16)



**Figure 1.8** Maudslay Map (Source: Maudslay 1899: Archaeology, Vol 4, Plate 1)

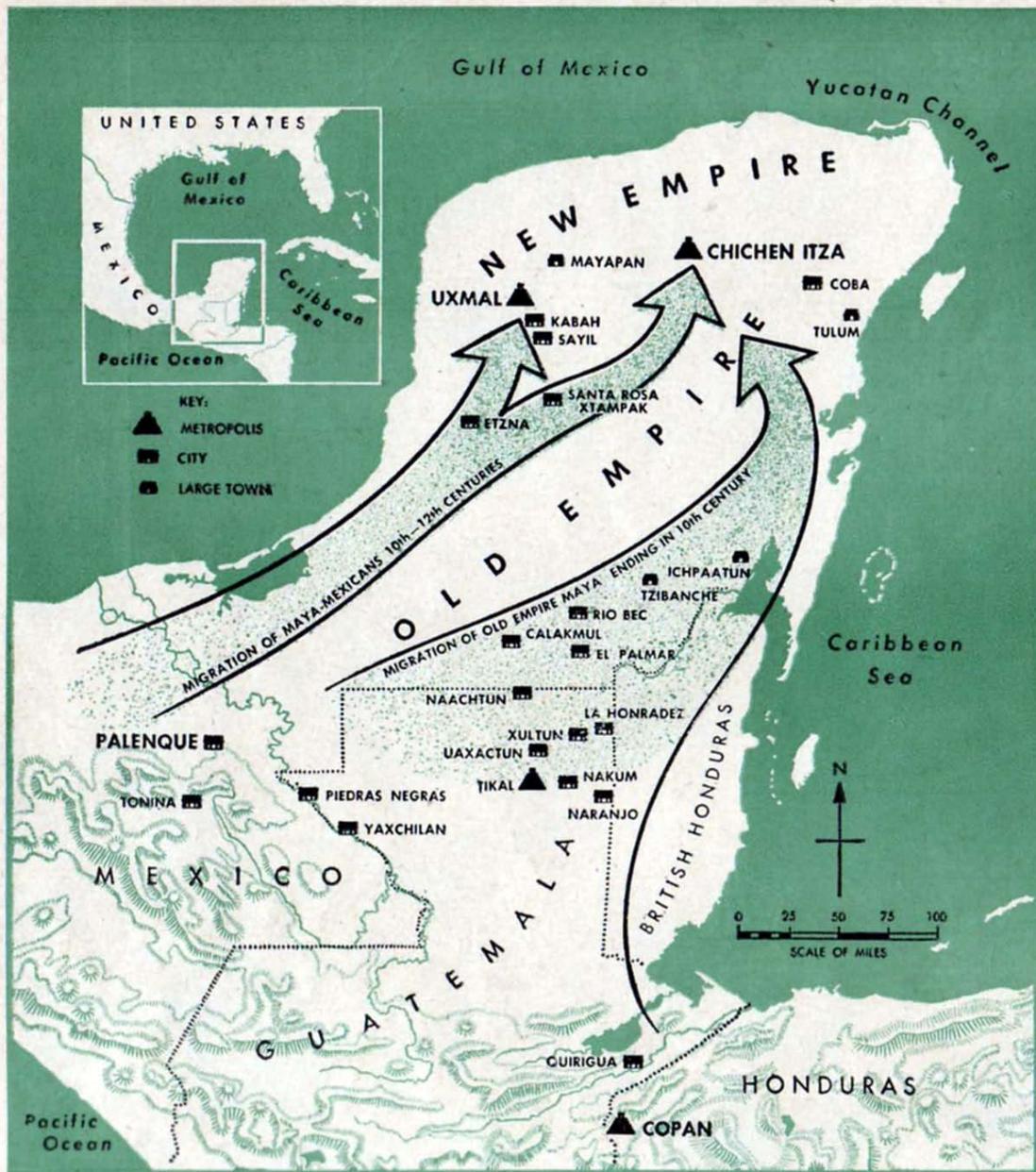


**Figure 1.9** Map drawn by Miguel Ruz designating lawn maintenance areas. (Source: AMNH Archives)



**Figure 1.10** Diagrams of the Dilapidated Tower (Source: Linda Schele Library Lam XIV)

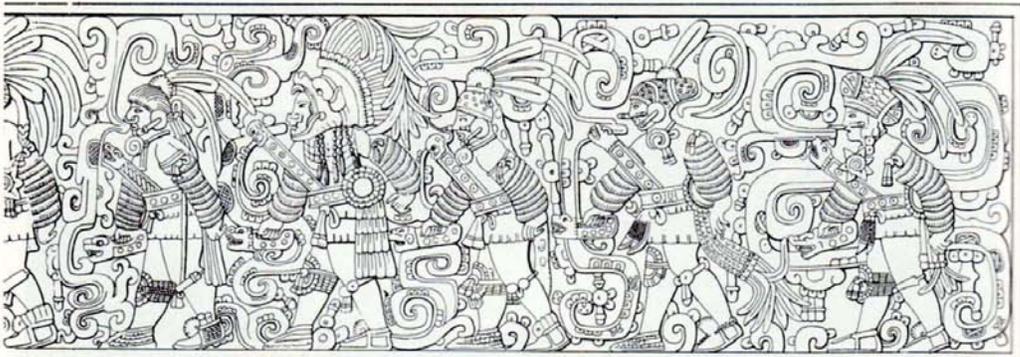
**THE MAYA** CONTINUED



**MAYA AREA** includes whole of Yucatan Peninsula and mountains to south. Only largest sites are shown. Arrows indicate migrations that converged in north to create New Empire; that of Old Empire peoples

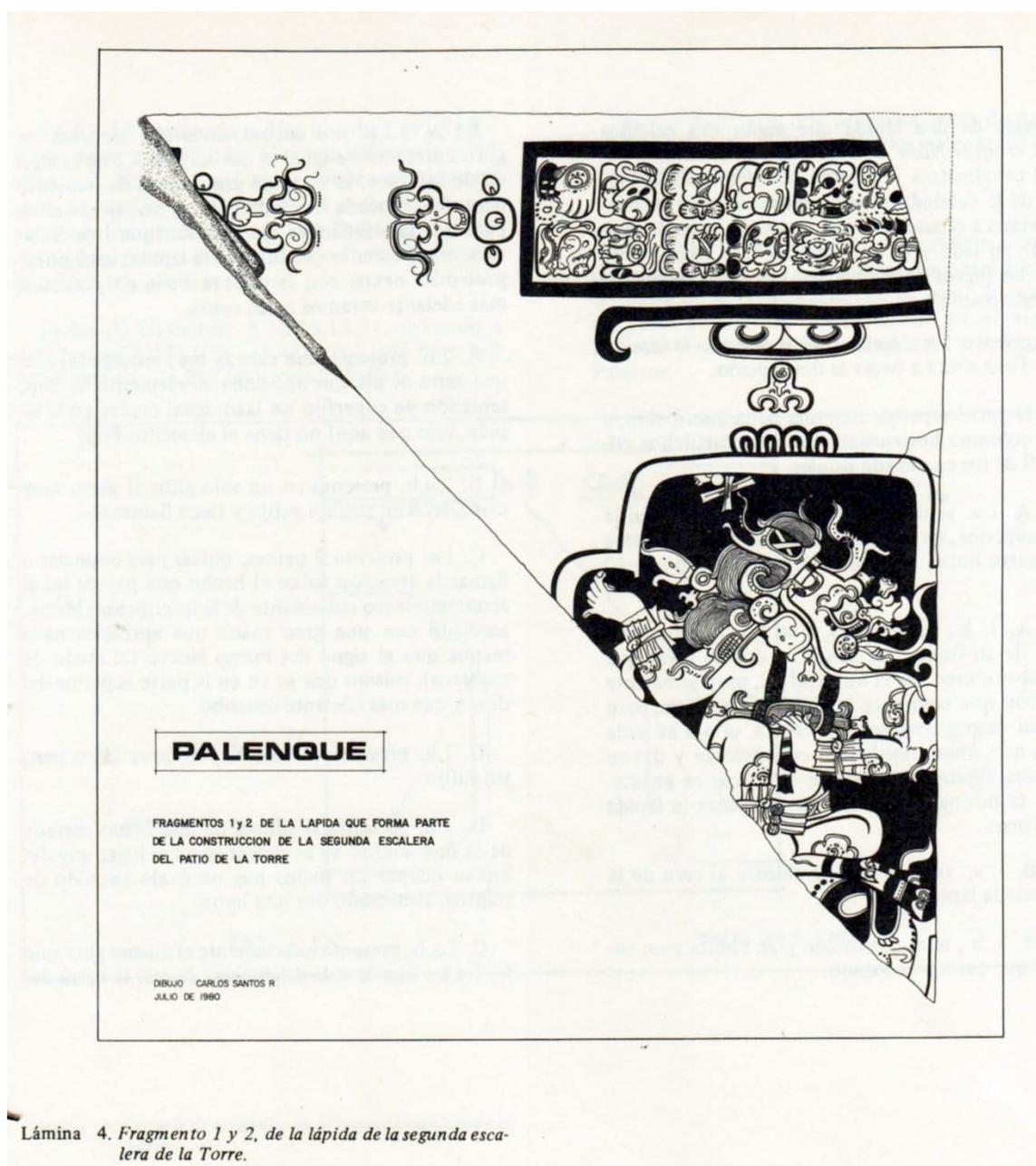
(right arrow) from their early centers in what is now Guatemala, and that of intruders (left arrow) from Mexican highlands. Old Empire covered entire area. New Empire existed only in northern tip of peninsula.

Figure 1.11 Geographic Area for Old and New Maya Empire (Source: Morley 1947:52)



Lám. 266.—Uno de los frisos en la banqueta del Juego de Pelota (el dibujo aparece dividido en tres partes). Al centro la pelota con un signo de la Muerte, a la cual se dirigen siete jugadores lujosamente ataviados con el traje típico del juego; el jugador que encabeza el grupo de la derecha, aparece arrodillado y sin cabeza, de su cuello sale la sangre convertida en seis serpientes y una guía con hojas y flores; el que está al frente del otro grupo lleva en la mano derecha un cuchillo y en la izquierda la cabeza del decapitado.—(Dibujo de Miguel Angel Fernández).

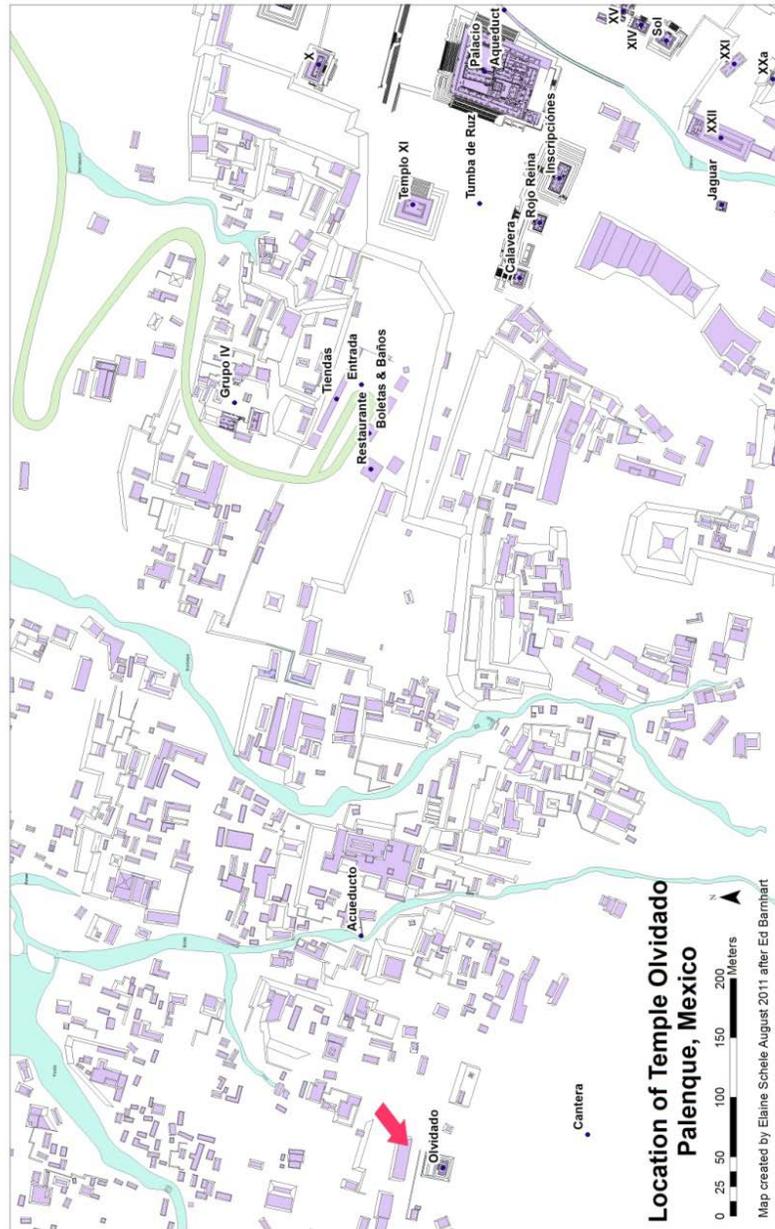
**Figure 2.1** Fernández Drawing of Chichén Itzá Ballcourt Friezes (Source: Marquina 1991:856)



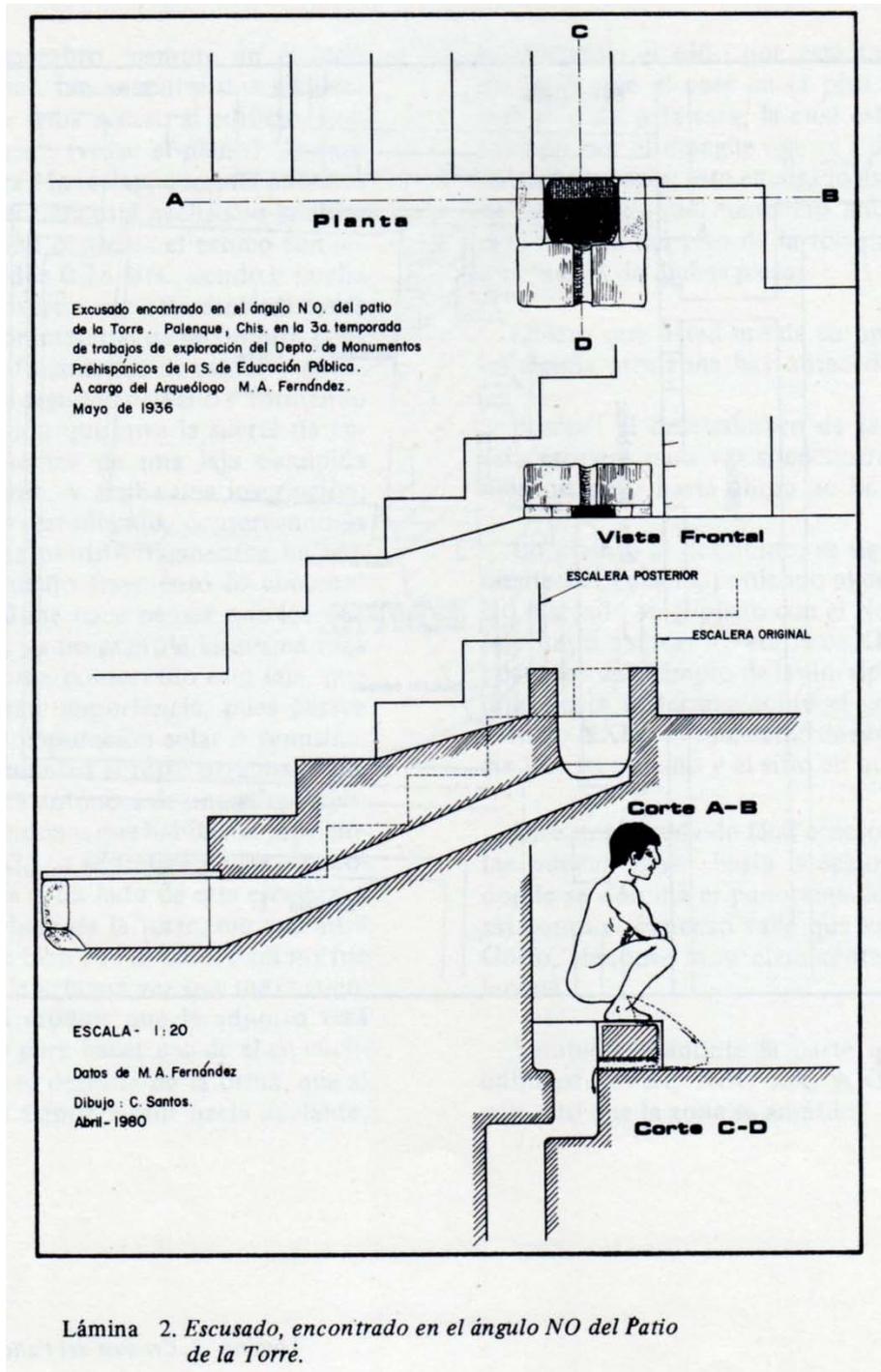
**Figure 2.2** Example of Fernández' Drawing Skills: Drawing of a carved stone found on the second stair of the Tower (Moll 1985:160)



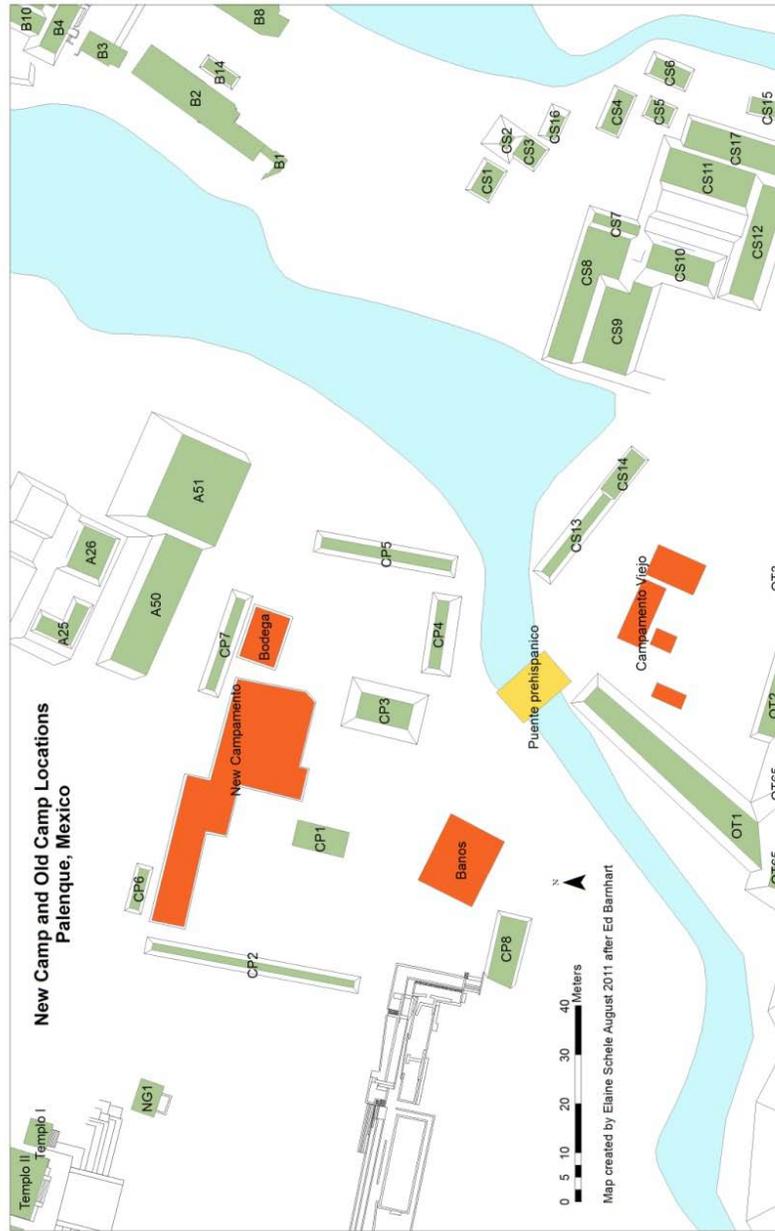
**Figure 2.3** The tower as workmen brought up wooden beams to support the door frames



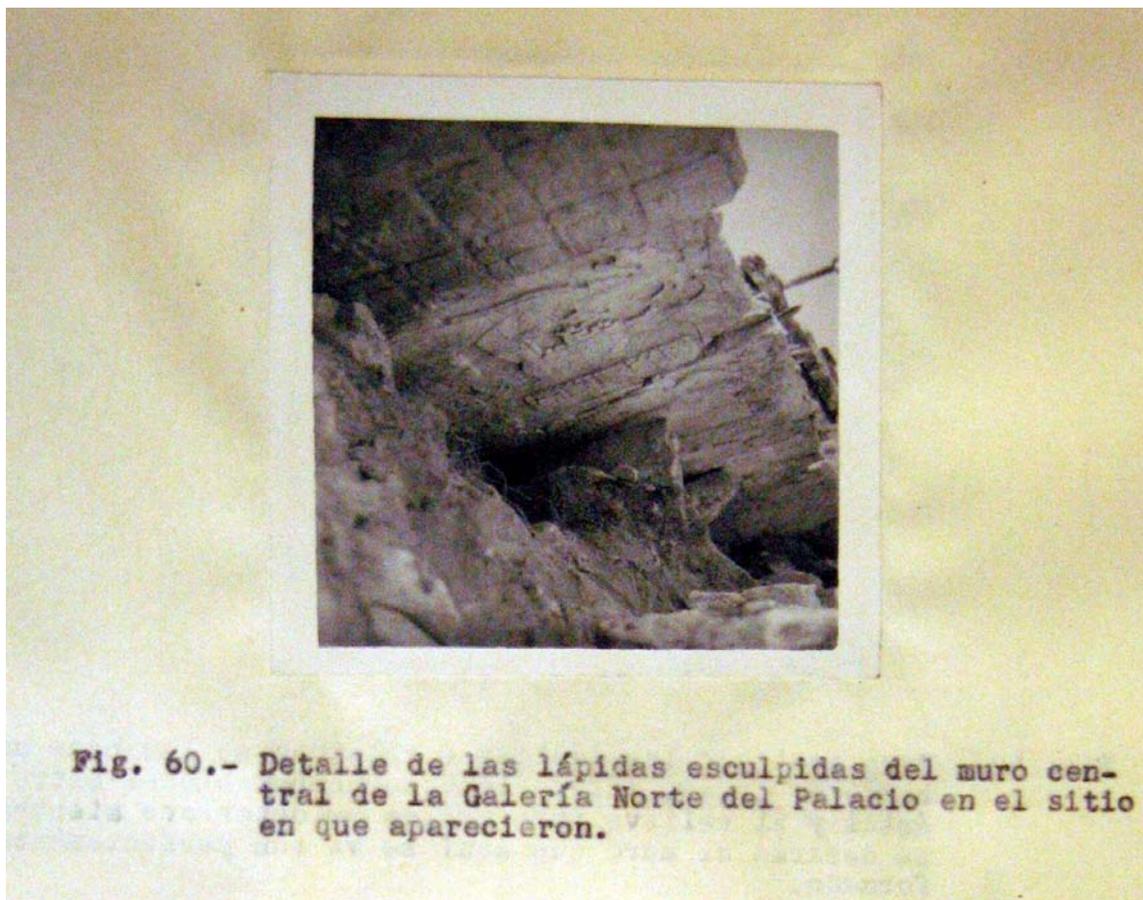
**Figure 2.4** Location of Temple Olvidado (Source: Elaine Schele)



**Figure 2.5** Fernández Drawing of the Toilet and How it Might Have Functioned (Source: Moll 1985:150)



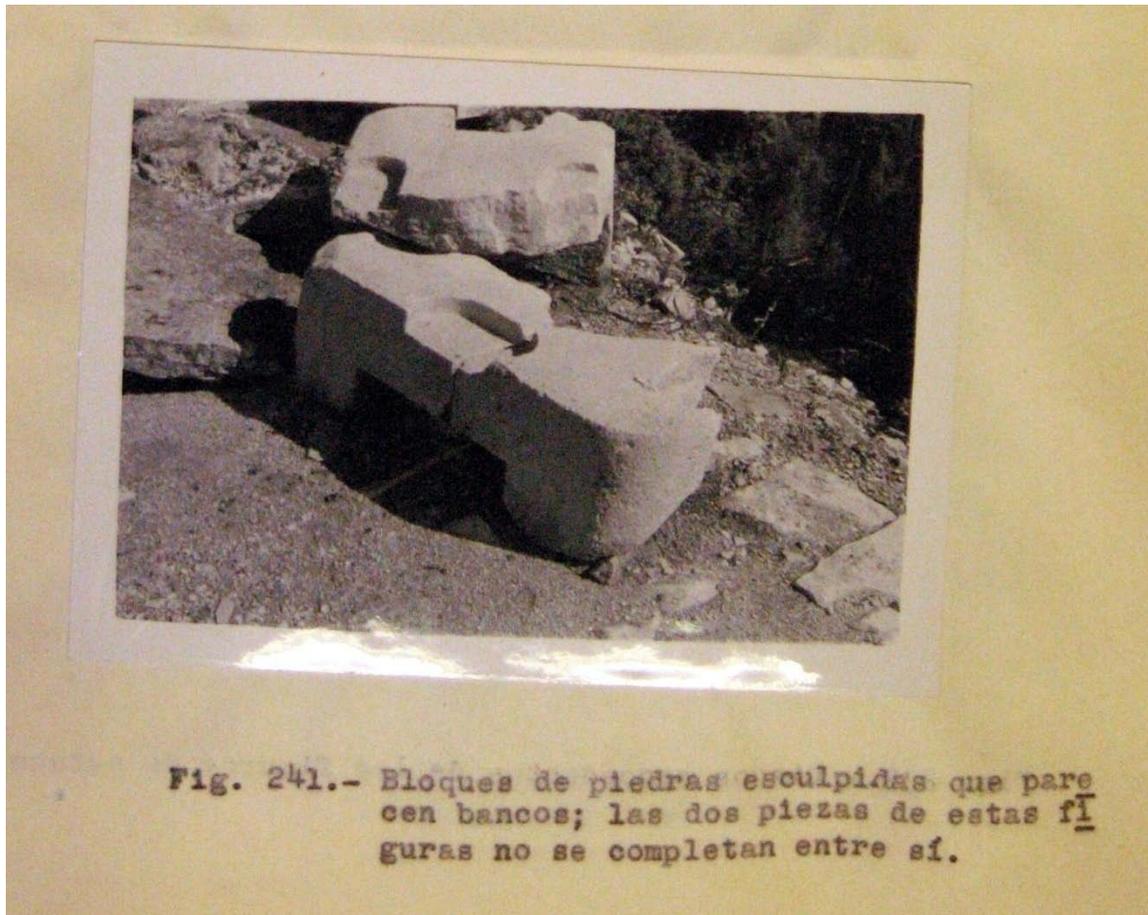
**Figure 6.1** Location of the new camp building and the old camp (Source: Elaine Schele)



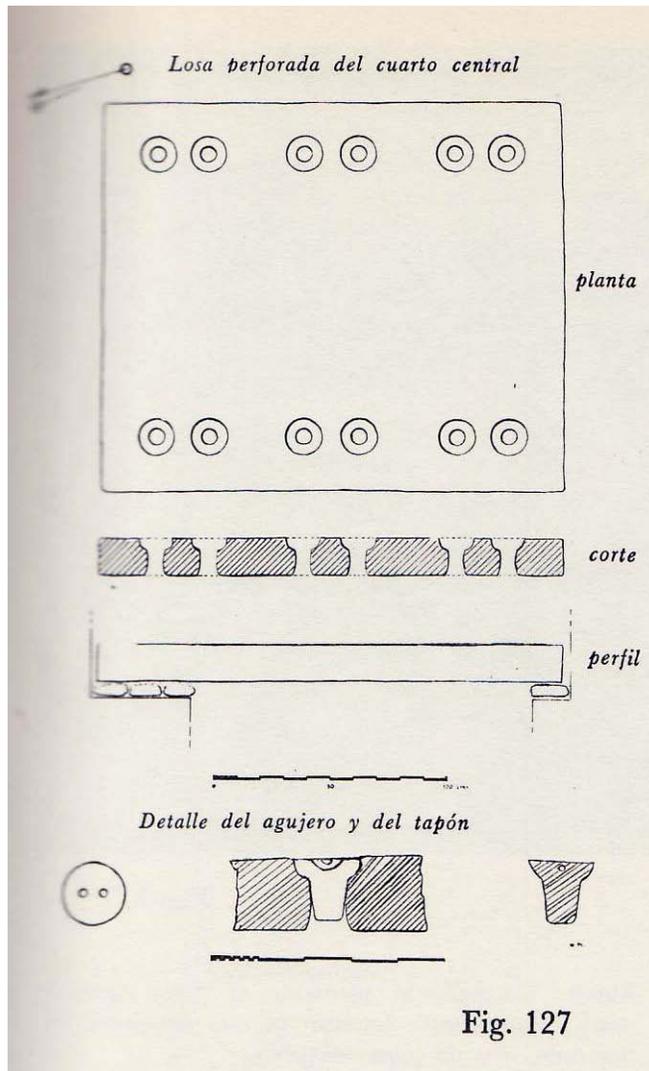
**Figure 6.2** The Palace Tablet as it was seen when first discovered (Source: AMNH Archives - Ruz 1949:104)



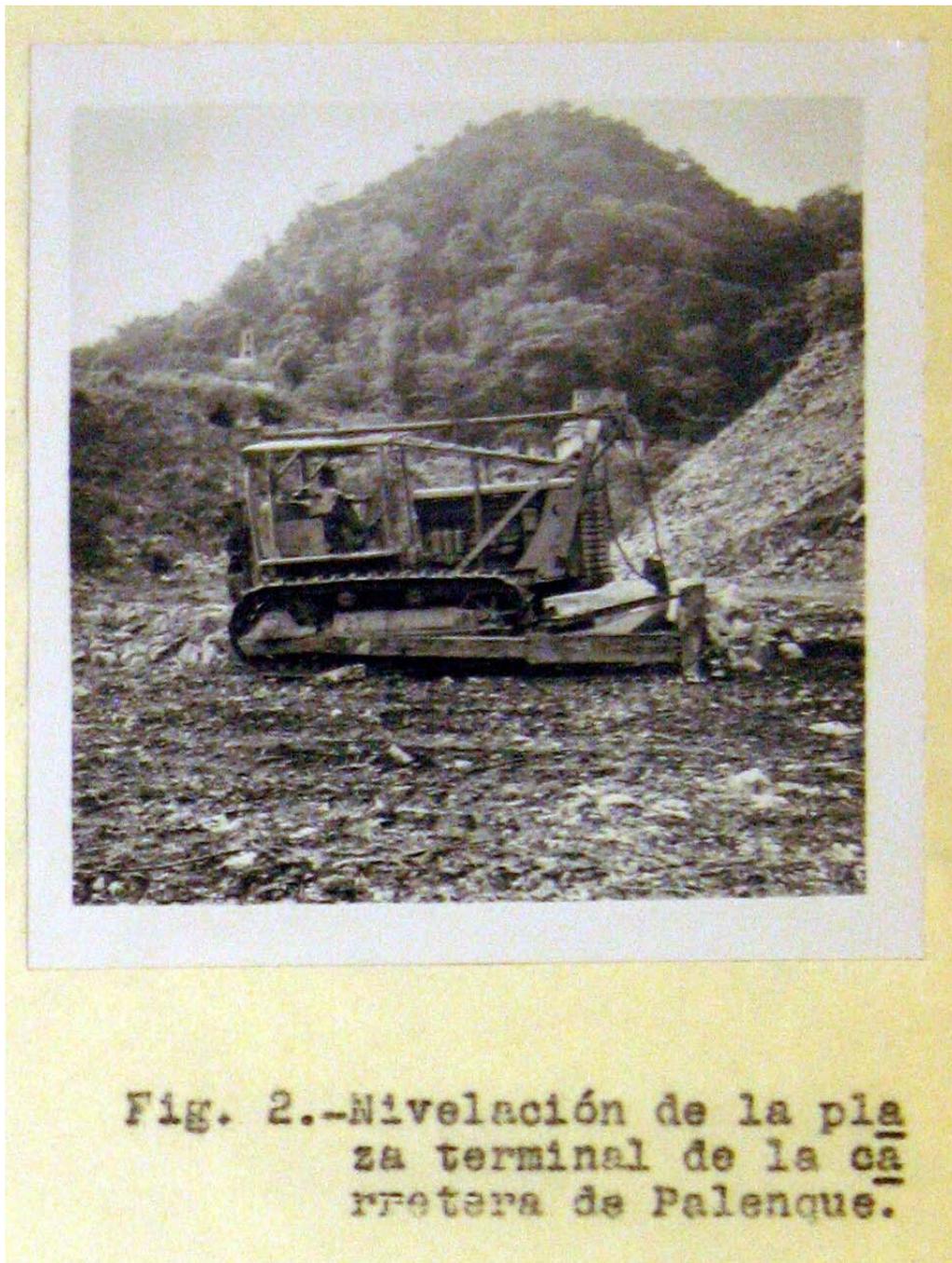
**Figure 6.3** Trench #1 at the Temple of the Inscriptions (Source: AMNH Archives - Ruz 1949:157)



**Figure 6.4** Fragments of a Carved Bench found in the Body of the Pyramid. (Source AMNH-Ruz 1949:192)



**Figure 6.5** Drawing Displaying the Arrangement of Holes in the Cover to the Temple of the Inscriptions Stairway (Source: Ruz 1973:124)



**Figure 7.1** Bulldozer at the Foot of the Temple of the Inscriptions (Source AMNH Archives - Ruz 1950)

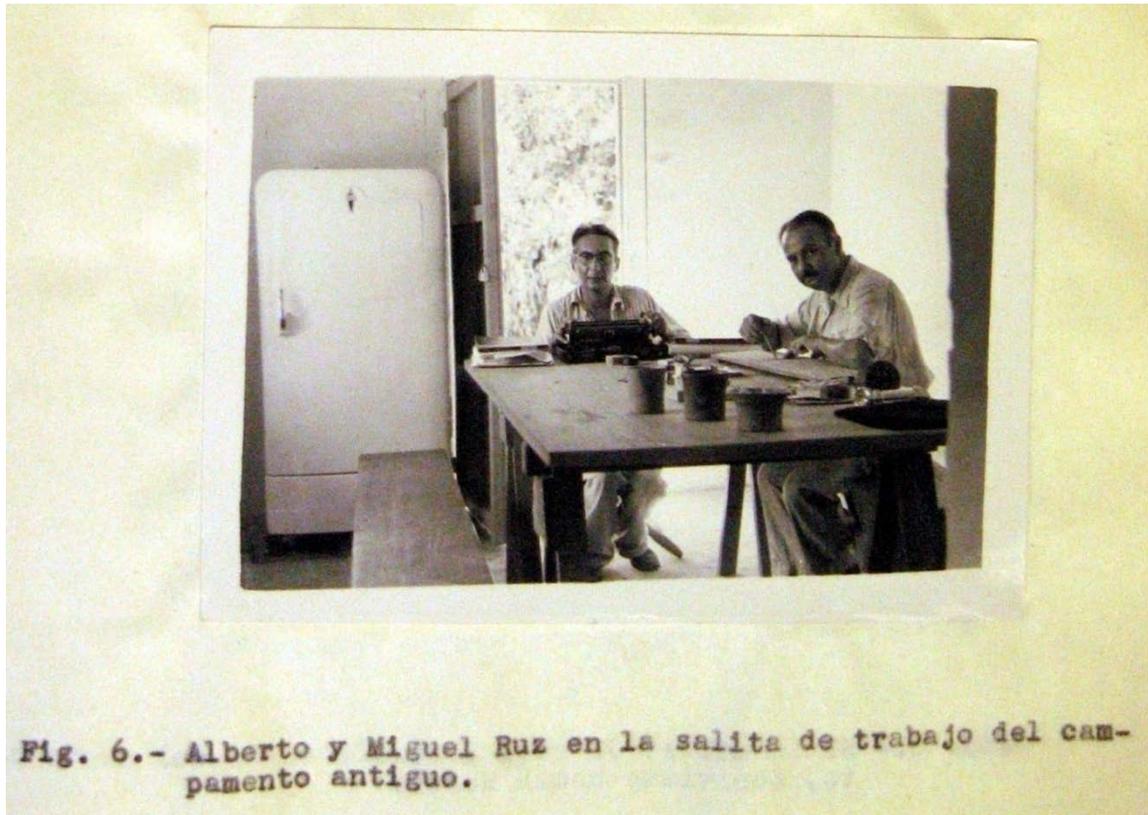


Fig. 6.- Alberto y Miguel Ruz en la salita de trabajo del campamento antiguo.

**Figure 7.2** Alberto and his Brother, Miguel Ruz Working at a Table in the Old Camp Building (Source: AMNH Archives - Ruz 1950)



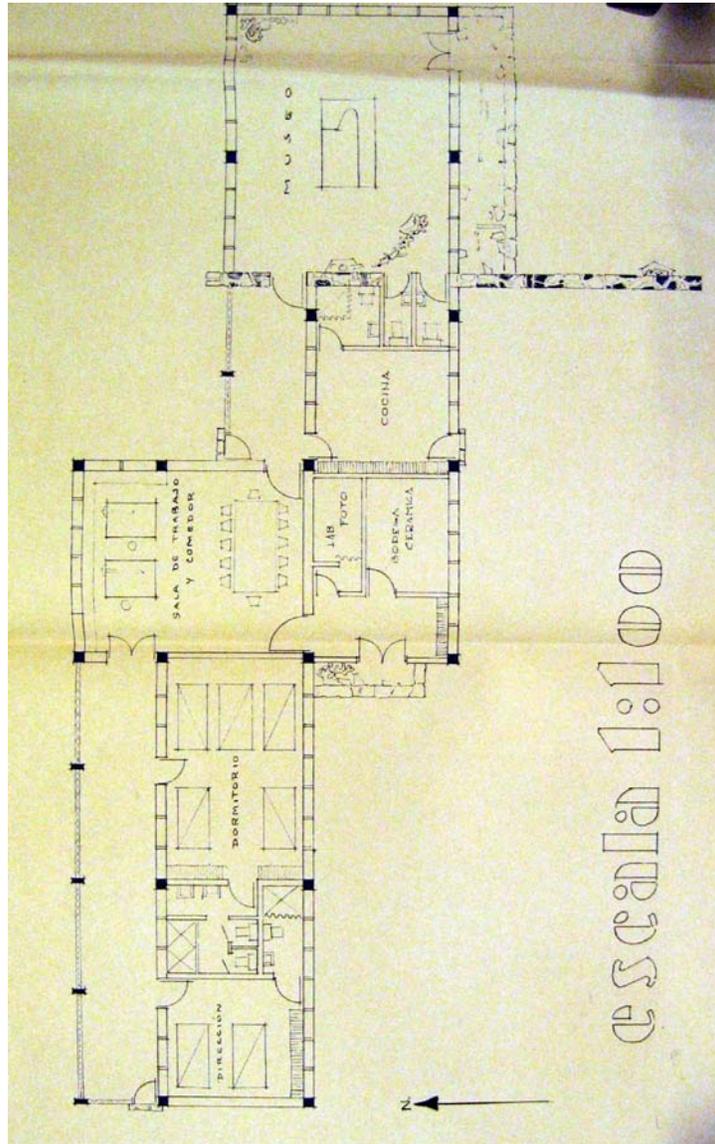


Fig. 140



Fig. 141

**Figure 7.4** Tablet of the Slaves Being Carried and Loaded into a Truck for Transport  
(Source AMNH Archives - Zavala 1950)



**Figure 7.5** Architectural Plan for the Museum and Camp Building by Macgregor  
(Source: AMNH Archives - Ruz 1950)

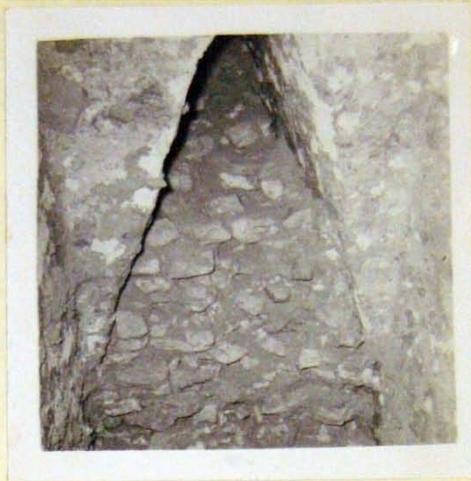


Fig. 31.-  
Descanso de la escalera interior  
del Templo de las Inscripciones,  
mostrando el relleno de piedras  
y barro.

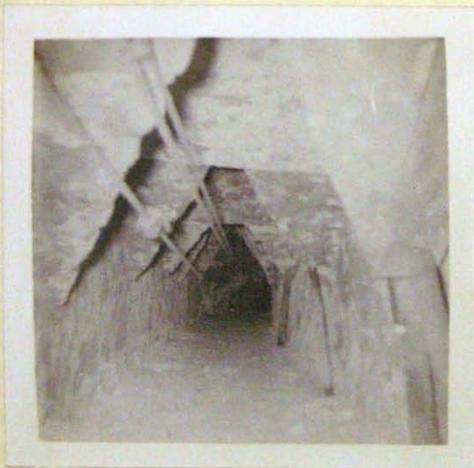


Fig. 32.-  
Primer tramo de la escalera in-  
terior del Templo de las Ins-  
cripciones, con el malacate uti-  
lizado para sacar el relleno.  
(visto desde arriba).

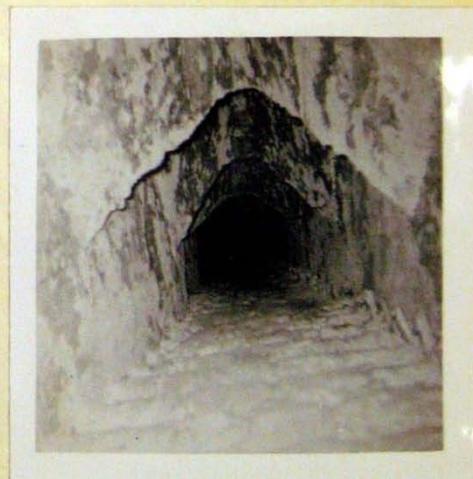


Fig. 33.-  
Escalera interior del Templo  
de las Inscripciones (vista -  
desde abajo) y mostrando a la  
derecha el adorno escalonado  
que sobrecala de las gradas..

**Figure 7.6** Three Photos of the Staircase and an Example of one of the Walls they had to dismantle (Source: AMNH Archives - Ruz:1950)

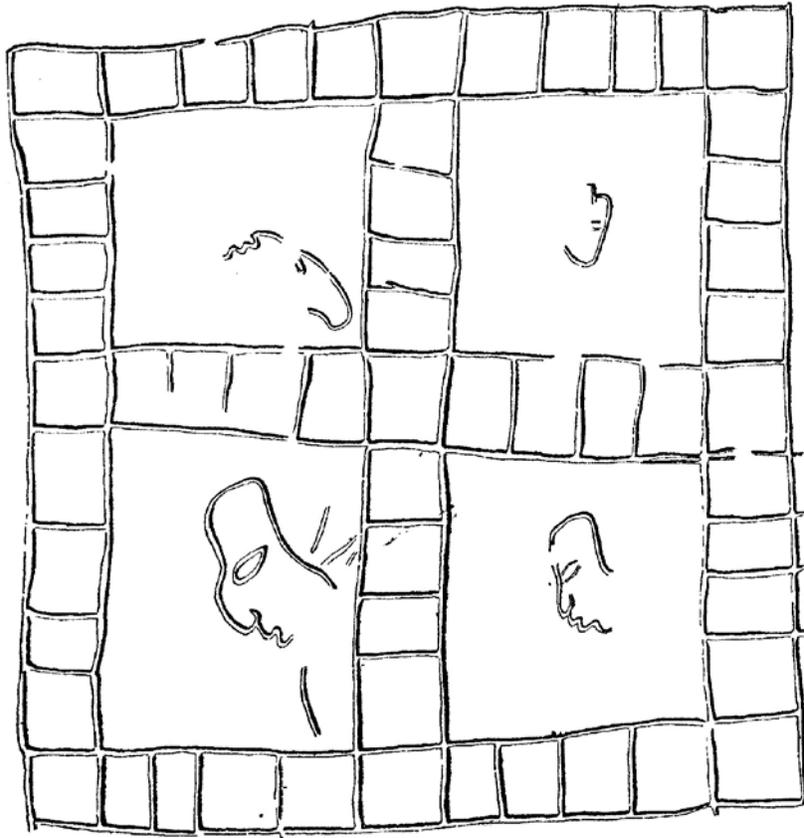


Fig. 2. Grabado de una de las losas del piso de El Templo de las Inscripciones.

**Figure 7.7** Carving on the Floor of the Temple of the Inscriptions in the form of a Square  
(Source: Ruz 1951:27) Season 1950

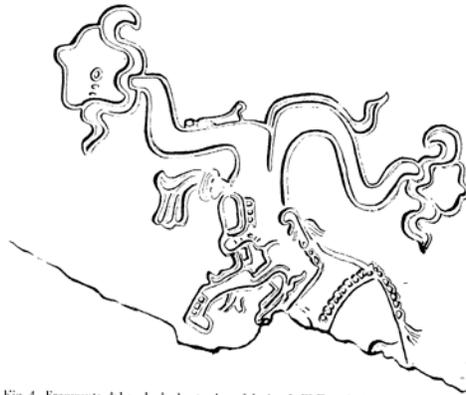
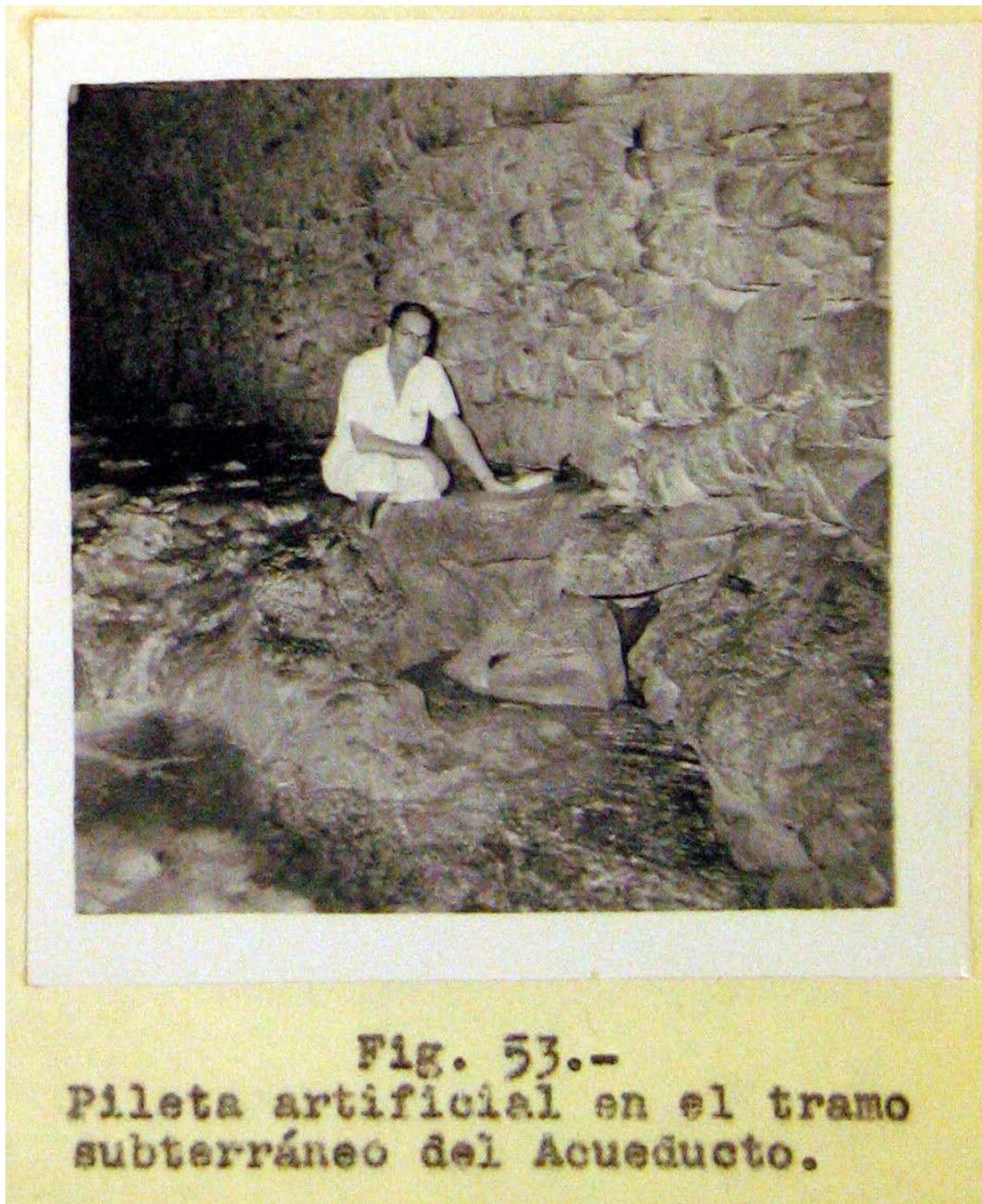


Fig. 4. Fragmento del grabado de otra losa del piso de El Templo de las Inscripciones.

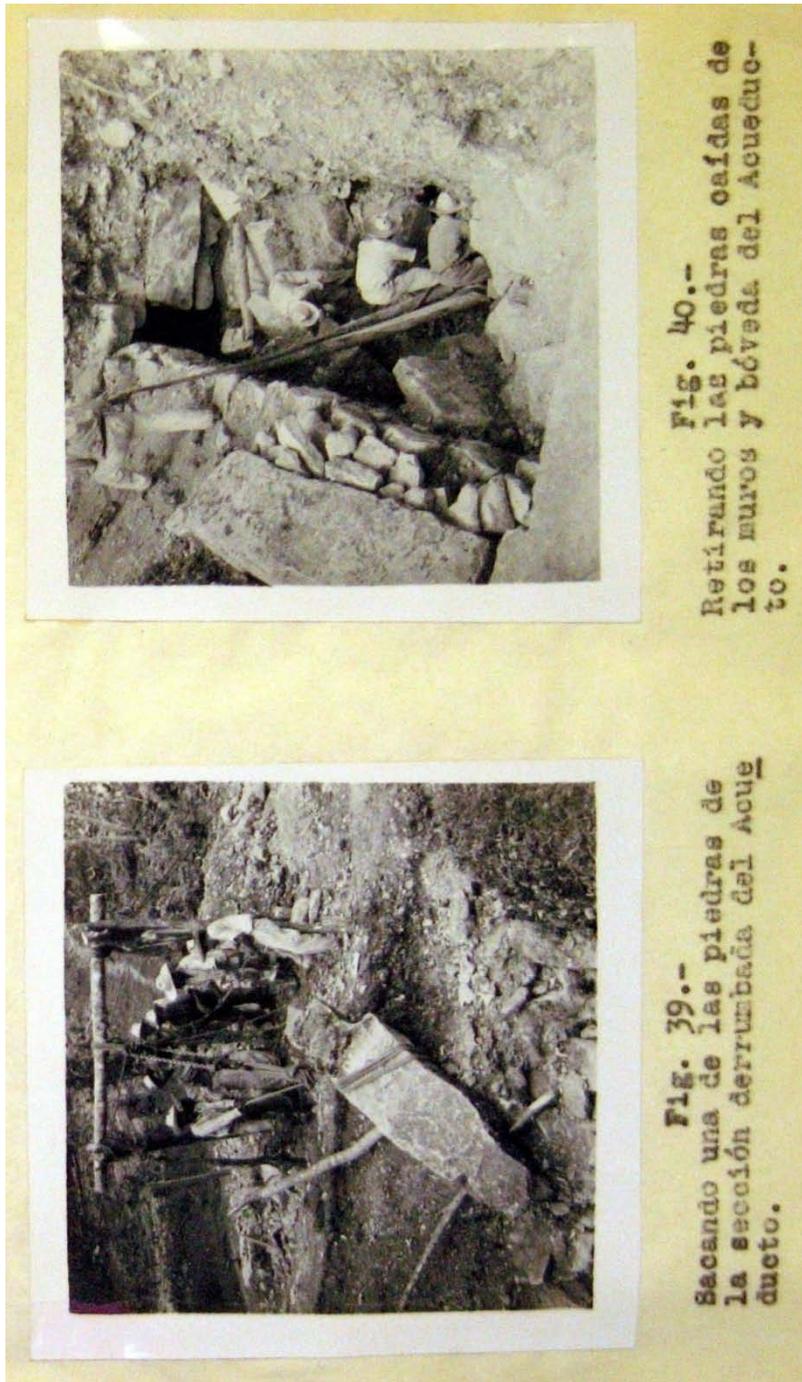
**Figure 7.8** Third Carving Found on the Inscriptions' Floor (Source: Ruz 1951:29) Season 1950



**Figure 7.9** Drawing by David Stuart, of the same carving as above (Season 1950)



**Figure 7.10** Ruz Sitting inside the Aqueduct (Source: AMAH Archives - Ruz: 1950)



**Figure 7.11** Workmen Clearing the Collapsed Aqueduct of Debris (Source: AMNH Archives - Ruz 1950)

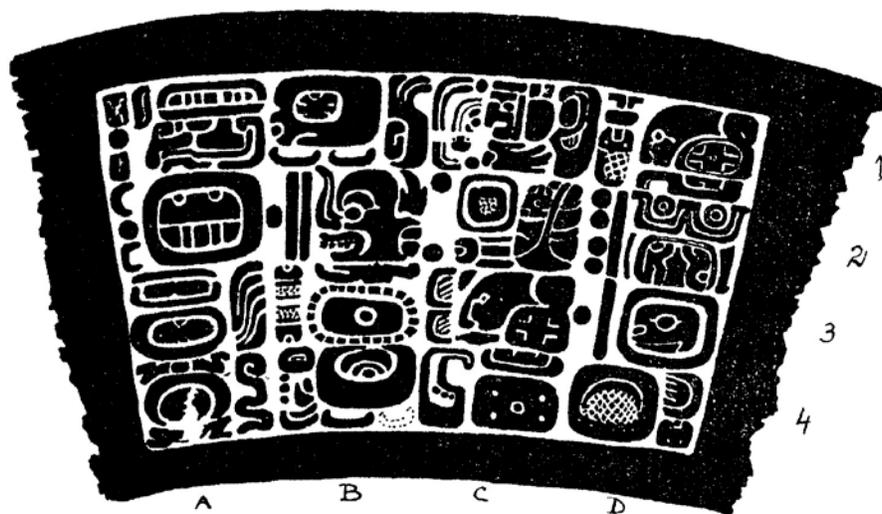
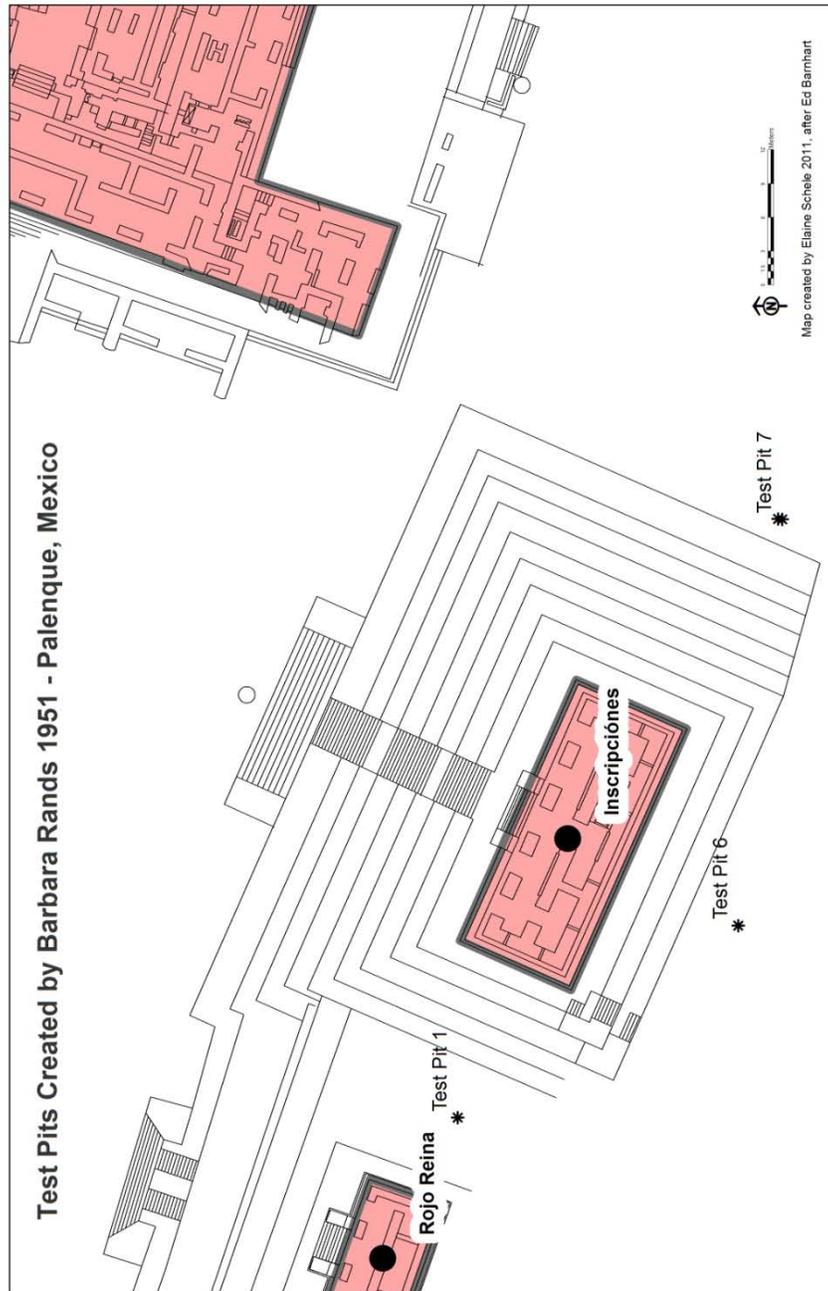


Fig. 14. Decoración del vaso de barro negro encontrado en el Grupo III de Palenque.

**Figure 7.12** Drawing of a Finely Made Black Vase that Zavala Found in Group III, the Murciélagos Group (Source: Ruz 1952:40)



**Figure 8.1** Test Pits Created by Barbara Rands 1951 (Source: Map Created by Elaine Schele)



Fig. 9.- Colando traves de concreto.



Fig.10.- Preparación del armazón para el techo.

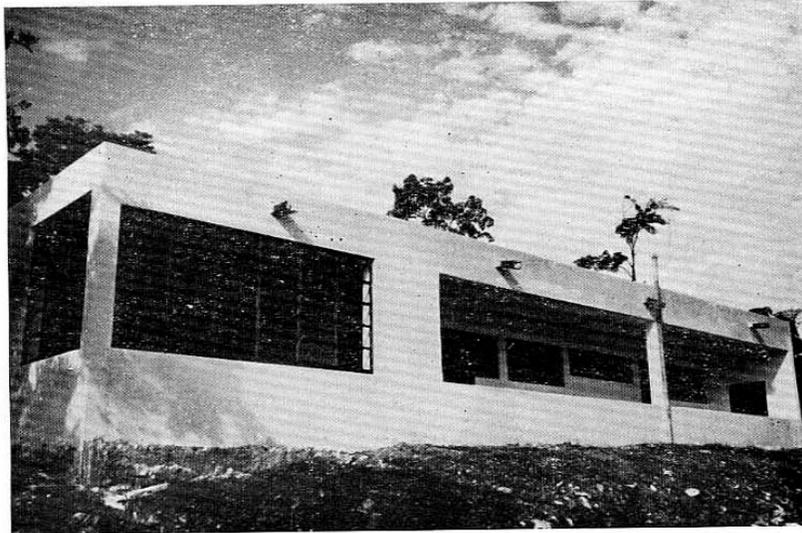


Fig. 11.- Armazón para la losa de concreto.

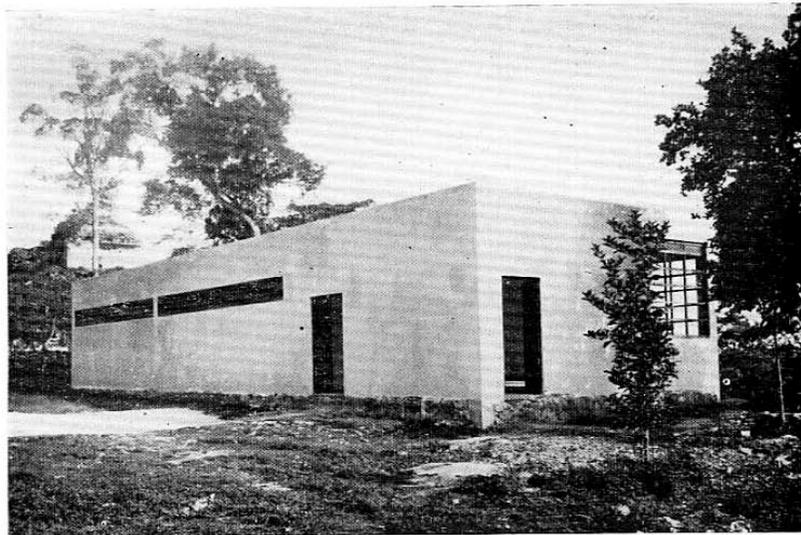


Fig.12.- Preparación de la mezcla de cemento, arena y grava.

**Figure 8.2** Photos of Construction Work for the Camp Building Performed in 1950  
(Source: AMNH Archives - Ruz 1950)

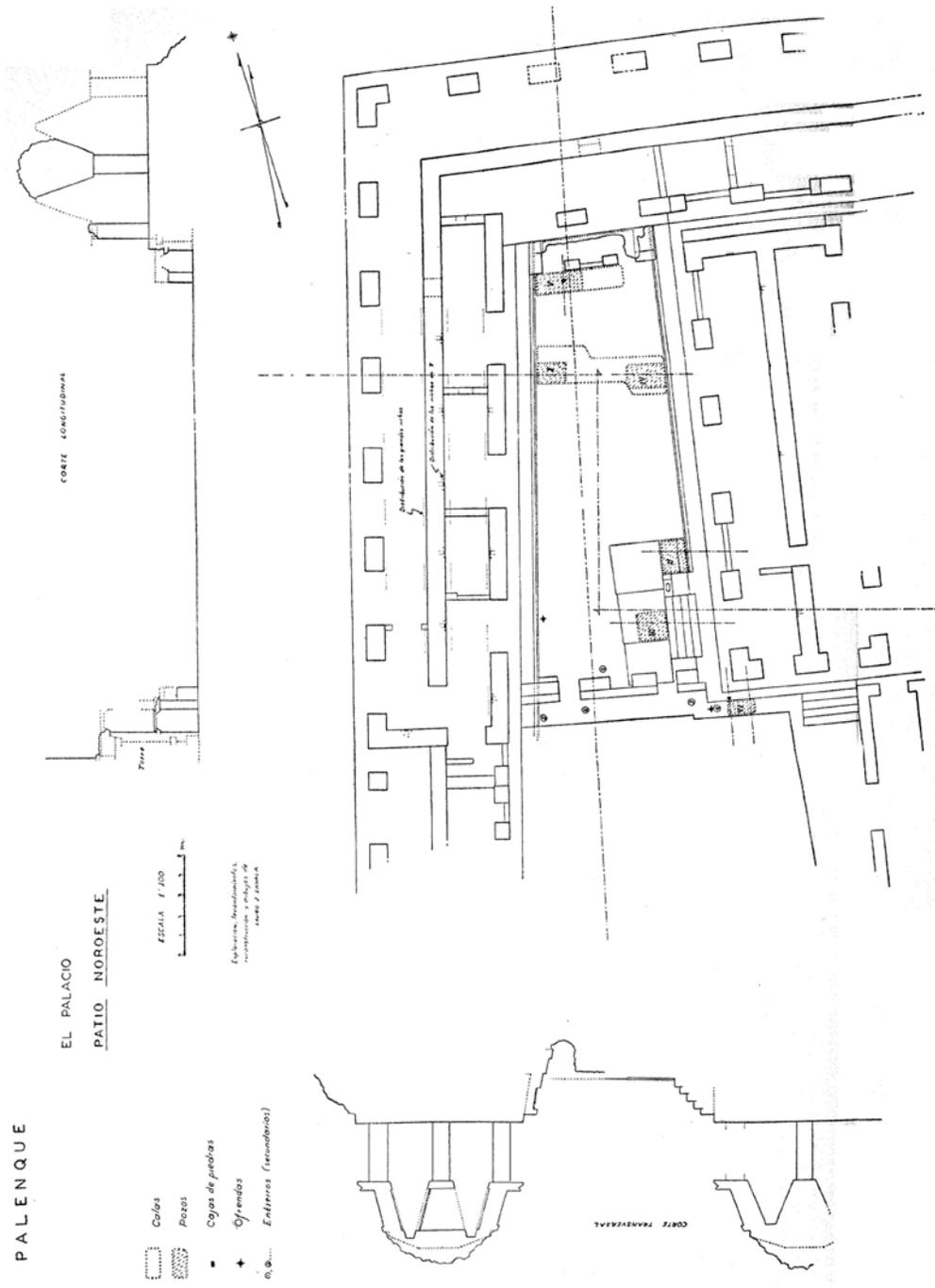


Lám. I. El nuevo campamento, frente al norte.



Lám. II. El nuevo campamento, lado sur.

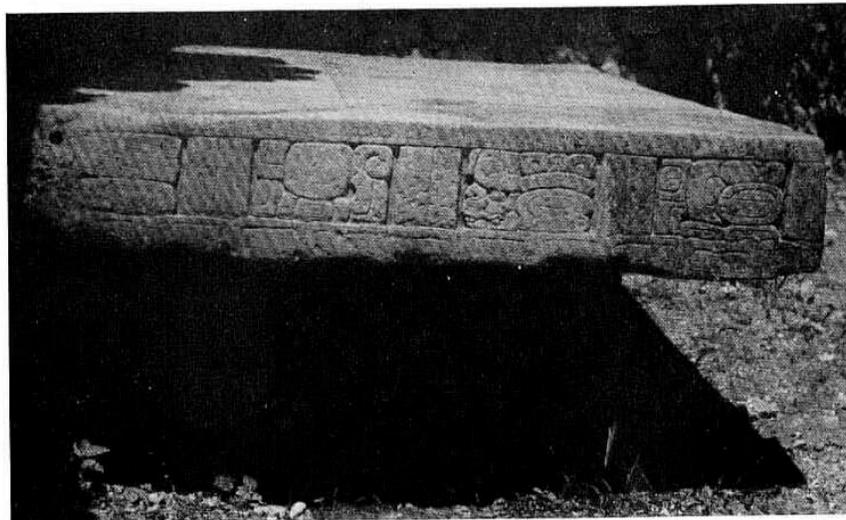
**Figure 8.3** Two pictures of the camp building at the end of the 1951 season (Source: Ruz 1952)



**Figure 8.4** Sáenz' Map of the SE Palace Patio Showing Trenches, Test Pits Offerings and Secondary Burials (Source: Ruz 1952)



Lám. XXV. Lado este del altar descubierto en la galería exterior de los "Subterráneos" en El Palacio (se lee una rueda calendárica "12 *Ahau*, 8 *Ceh*").



Lám. XXVI. Lado oeste del mismo altar, con inscripción jeroglífica.

**Figure 8.5** Two photos of the "altar" found in the exterior gallery of the subterráneos (Source: Ruz 1952)

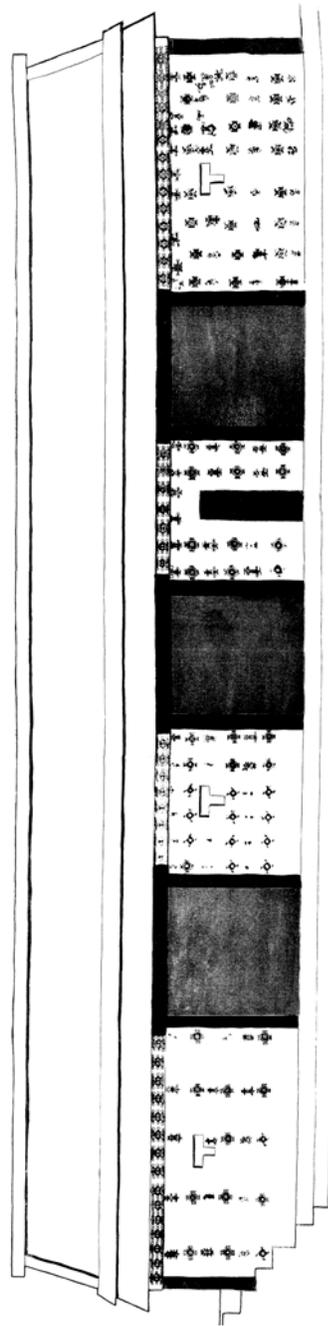


Fig. 1. Reproducción de los Motivos del Exterior de la Casa E.

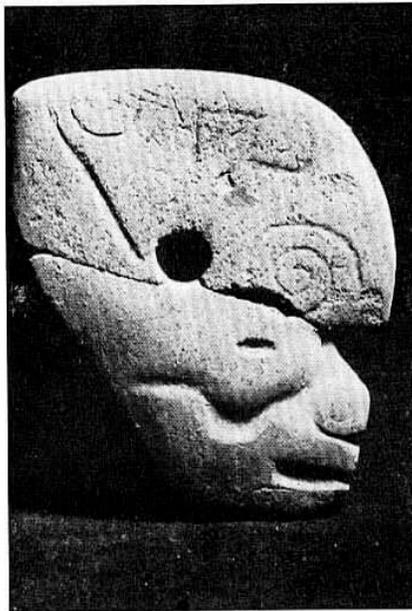
**Figure 8.6** Agustin Vilagra's Reproduction of the Motif's Found on the Outside of House E (Source: Ruz 1952 Figure I; 1949 Season)



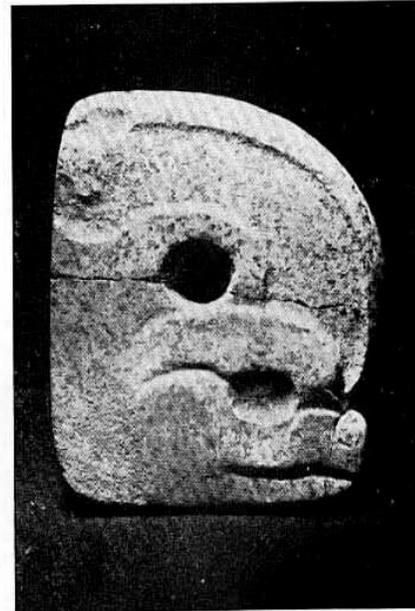
a. Hacha votiva representando un anciano, cuyo cráneo es una tortuga.



b. Hacha votiva con realista representación humana.



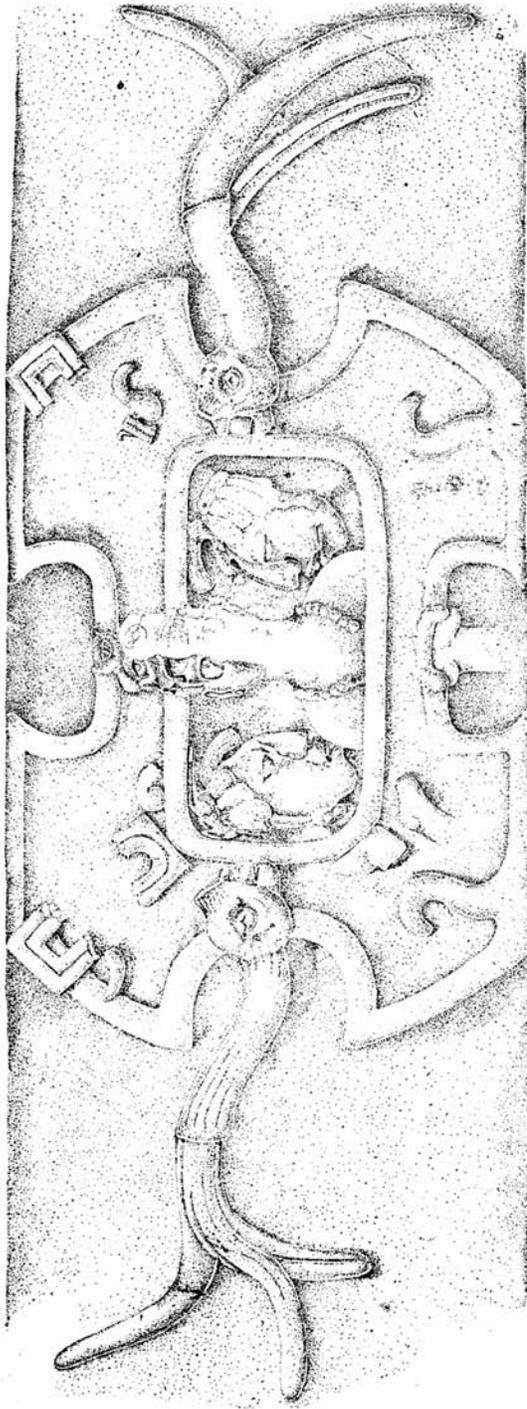
c. Hacha votiva con cara de mono.



d. Hacha votiva que parece representar la cara de un jabali.

Lám. XXIX

**Figure 8.7** Artifacts from the Tononac region of the Atlantic coast (Source: Ruz 1952)



**Figure 8.8** Drawing of an Intricate Medallion found on the Wall of the NW Palace Courtyard (Source: Ruz 1952:Fig 7)



Lám. VI. Entrada de la escalera interior desde el santuario de Las Inscripciones; la tapa perforada ha sido desplazada para dejar libres los peldaños superiores.

**Figure 9.1** A View Down into the Interior Stairs of the Temple of the Inscriptions  
(Source: Ruz 1954)

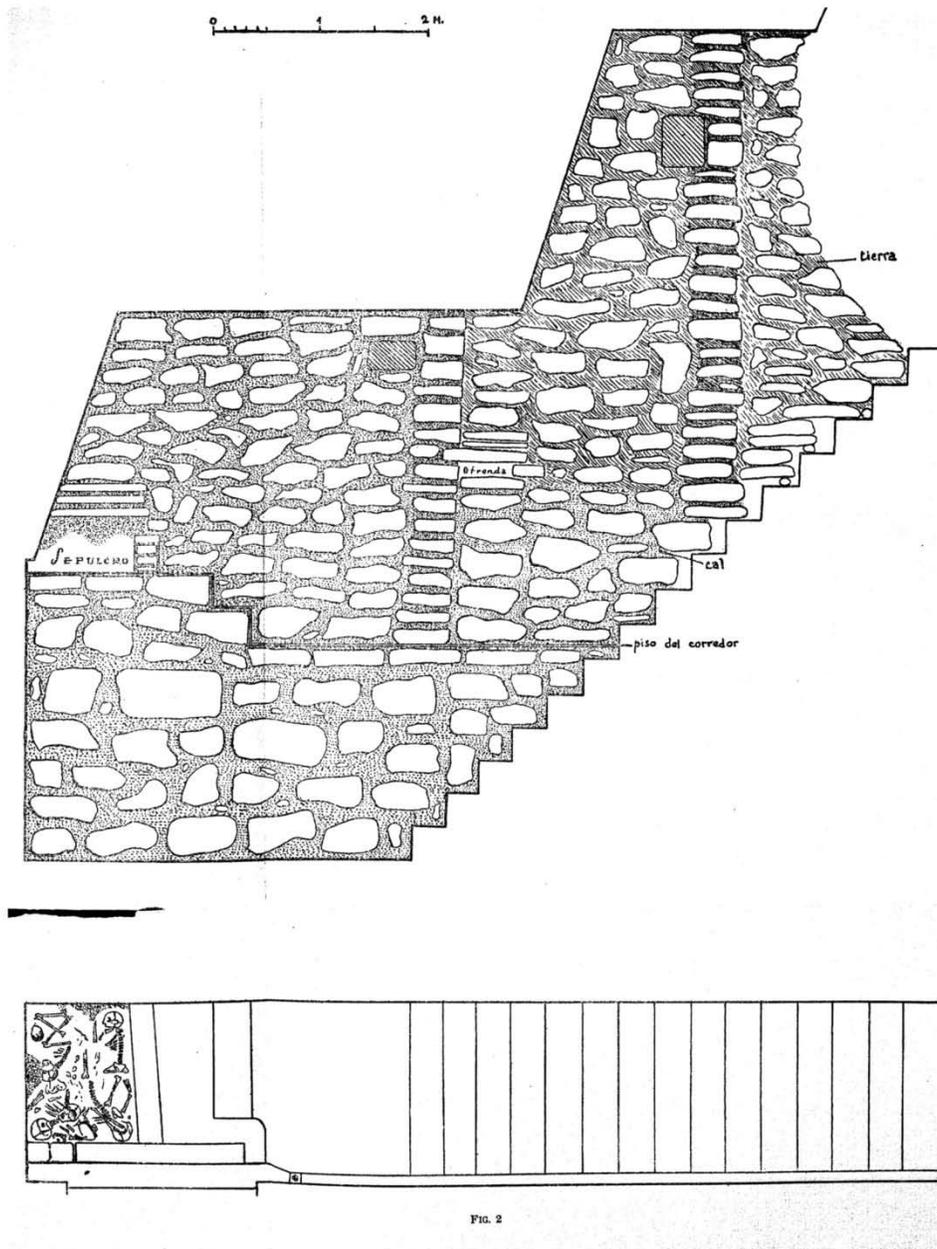


FIG. 2

**Figure 9.2** Drawings of (Top) the Last Two Walls Torn Down as they Proceeded Down the Stairs (Bottom) The Last Few Steps and Corridor (Source: Ruz 1954:110-B)

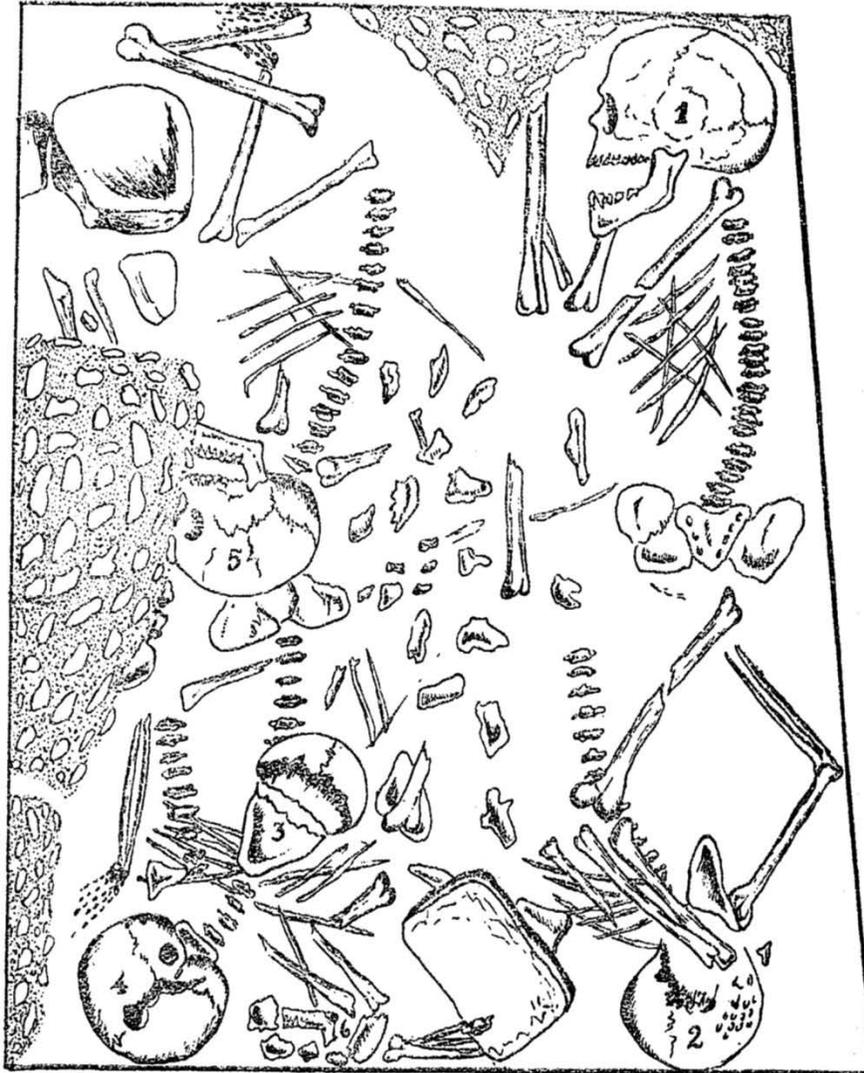
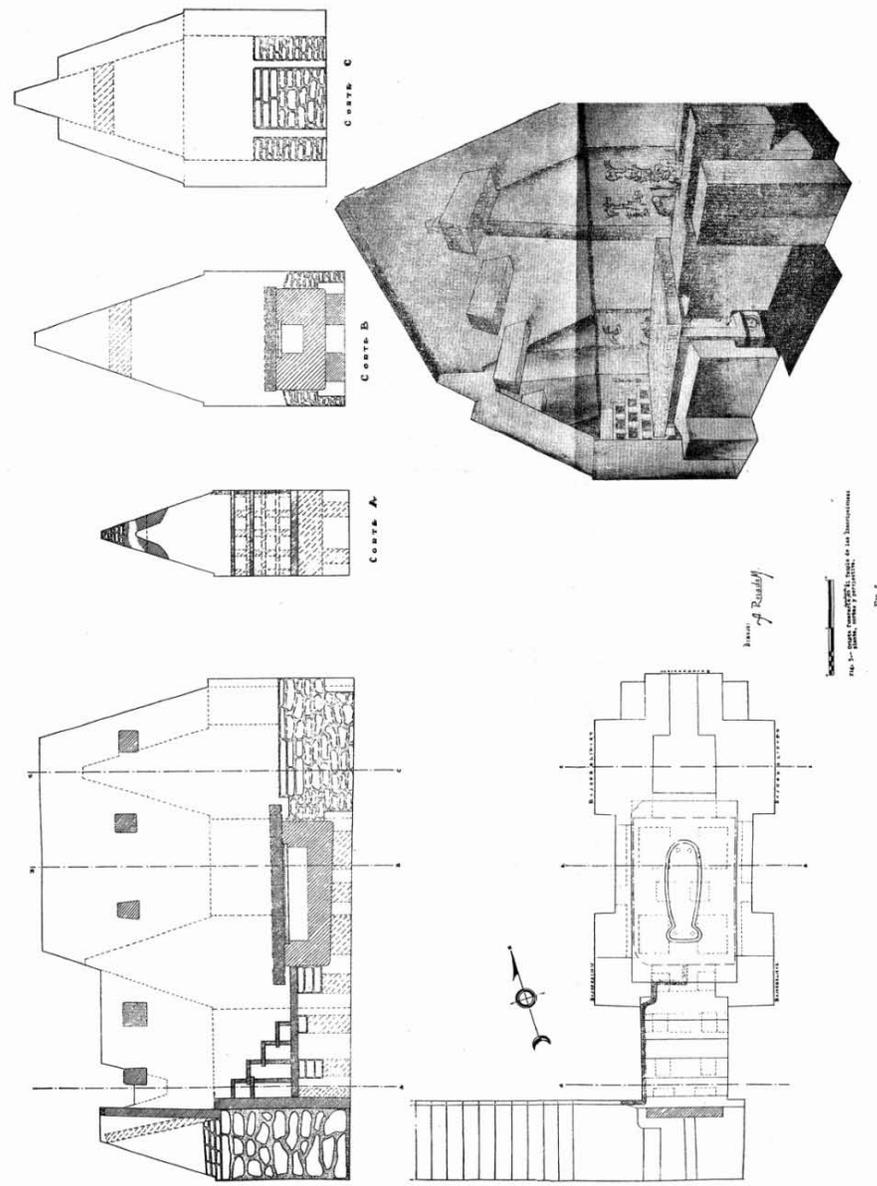


Figure 9.3 Drawing of the Collective Burial (Source: Ruz 1954)

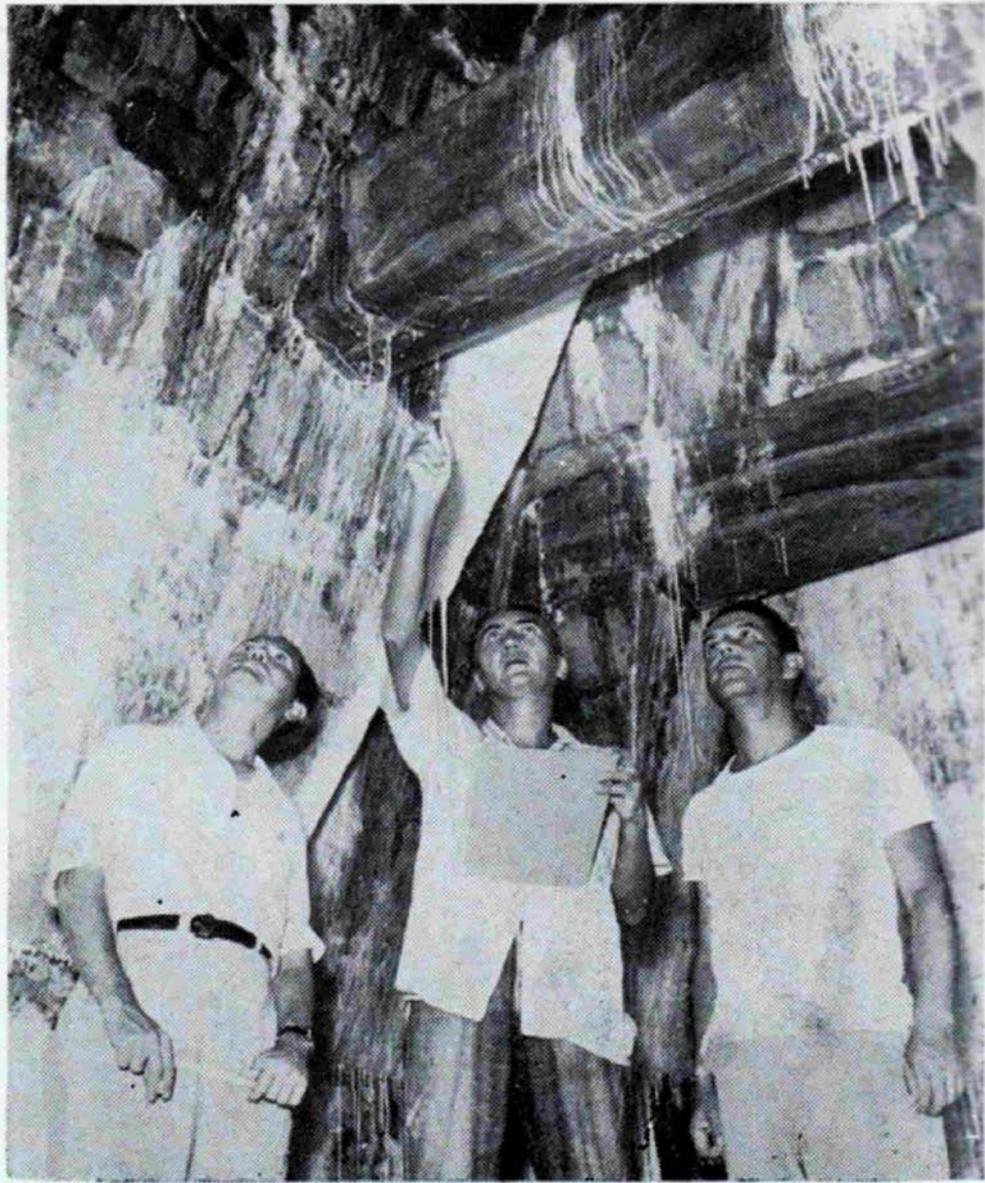


Lám. XV. Bajorrelieve de estuco con el sacerdote parcialmente oculto detrás de las estalactitas y estalagmitas.

**Figure 9.4** The Upper Part of One of the Stucco Figures on the Wall of the Crypt  
(Source: Ruz 1954)

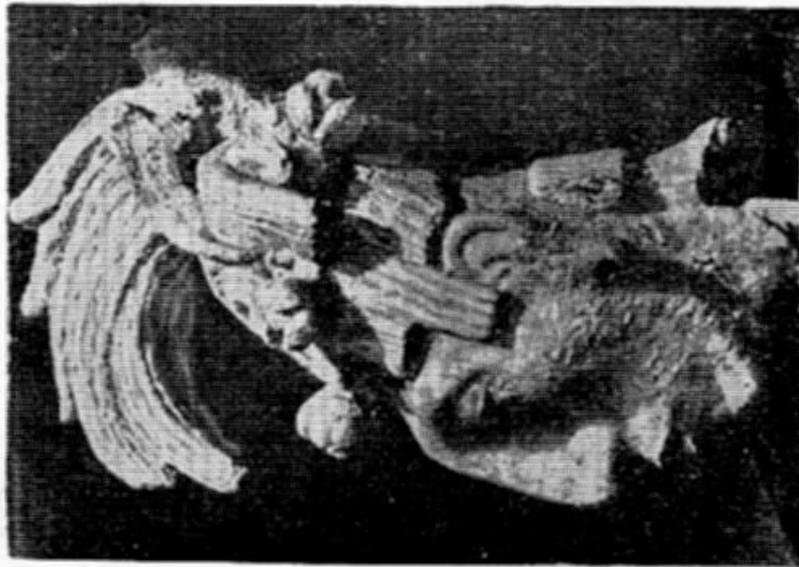


**Figure 9.5** Drawing of the Schematics of the Crypt in the Temple of the Inscriptions (Source: Ruz 1954) Season 1952

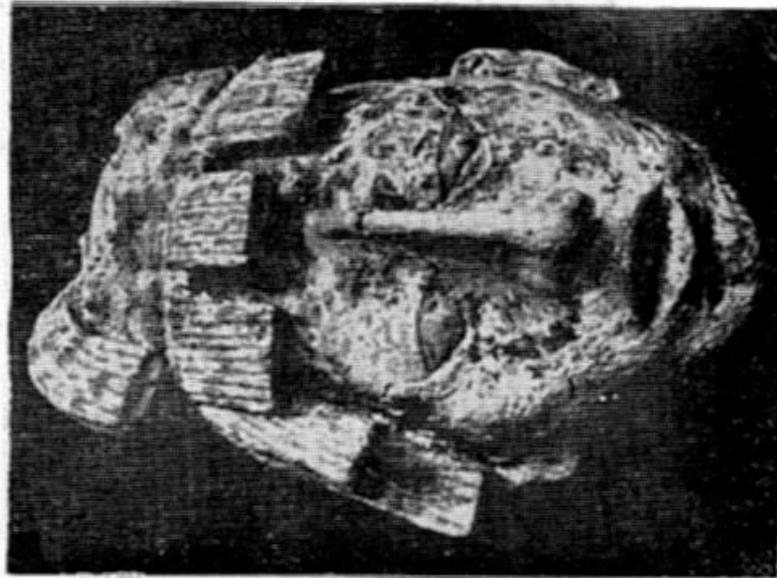


**STONE BEAMS** in inner chamber are covered with stalactites. On wall are stucco portraits of Maya priests.

**Figure 9.6** Photo by Romano Pacheco of Ruz and Others Examining the Ceiling of the Secret Chamber (Source: Life 1953:73)



Lám. XX. Cabeza de estuco, limpia de la capa caliza que la cubría, formaba parte de la ofrenda depositada debajo del sepulcro.



Lám. XXI. Otra cabeza de estuco procedente de la misma ofrenda y en parte libre de la capa caliza,

**Figure 9.7** Two Stucco Head found under the "Altar" (Source: Ruz 1954:120)



**Figure 9.8** Elaborately Carved Horizontal Stone (Source: Ruz 1973:140)



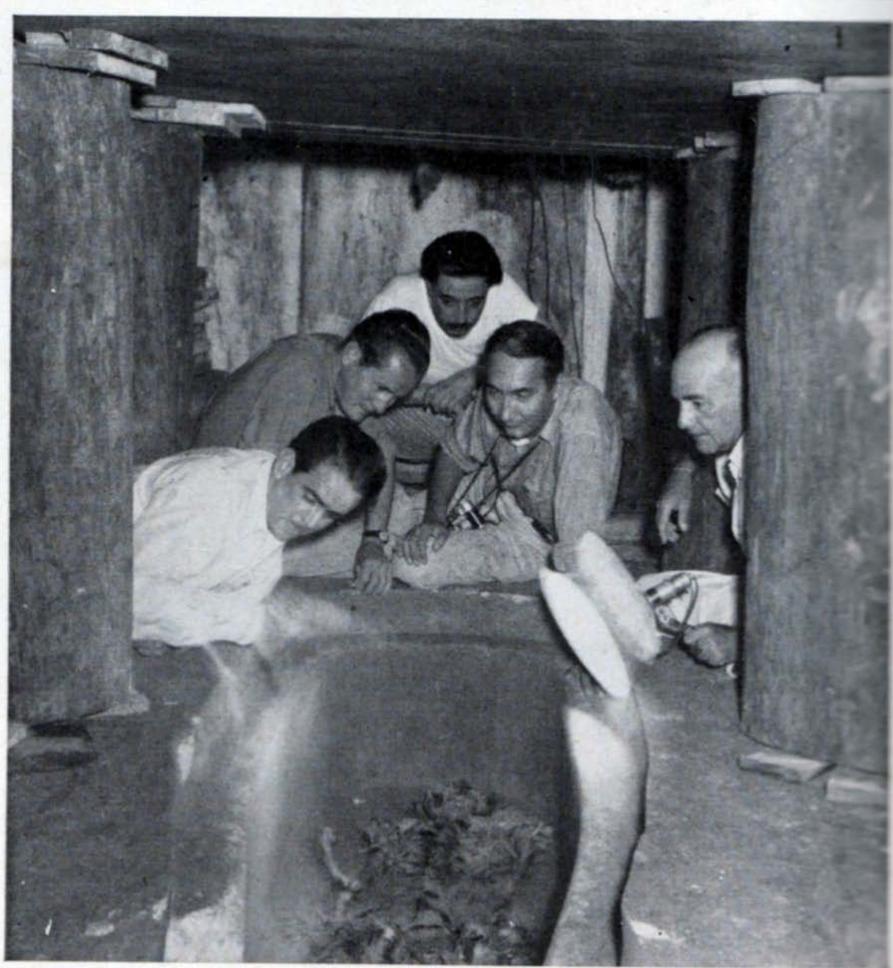
*FIGURA 23. Vista parcial del segundo tramo de escalinata (el más profundo), en el interior del basamento piramidal del Templo de las Inscripciones que conduce a la cámara funeraria. En la ilustración se muestra como se hizo el descenso de los gruesos troncos para sostener elevada la gran lápida para poder abrir el sarcófago. En la vista anterior (fig. 22) y en ésta, se aprecian claramente los distintos tipos de arco maya empleados en cada tramo de la escalinata. Palenque, noviembre de 1952.*

**Figure 9.9** Ruz's Men Rolling Bari Logs down the Interior Stair of the Inscriptions Temple (Source: Romano Pacheco 1989:1446)



**LIFTING SLAB,** workers carefully turn truck jacks. Under this slab was a second heavy stone lid that also had to be raised.

**Figure 9.10** Photo by Romano Pacheco of the Men using Truck Jacks to Raise the Carved Lid (Source: Life 1953:72)



**PEERING INTO TOMB,** Ruz (*with camera*) and helpers crawl under logs holding slabs to get a glimpse of pyramid's occupant.

**Figure 9.11** Photo of Ruz and others as they peered into the Tomb Chamber (Source: Life 1953:72). The photo was probably taken by Romano Pacheco.

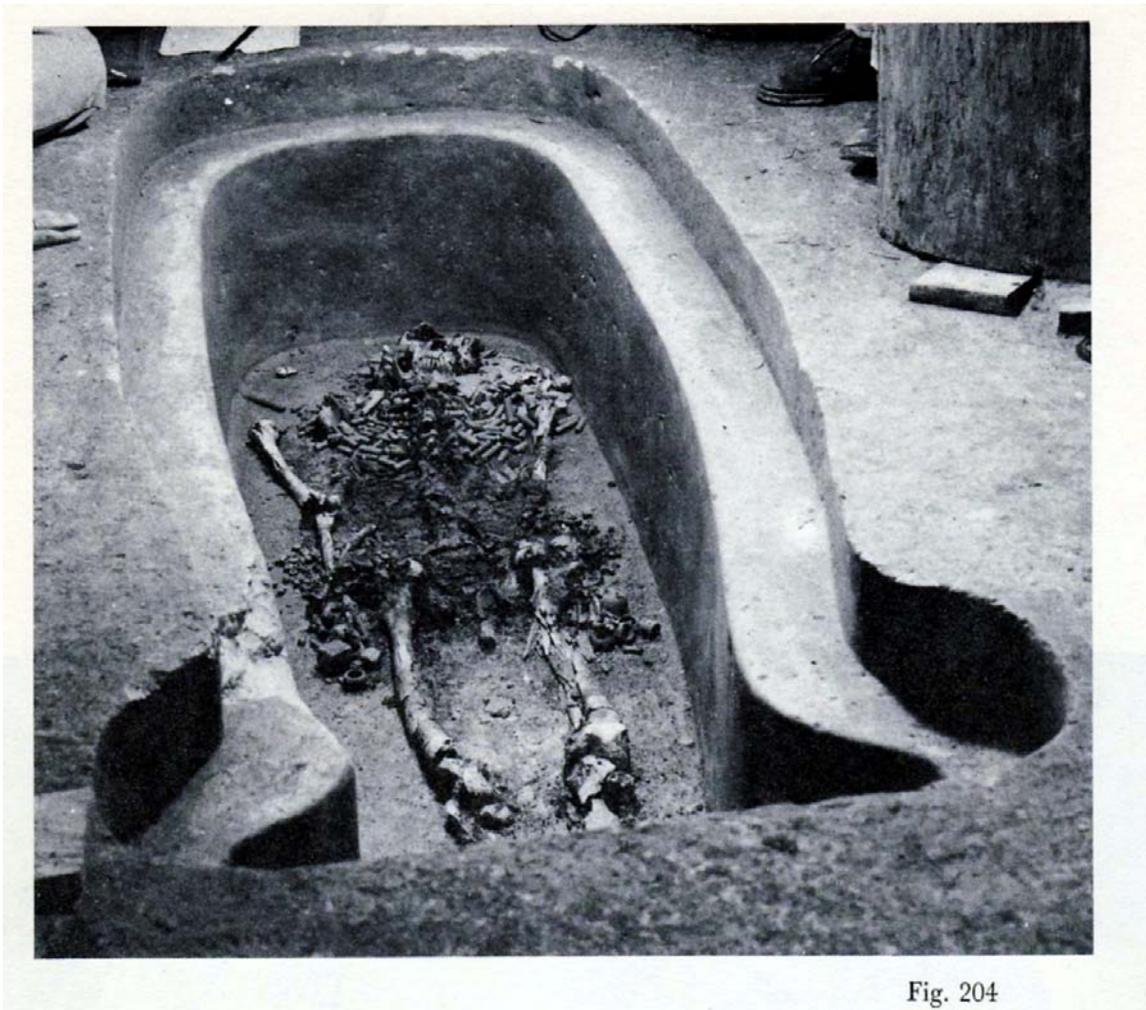


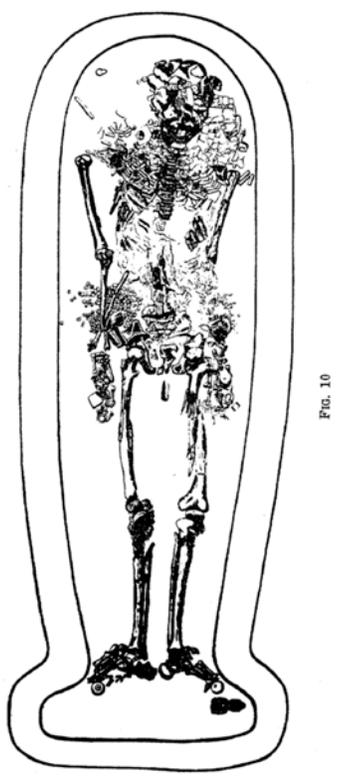
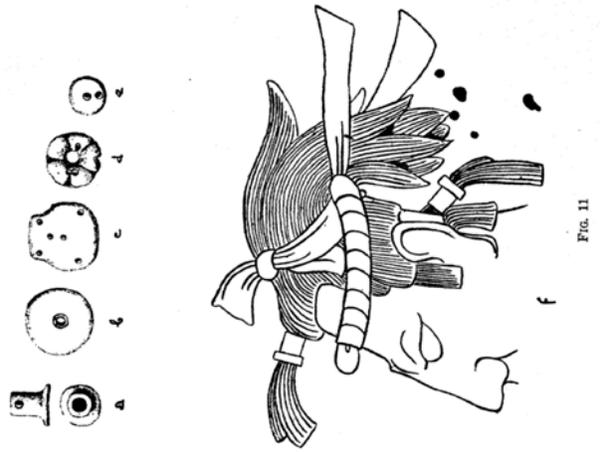
Fig. 204

**Figure 9.12** A View of the Bones inside the Cavity Carved out of a Monolithic Block  
(Source: Ruz 1973:188)

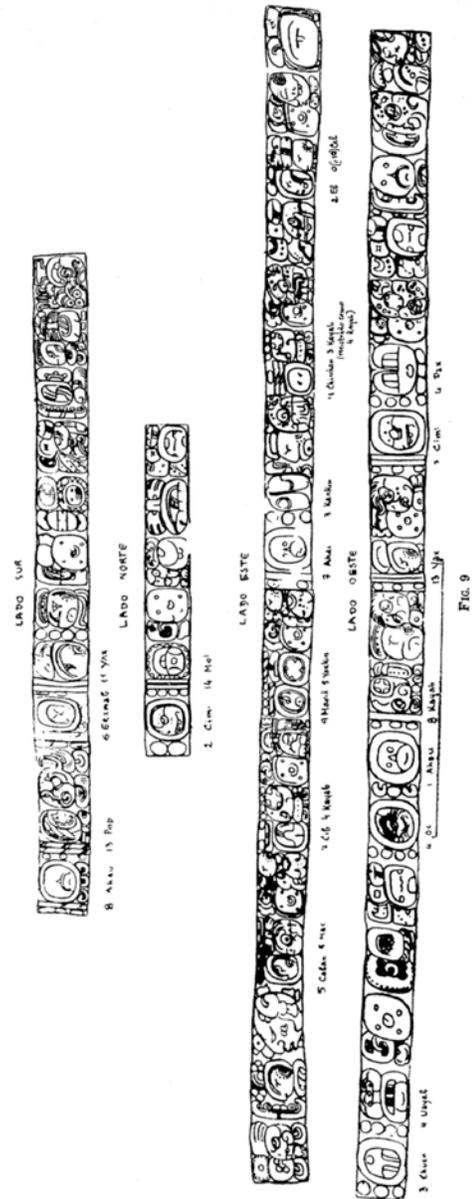


**PEERING BACK**, skull of Maya ruler faces the discoverers from pile of ornaments. Jade beads served as ruler's breastplate.

**Figure 9.13** One of the Photos taken by Romano Pacheco published in *Life Magazine* - Neck and Bones (Life 1953:73)



**Figure 9.14** Drawing of the Entire Skeleton with Jewels (Source: Ruz 1954:110-J)



**Figure 9.15** Drawing of the Glyphs found on the Edge of the Sarcophagus Lid (Source: Ruz 1954:110-I)

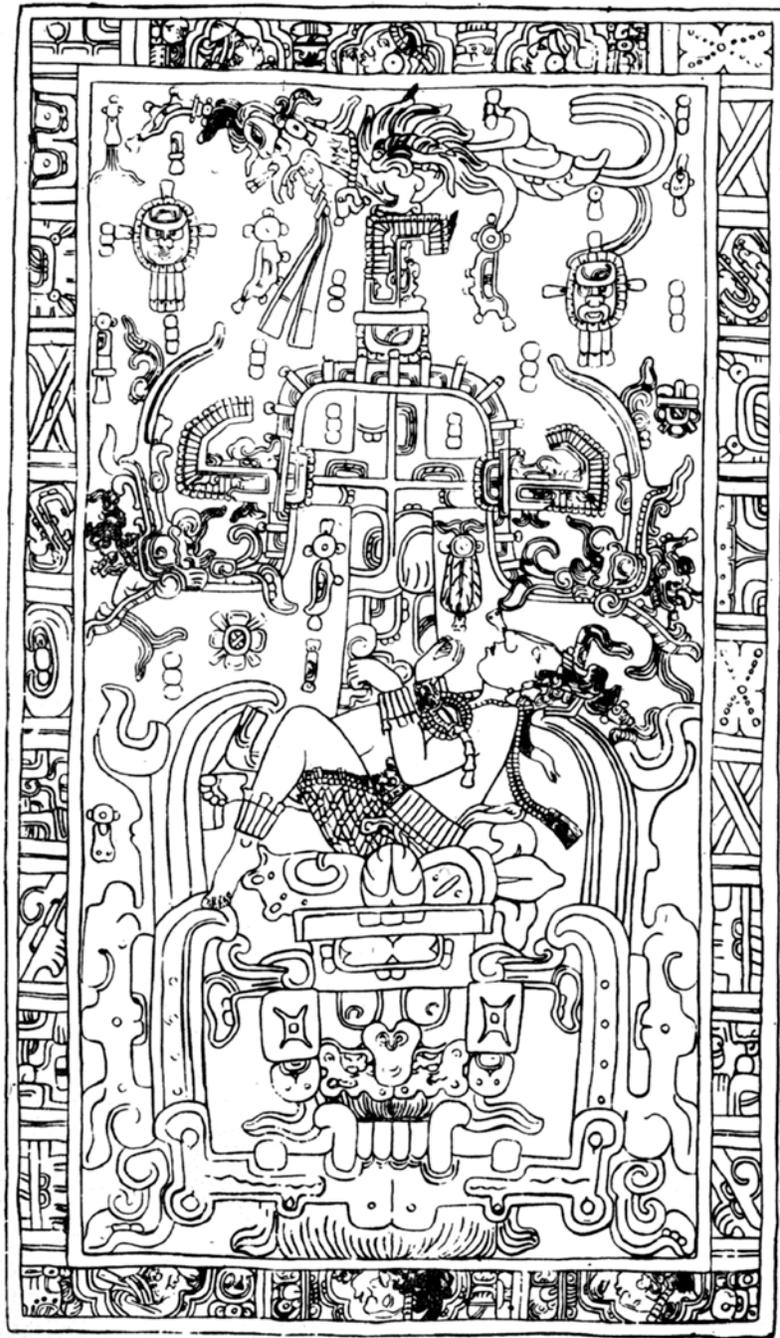
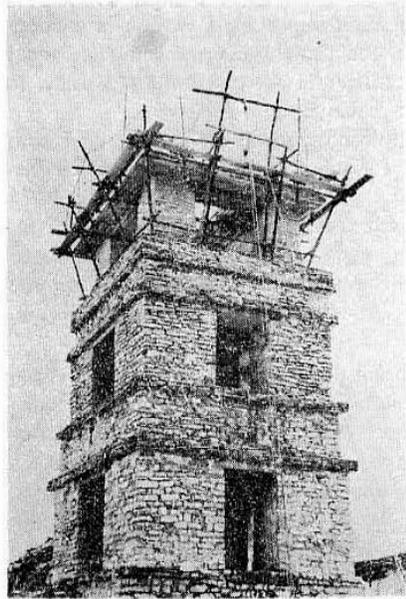


FIG. 8

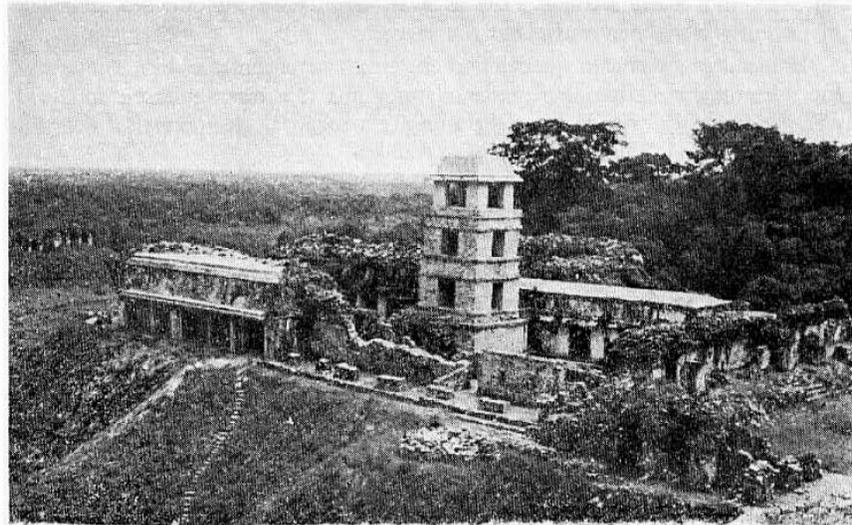
**Figure 9.16** Drawing of the carved image on top of the sarcophagus lid (Source: Ruz 1954, Fig 8)



Lám. V.—La Torre del Palacio al iniciarse la reconstrucción del techo.



Lám. VI.—La torre con su techo casi terminado de reconstruir.



Lám. VII.—Vista general del Palacio al fin de esta temporada de trabajo.

**Figure 10.1** Before and After Photos of the Palace Tower for the Season 1953 (Source: Ruz 1958:75)

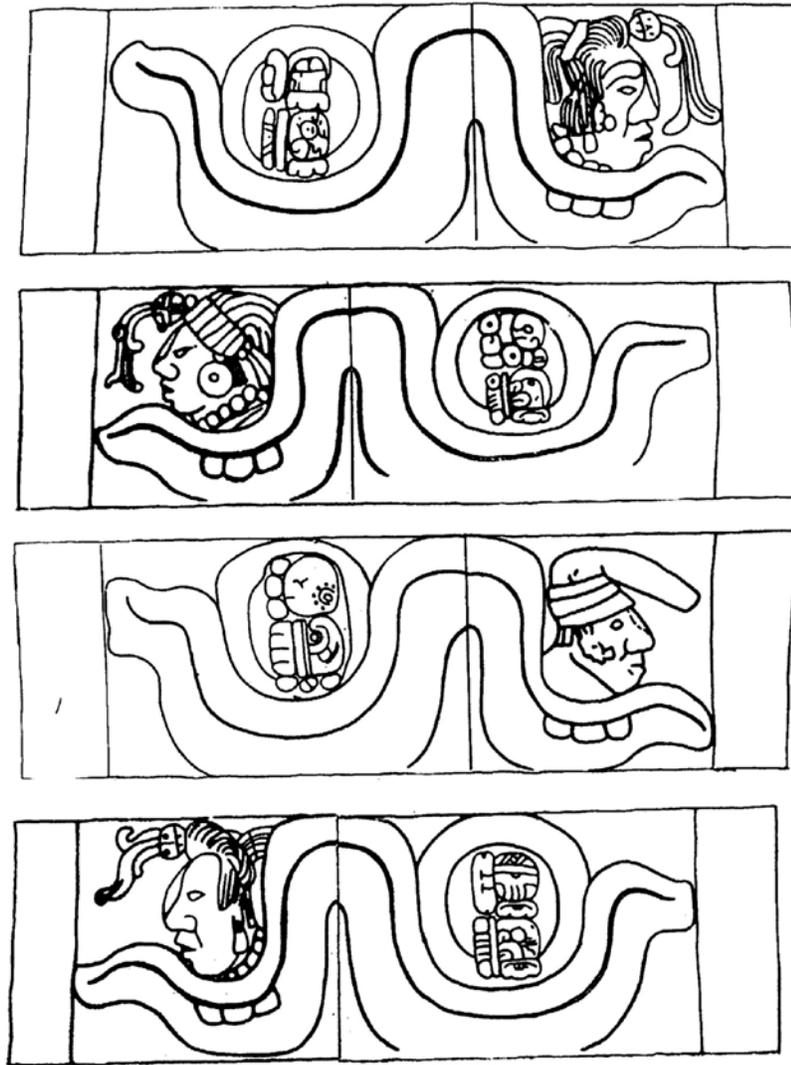
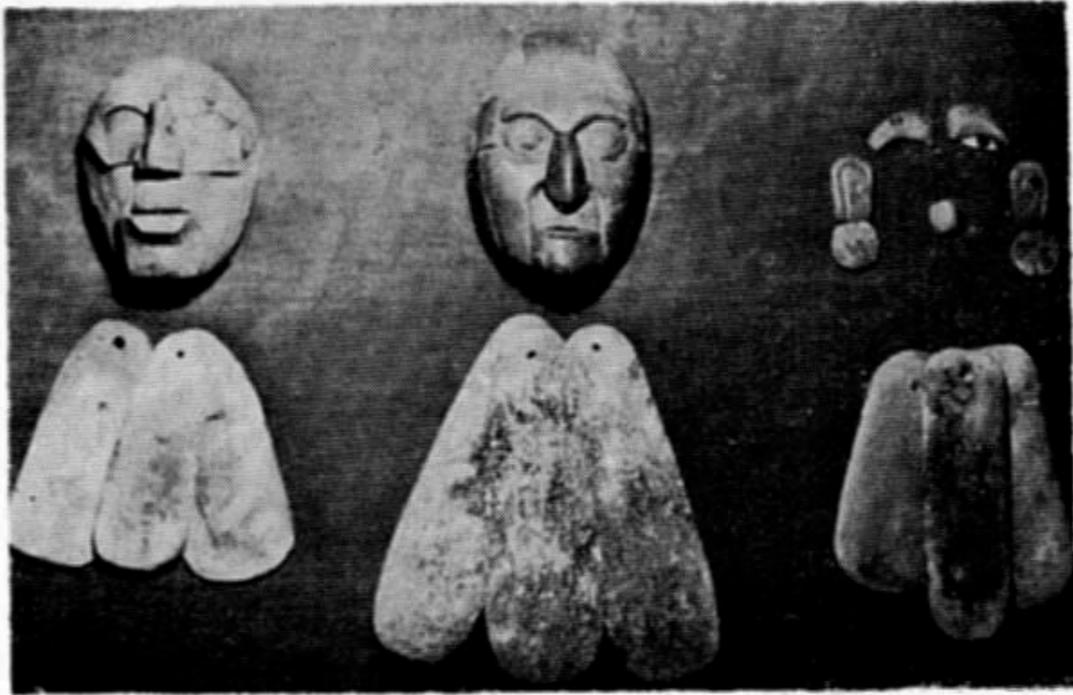


Fig. 15.—Bajorrelieves esculpidos en los soportes del sarcófago. (Las caras corresponden a los lados Norte y Sur; los glifos a los lados Este y Oeste).

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| a) — soporte Suroeste. | c) — soporte Noreste.  |
| b) — soporte Sureste.  | d) — soporte Noroeste. |

**Figure 10.2** Drawings of the Carvings Found on the Legs of the Stone Block by Hipólito García and Alberto Maldonado (Source: Ruz 1958:109)



Lám. XLIII.—Elementos de tres caras humanas con tres pendientes cada una que constituían probablemente el adorno del cinturón.

**Figure 10.3** Reconstructed Mosaics of the pieces found on top of the Carved Lid  
(Source: Ruz 1958:114)



Lam. II.- Figura de estuco que representa al parecer un jabalí.

**Figure 10.4** Painted and Molded Image of what is thought to be a wild boar in the SW Patio near the Tower (Source: Ruz 1954)



Lám. XIII. Baño de vapor en El Palacio, con dos aberturas en el piso para el desagüe (sendos tapones cerraban las aberturas).



Lám. XIV. Caño de desagüe en el Patio Suroeste de El Palacio, con el que se conectan el baño de vapor y dos retretes (fragmentos de yugos *in situ*).

**Figure 10.5** (Top Photo) Holes Found in Palace House H that they surmised was used as a Sweatbath. The Displayed Holes Connect below the Floor to possible bathrooms located in the Tower Plaza (lower photo) (Source: Ruz 1952)



Lám. XXIX.—Cilindro de barro modelado, con máscaras y animales superpuestos.

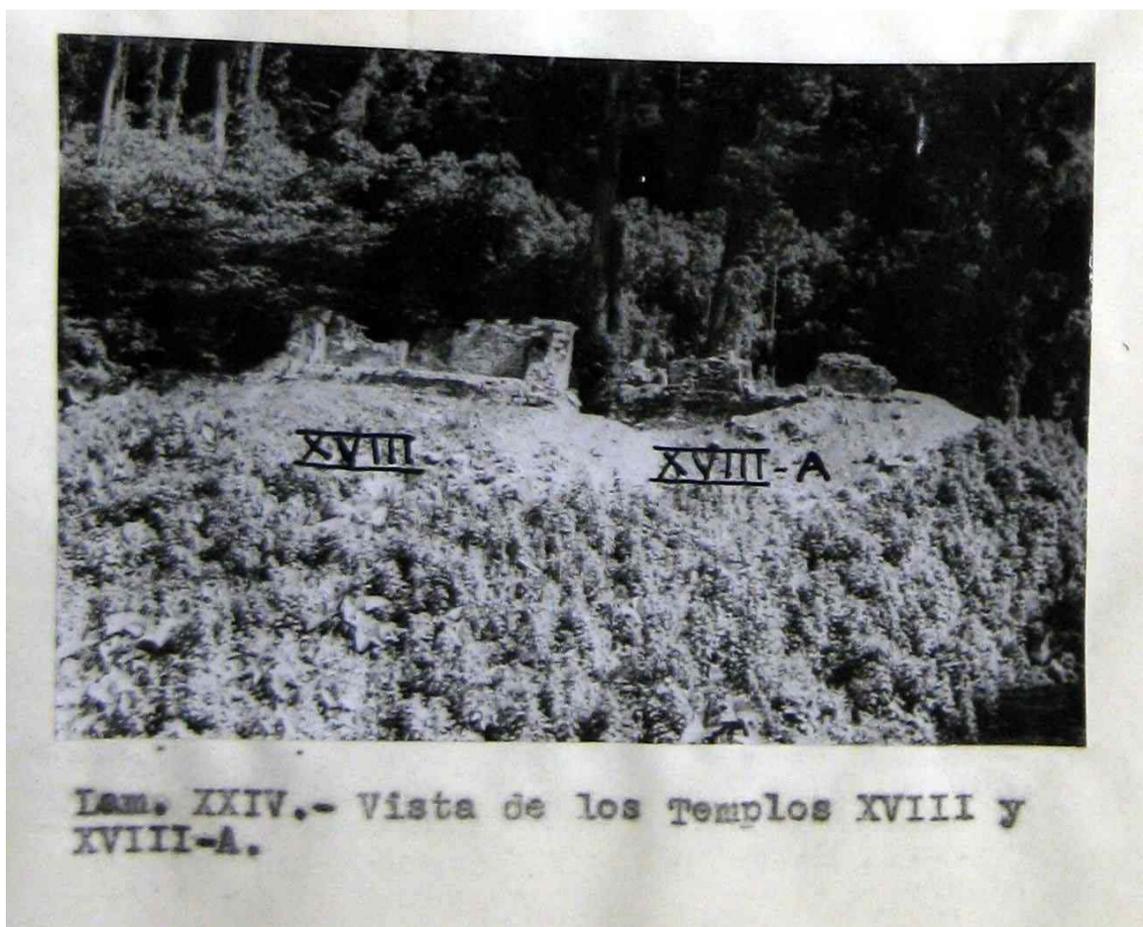


Lám. XXX.—Otro cilindro de barro modelado con superposición de motivos simbólicos.



Lám. XXXI.—Otro ejemplar de barro modelado semejante a los anteriores.

**Figure 10.6** Large Ceramic Cylinders with Elaborately Modeled Faces (Source: Ruz 1958:143)



**Figure 10.7** A View of the Twin Temples, XVIII and XVIII-A (Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1954)



**Figure 10.8** A View of Two of the Tombs Found in Temple XVIII (Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1954)

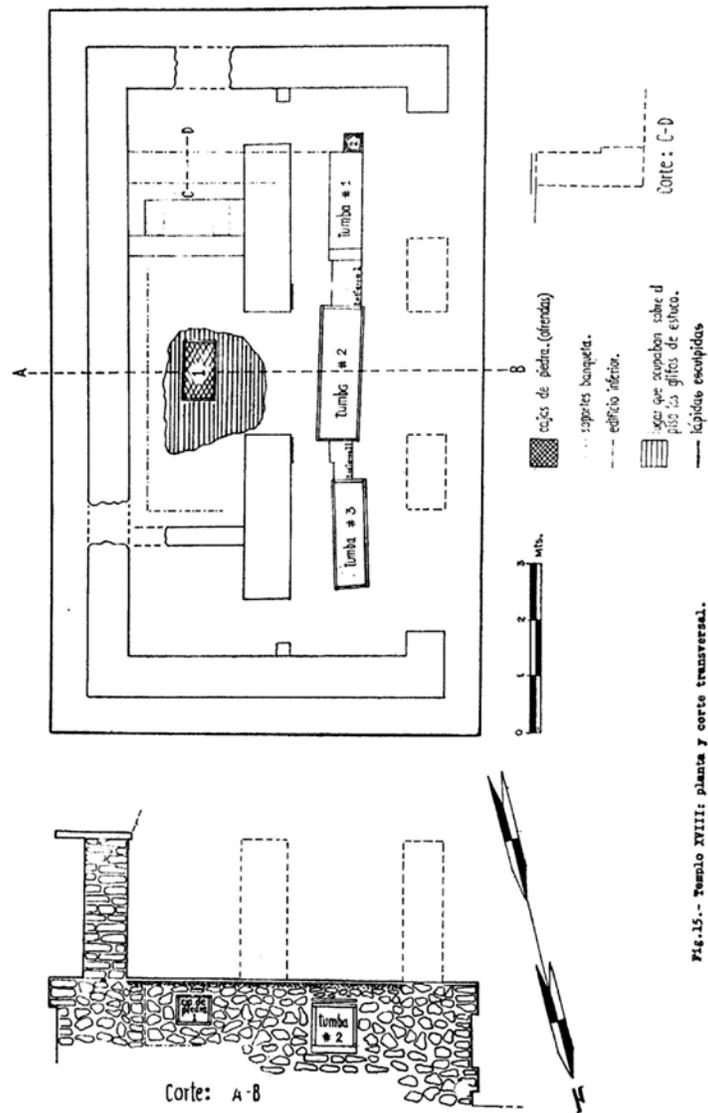
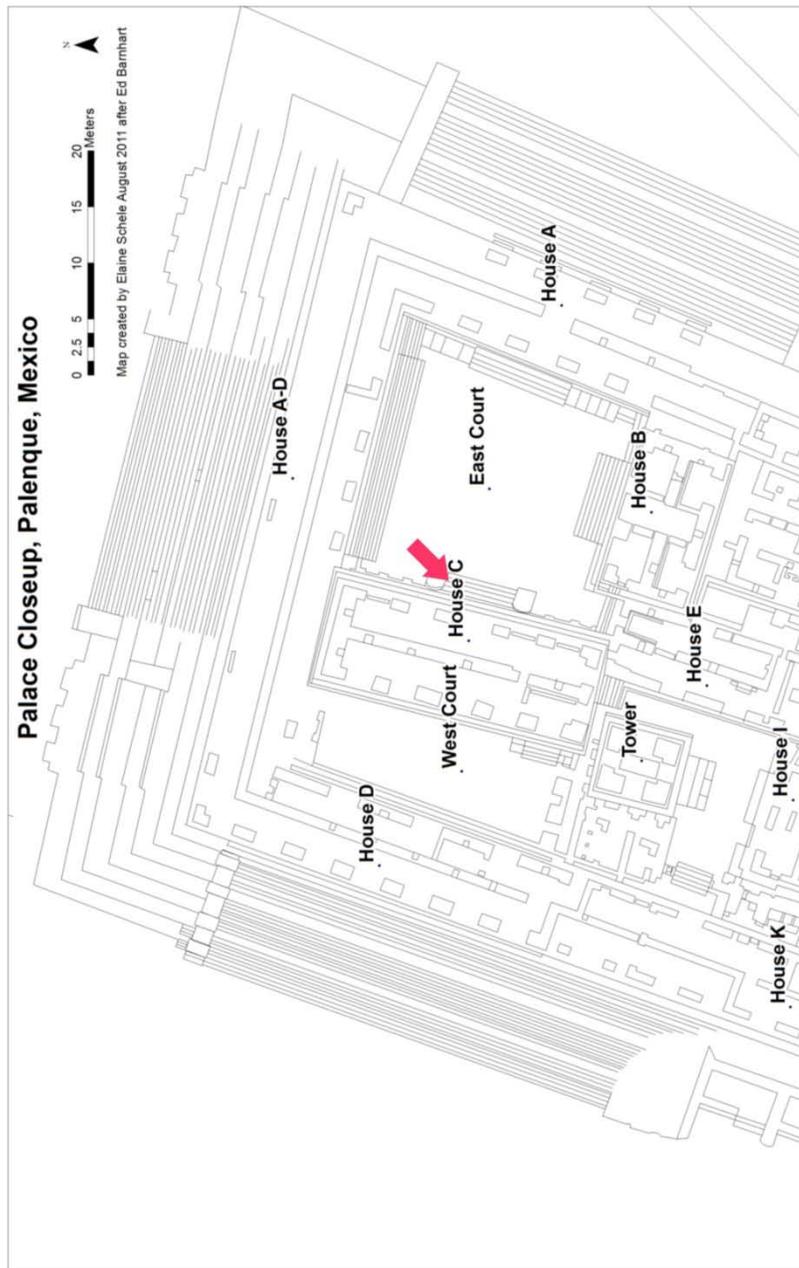
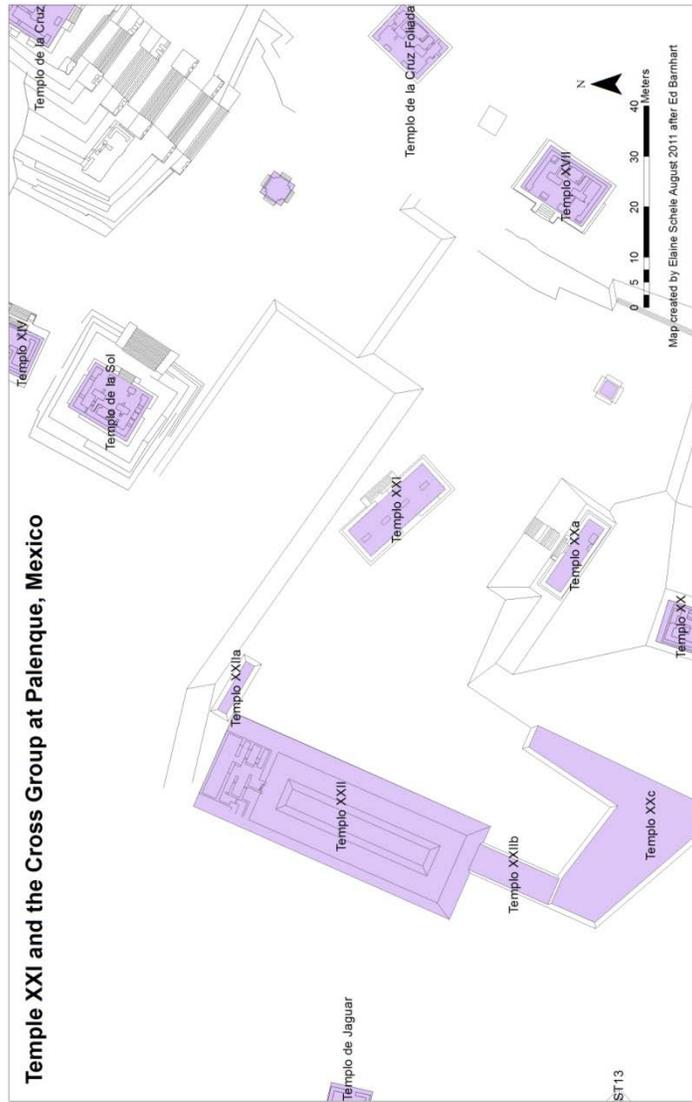


Figure 10.9 Drawing of Temple XVIII and the Tombs (Source Ruz 1958)

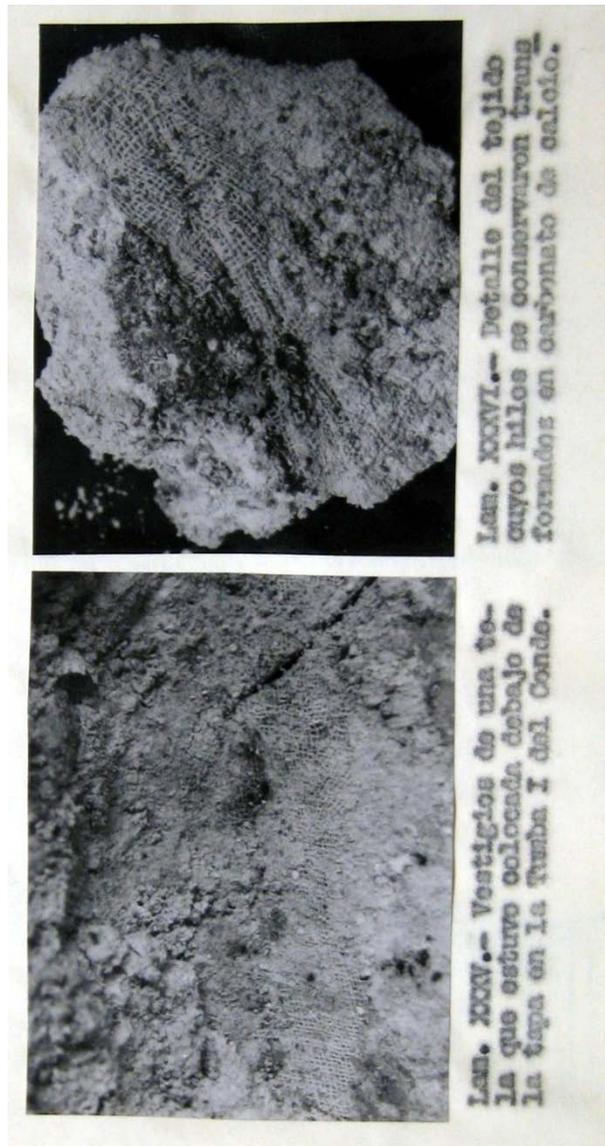


**Figure 10.10** Palace House C (Map Created by Elaine Schele)

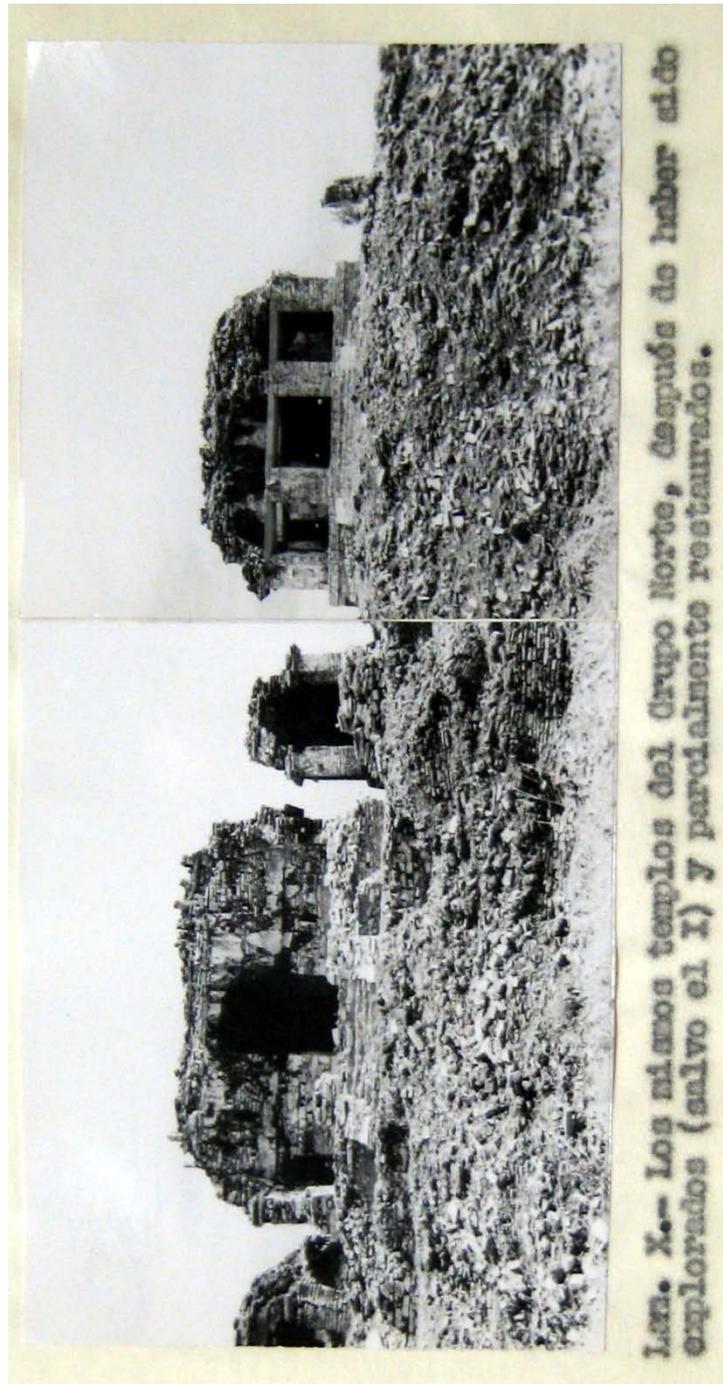
\*



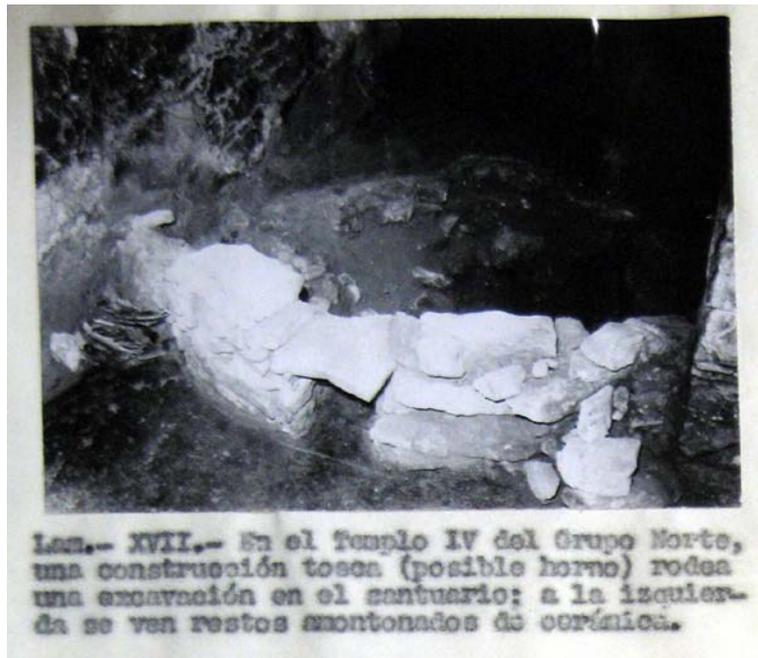
**Figure 10.11** Location of Temple XXI (Map Created by Elaine Schele)



**Figure 10.12** The Temple of the Count Tombs - Traces of Fabric in Stucco (Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1955)



**Figure 10.13** A view of North Temples II, III and IV (Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1955)



**Figure 10.14** Inside Temple IV Sanctuary an Unusual Structure, Perhaps a Furnace  
(Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1955)



**Figure 10.15** Recent Photo of the Same Possible Furnace as Above (Source: Elaine Schele)



Lam. VII.- Templo X al iniciarse su exploración  
Son visibles los grandes bloques tallados de su  
escalinata.



Lam. VIII.- Templo X, del que solo quedan las  
filas inferiores de piedras en el muro poste-  
rior y en los pilares, todo sumamente despla-  
nado hacia Norte.

**Figure 10.16** Photos of Temple X which is made of very large and yellow stones that are well-cut limestone (Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1955)



**Figure 10.17** The Walls of the Bodega (Storage Building) Where they Planned to Store Artifacts not on display in the museum (Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1954)



**Figure 10.18** Molded Stucco of a dog with a footprint in his eye (Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1955)



LAM. I.- Fachada del Museo y su bodega al terminarse la temporada.



LAM. II.- Lado Oeste del Museo en vía de construcción.

**Figure 10.19** Completion of the walls and concrete roof of the museum and attached bodega (Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1956)



**Figure 10.20** A trench dug into the north stairs of the Palace (Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1956)



**Figure 10.21** A vertical tube found in the floor of Temple XVIII-A that was proposed as a "psycho-tube" similar to the one found in the Temple of the Inscriptions (Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1956)



Iam. XIII.- Templo XIII con el basamento reconstruido, así como el arranque de los muros del templo.

**Figure 10.22** A view of the reconstructed Temple XIII which is immediately adjacent to the Temple of the Inscriptions (Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1957)



Lam. XIV.- Juego de Pelota, al iniciarse la temporada (al fondo el Templo del Conde y el Grupo Norte).



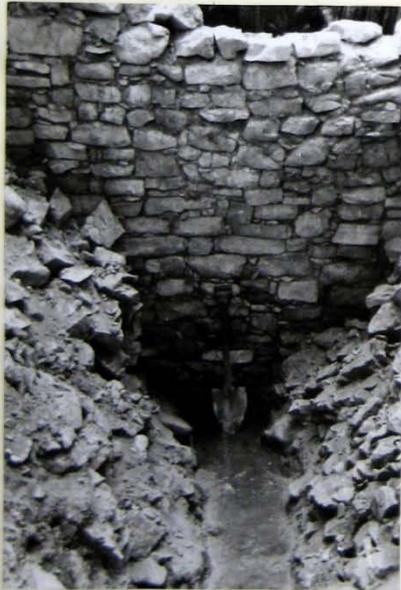
Lam. XV.- El Juego de Pelota en proceso de exploración.



Lam. XVI.- Fachada Este de la plataforma oriente del Juego de Pelota, tal como se descubrió.

**Figure 10.23** Scenes of the before and after partially restored ballcourt (Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1957)

Iam. XX.- Al fondo de la cala - abierta en la escalinata del Palacio apareció una construcción más antigua de la que se ve aquí el muro Norte (arriba), un pilar al Sur (abajo) y una pared transversal.

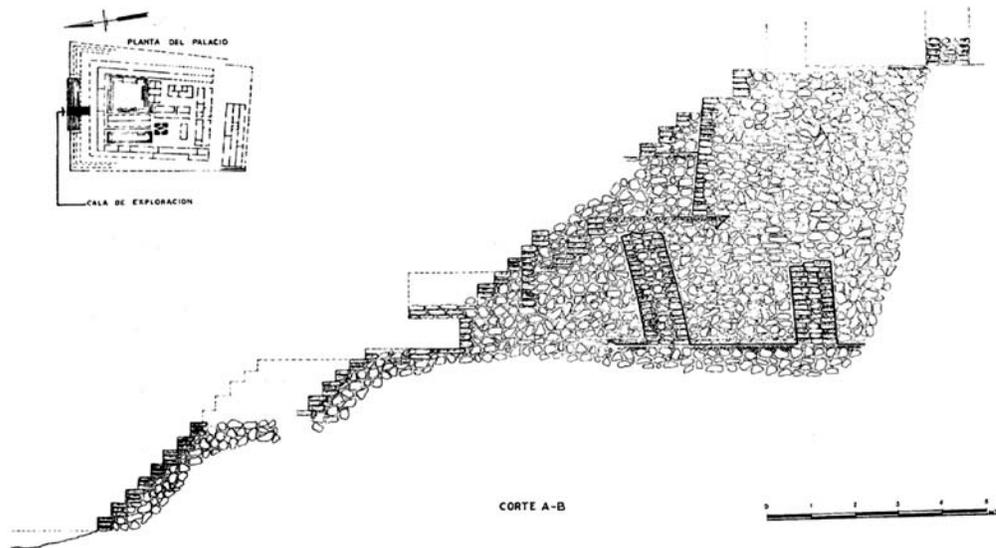


Iam. XXI.- Muro Norte de la construcción antigua del Palacio.



Iam. XXII.- Pilar de la estructura antigua debajo del Palacio y pared transversal.

**Figure 10.24** Photos of the discovery of a structure under the Palace north stairs (Source: AMNH Ruz 1957)



**Figure 10.25** A drawing of the location and configuration of the building under the Palace north stairs (Source: Anales Ruz 1962)



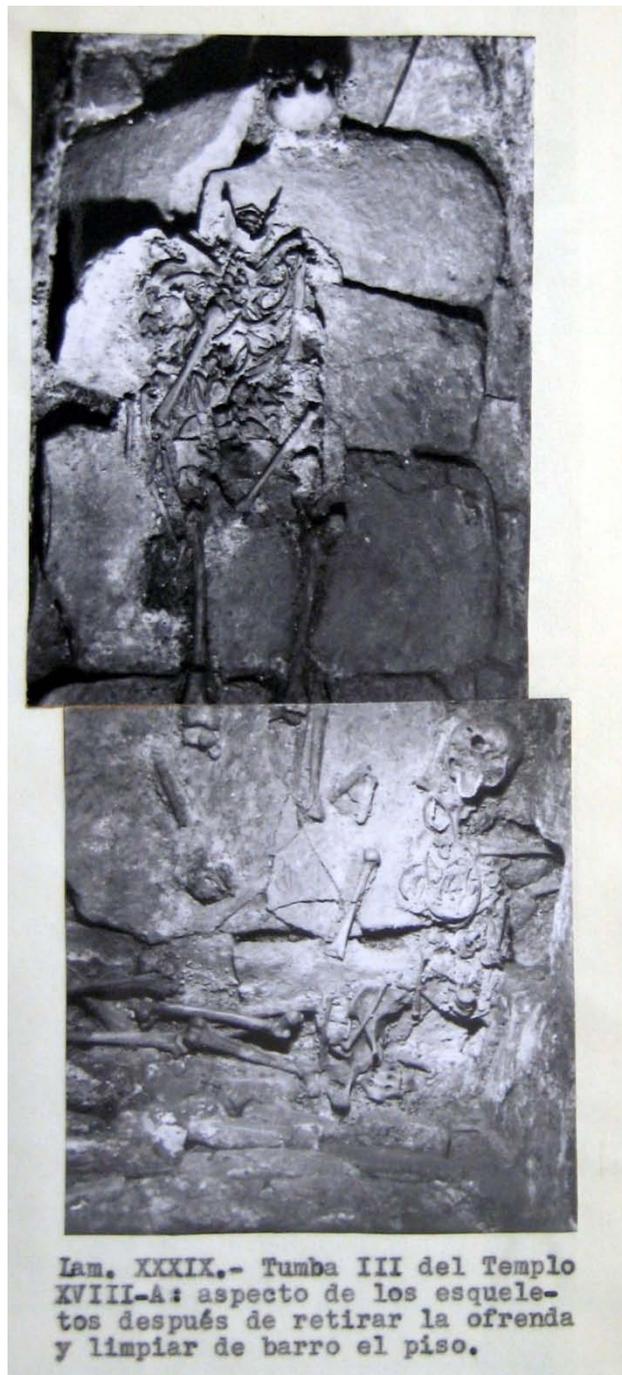
**Figure 10.26** Carved rock with glyphs found in the wall of the aqueduct (Source AMNH Archives Ruz 1957)



**Figure 10.27** One of two carved stones with glyphs found in the wall of Temple IV of the North Group (Elaine Schele Photo)



**Figure 10.28** The second carved stone found in the wall of Temple IV (Photo by Elaine Schele)



**Figure 10.29** Two skeletons found in Tomb III of Temple XVIII-A Sub (Source: AMNH Archives Ruz 1957)



Iam. I.- Casa de madera y techo de cartón en que se conservan las colecciones arqueológicas de Palenque.



Iam. II.- Vista casi de frente del local construido para el Museo de Palenque.



Iam. III.- Vista lateral (Oeste) del Museo de Palenque.

**Figure 10.30** Comparison of the old shed (top photo) where they used to store their precious artifacts and the new facility (bottom 2 photos) (Source: AMNH Ruz 1957)

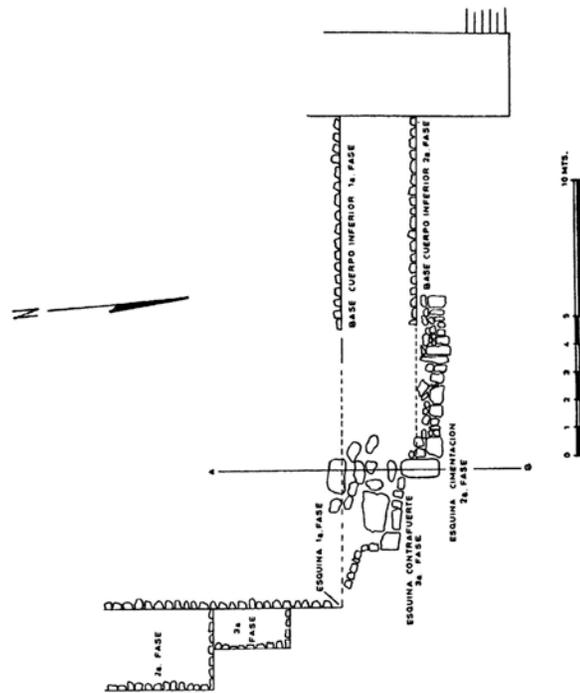
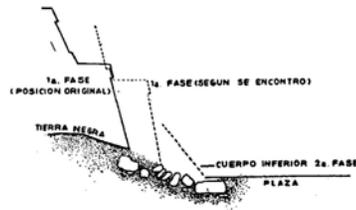
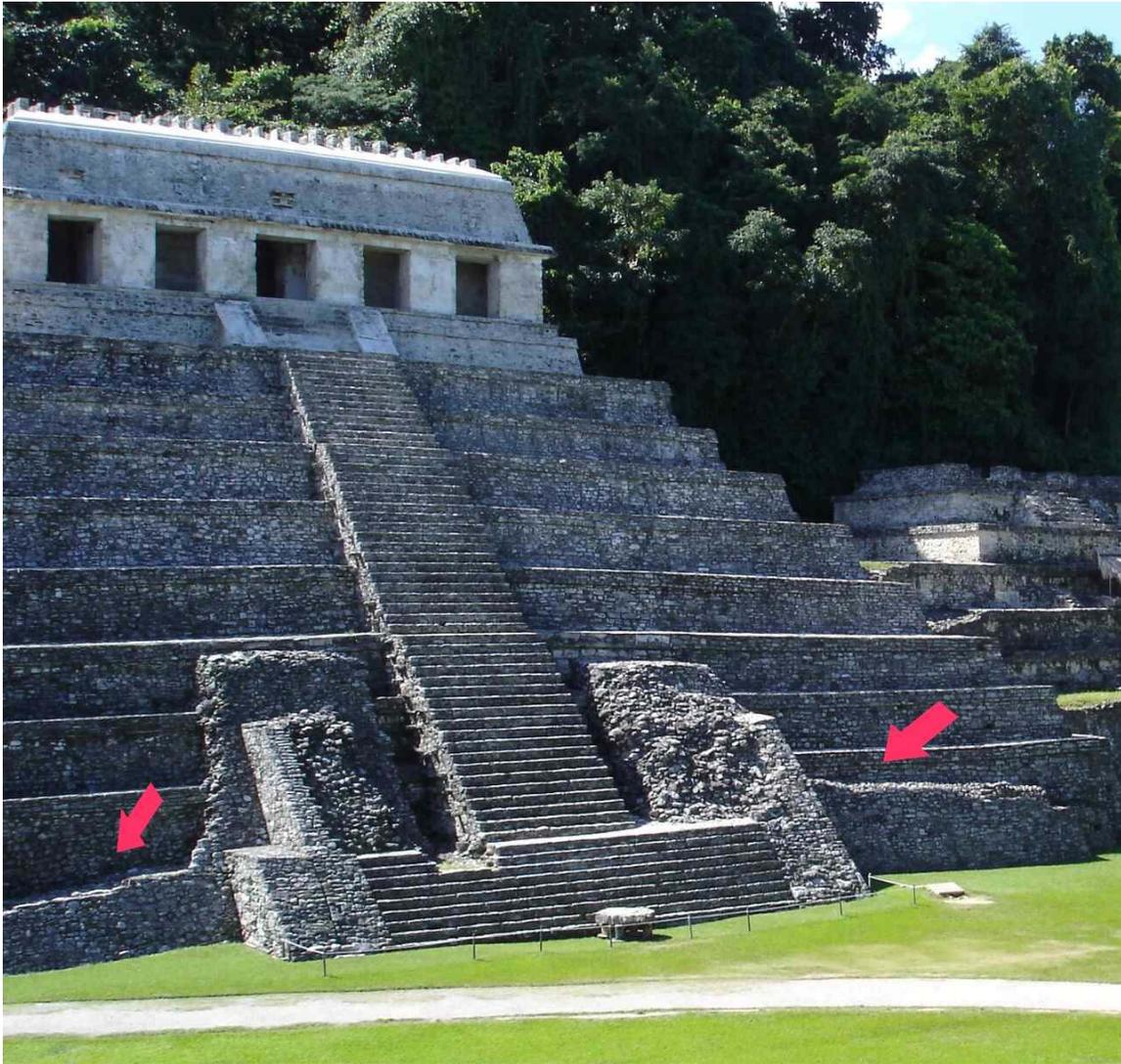


FIG. 1.—Pirámide de las Inscripciones; fundaciones de la esquina noreste.



**Figure 10.31** The three building phases of the pyramid of the Temple of the Inscriptions (Source: Ruz 1962)



**Figure 10.32** Buttresses of the Temple of the Inscriptions reconstructed by Ruz to display the final construction stage made by the ancient builders (Photo by Elaine Schele)

## Appendices

### APPENDIX A: KNOWN FUNDING SOURCES FOR TEN-YEAR PALENQUE PROJECT

<b>Year</b>	<b>INAH (Pesos)</b>	<b>Rockefeller (Pesos)</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>Rockefeller (equivalent U.S. Dollar)</b>
1949	30,000	70,354	100,354	10,000
1950	20,000	41,040	61,040	5,000
1951	115,000	38,880	153,880	5,000
1952	40,000	0	40,000	0
1953	*125,000	0	125,000	0
1954	40,000	75,000	115,000	6,000
1955	Unknown	75,000	Unknown	6,000
1956	Unknown	75,000	Unknown	6,000
1957	Unknown	75,000	Unknown	6,000
**1958	Unknown	0	Unknown	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>450,274</b>		<b>44,000</b>

\*This money was promised to Ruz by the Alemán administration, but there is evidence that the full amount was not received.

\*\* For reasons that are not clear, Ruz did not use funds from Rockefeller this year, although they were available.

**APPENDIX B: LIST OF ANALES AND INFORMES**

Appendix B: List of Anales and Informes, Palenque 1949-1958

Date Pub.	Season	Author	Type	Name	# Pages	Lams.	# of Photos	Page Ref.	Season Start	Season End	# Days	Date Signed
None	1947	Ruz	Informe	Informe Sobre la Inspección de la Zona de Palenque	9	0	17	-	15-Mar-47	18-Mar-47	5	28-Apr-47
1952	1949	Ruz	Anales	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1949	21	8	30	49-60	29-Mar-49	15-Jun-49	79	--
None	1949	Ruz	Informe	Exploraciones Arqueológicas en Palenque, Chiapas: Informe de la Temporada de 1949	73	28	265	-	29-Mar-49	15-Jun-49	79	24-Mar-50
None	1949	Zavala	Informe	Zavala - Informe 1949 (en las sepulturas)	35	10	180	-	29-Mar-49	15-Jun-49	79	31-Dec-49
None	1949	Villagra	Informe	Las pinturas de la fachada del edificio "E", en Palenque, Chiapas	0	69	0	-	29-Mar-49	15-Jun-49	79	--
1952	1950	Ruz	Anales	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1950	21	14	50	25-45	29-Mar-49	15-Jun-49	79	--
None	1950	Ruz	Informe	Exploraciones Arqueológicas en Palenque, Chiapas: Informe de la Temporada de 1950	35	16	96	-	29-Mar-49	15-Jun-49	79	20-Mar-51
None	1950	Zavala	Informe	Exploraciones Arqueológicas en Palenque, Chis. Sección de Tumbas	98	12	158	-	29-Mar-49	15-Jun-49	79	15-Mar-51
1952	1951	Ruz	Anales	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1951	20	8	49	47-66	1-May-51	28-Jul-51	89	--
None	1951	Orellana	Informe	Informe de las exploraciones arqueológicas realizadas en el lado suroeste del palacio, Temporada III 1951	48	0	0	-	1-May-51	28-Jul-51	89	--
None	1951	Saenz	Informe	Informe de los trabajos arqueológicos llevándose a cabo en el Patio NE del Palacio, Palenque temporada 1951	24	1	42	-	10-May-51	31-Jul-51	83	--
None	1951	Ruz	Informe	Palenque. Temporada de 1951	15	-	-	-	10-May-51	31-Jul-51	83	--
1954	1952	Ruz	Anales	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1952	32	14	51	79-110	28-Apr-52	5-Jul-52	69	--

Appendix B: List of Anales and Informes, Palenque 1949-1958

Date Pub.	Season	Author	Type	Name	# Pages	Lams.	# of Photos	Page Ref.	Season Start	Season End	# Days	Date Signed
1954	1952	Davalos	Anales	Apéndice: Estudio Preliminar de los Restos Osteológicos Encontrados en la Tumba del Templo de las Inscripciones, Palenque	4	0	0	107-110	28-Apr-52	5-Jul-52	69	--
1954	1952	Ruz	Anales	Same as 1952	Same as 1952	Same as 1952	Same as 1952	Same as 1952	15-Nov-52	21-Dec-52	37	
No	1952	Saenz	Informe	Informe, SE Patio, y en la escalera Sur del Patio N.E., del Palacio 1952	4	0	25	-	1-May-52	30-Jun-52	61	--
No	1952	Ruz	Informe	Exploraciones en Palenque 1952	32	13	56	-	28-Apr-52	5-Jul-52	69	21-Dec-52
None	1952	Davalos	Informe	Apéndice: Estudio Preliminar de los Restos Osteológicos Encontrados en la Tumba del Templo de las Inscripciones, Palenque	5	0	0		28-Apr-52	5-Jul-52		
1958	1953	Ruz	Anales	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1953	47	18	43	69-116	23-Jul-53	23-Sep-53	63	--
None	1953	Saenz	Informe	Informe de Los Trabajos Arqueológicos	11	8	43	-	23-Jul-53	23-Sep-53	63	1-Feb-54
None	1953	Ruz	Informe	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1953	20	18	43	-	23-Jul-53	23-Sep-53	63	--
1958	1954	Ruz	Anales	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1954	67	31	65	117-184	10-May-54	22-Aug-54	104	--
1956	1954	Saenz	Anales	Exploraciones en la Pirámide de la Cruz Foliada (Season 1954)	14	7	30	5-18	10-May-54	22-Aug-54	104	--
None	1954	Saenz	Informe	Informe 1954	27	-	148	-	10-May-54	22-Aug-54	104	--
None	1954	Ruz	Informe	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1954	22	18	45	-	10-May-54	22-Aug-54	104	15-Aug-55

Appendix B: List of Anales and Informes, Palenque 1949-1958

Date Pub.	Season	Author	Type	Name	# Pages	Lams.	# of Photos	Page Ref.	Season Start	Season End	# Days	Date Signed
None	1954	Ruz	Informe (Resumen)	Resumen de los trabajos llevados a cabo en la Zona Arqueológica de Palenque	6	0	20	-	10-May-54	22-Aug-54	104	--
1958	1955	Ruz	Anales	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1955	56	18	51	185-240	13-Jun-55	10-Sep-55	90	--
None	1955	Ruz	Informe	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1955	22	18	51	-	13-Jun-55	10-Sep-55	90	4-Oct-57
1958	1956	Ruz	Anales	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1956	59	17	52	241-299	13-Aug-56	13-Nov-56	93	--
None	1956	Ruz	Informe	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1956	24	17	5	-	12-Aug-56	4-Nov-56	84	29-Mar-58
None	1956	Lizardi	Informe (Appx) to Saenz 1956	Apéndice: Otras Inscripciones Palencanas.	9	1	0	37-45	--	--	--	--
1962	1957	Ruz	Anales	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1957	56	13	50	35-90	29-Apr-57	10-Aug-57	104	--
None	1957	Ruz	Informe	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1957	24	10	50	-	29-Apr-57	10-Aug-57	104	9-Dec-58
None	1957	Ruz	Informe preliminar	Informe preliminar sobre los trabajos realizados en Palenque, durante la temporada	4	0	12	-	29-Apr-57	10-Oct-57	--	--
1962	1958	Ruz	Anales	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1958	22	2	30	91-112	18-Aug-58	5-Oct-58	49	--
None	1958	Ruz	Informe	Exploraciones Arqueológicas in Palenque 1958	8	2	30	-	18-Aug-58	5-Oct-58	49	12-Jan-59

**APPENDIX C: THE WORDS FROM A LETTER WRITTEN TO ALBERTO RUZ UPON HIS  
DEATH BY HIS SON ALBERTO RUZ BUENFIL**



## Prologue

### *A Letter to Dr. Alberto Ruz Lhuillier from His Son, Alberto Ruz Buenfil*



Author Alberto Ruz Buenfil with his father, Dr. Alberto Ruz Lhuillier, University of Mexico City, 1976.

*Editor's note: The following is an edited letter from the author to his father, the famed anthropologist who discovered the Royal Tomb of Palenque. Written shortly after the professor's death, it expresses not only the agony of the loss of a loved one, but more importantly the clash of cultures and ideologies and the search for meaning that characterized the postwar generation. In a sense, it is both a short autobiography and an introduction to this book, for all these forces conspired to shape the thoughts, yearnings, travels, and convictions of the author. For more than two decades, they led him all over the world, ultimately creating the broad perspective and the "path of the heart" that allowed him to produce this book.*

My Very Dear Doctor:

We were all gathered at our temporary home at Round Mountain Ranch in California. We were sitting in a circle inside a yurt, a circular Mongolian tent, watching a videotape about the natural home birth of one of our children. Tears were rolling down my face as I wondered

about the magic of life. Then, when the film was over, I received a long-distance telephone call from Mexico, from brother Jorge, telling me you had died.

One hour later, I went alone on a long walk toward the lake, at the same moment the full moon was disappearing behind Round Mountain. Then I knelt and entered the sweatlodge, where the members of our community frequently celebrate together in the tradition of the Lakota Sioux.

The moon cycle, Round Mountain, the sweatlodge, the yurt, the circle of people holding hands—all remind me of the magic of life and death, and prompt me to reflect on the life we spent together.

In my oldest memories, I go back to the Yucatán, to you and me sitting in front of a chess table, concentrated and serious. I remember, too, the baseball and croquet games in Mérida and the beach house in Chichulub, as well as the fishing parties in our little boat *Saeta*.

Then there were my birthdays when you took me to the bookshop to choose four or five new classics for children: Verne, Cooper, Stevenson, Twain, Salgari. And the long holidays in the summer, when for two months I would share your expeditions and adventures in Chichén Itzá, Uxmal, Dzibilchaltún, or Palenque. It was then, I remember, that you gave me my first jobs: carrying stones for the reconstruction of the Pyramid of Inscriptions; cleaning and classifying clay pots and bones; putting together the pieces of Preclassic and Postclassic puzzles; mixing sand, gravel, and cement for the building of the new museum. Always you were there—my biggest hero, my best teacher, my most demanding tutor, my most loving and patient father.

I also remember that the rediscovery and reopening of the Royal Tomb of Palenque brought important changes to our lives: our first family trips out of Mexico; the lecture tours in the United States and Cuba; and the widening of our world and its marvelous possibilities.

Then, when I was thirteen, came our forced exile from the Yucatán and our tropical paradise, as a result of the corruption of the state governor. With that painful event came the end of a cycle and the beginning of a new one. It was the end of my childhood and a certain wild innocence that had only been possible on the beaches and in the jungles of the Mayan centers. It was also the beginning of my youth in the

streets of Mexico City, life on the third floor of an apartment building, and a new discipline at the Franco-Mexican high school.

This, I remember, was about the time you had your first heart attack, which forced you to stay at home for almost a year and brought us closer together. During those months, I learned a great deal about your revolutionary past in Cuba and your association with legendary figures such as Juan Marinello, Tony Guiteras, Calixta, and Julio Le Riverand. It was also then that I first heard about the times you had been imprisoned in Cuba, in the jails of the Machado and Fulgencio Batista regimes.

You taught me about the struggle for freedom, and you told me amazing stories about my great-grandfather, Francisco Ruiz, the first Cuban to free his slaves. All of that began to shape my destiny, setting fire to my teenage imagination, awakening a new admiration for you.

During this time in Mexico City, you also made contact with your old bohemian and revolutionary writer friends again—people who through their art, writing, and deeds continued to give me an education far beyond the walls of the classroom. No longer were my readings limited to the classics of my youth; now you began loaning me books from your own library. One book in particular, *The Good Conscious People* by Carlos Fuentes, helped to confirm my future direction. We shared a certain ideological complicity, you and I.

Then the first ideological conflicts began to erupt with my friends and teachers in high school. For the first time in my life, I began experiencing the realities of social injustice, political activism, and the strong impact of the Cuban Revolution. I remember describing all this in one of my first political essays, written in 1962 for a modern-history course—an essay dedicated to the two figures in contemporary times who had most influenced my life. I well remember your smile and the look in your eyes when you read my work, entitled “Fidel Castro Ruz and Alberto Ruz Lhuillier.”

A new cycle started in our family life when you began working with Mother at the Seminar on Mayan Culture at the University of Mexico City, about the same time I entered college at the Faculty of Chemical Sciences. While at college, I was surprised to discover that you were very worried about my helping to organize the first street marches in support of the Cuban Revolution. Perhaps I could not blame

you; these demonstrations were usually repressed and often ended with hundreds of people wounded and jailed. I also noticed that you seemed worried about my waning interest in a career in petrochemical engineering. Even then, I remember, you had a very clear vision about the effect oil was going to have on Mexico and the rest of the world.

One year later, I left the Faculty and Mexico to go to Cuba, hoping to get some firsthand experience in the revolutionary process. I went with some close friends of yours: author Sol Arguedas, theater director Jorge Godoy, economist Elena Huerta, and others—I felt like a young apprentice on an initiatic journey.

I returned from that journey with full sympathy for the Cuban Revolution, and I began spreading my enthusiasm in lectures, study circles, protest songs, and the publication of one of the first books in Mexico about Fidel Castro's historical speeches.

In 1965, I entered the school of economics, then the most important center for political activities in the Mexican university world. It was a focal point not only for classes but for strikes, rallies, elections, and fascinating roundtable discussions that pushed my education in many new directions.

The trip to Cuba had given me a new critical perspective that began to conflict with the ideas of the intellectual left to which you and most of your friends belonged. I was young, filled with enthusiasm for new ideas, and I began to feel that you and most of the people in your generation were happily "sitting" on some very small achievements, and that many of your advanced ideas did not correspond to the way you were living your own lives.

This was also a time when your work at the Seminar for Mayan Culture was taking most of your time and interest, a situation that led to some distance between us—a distance that I knew was good and necessary both for your growth and mine. During those years, our family unity was broken, too, with your divorce from Mother. Yet this, too, I took as a sign of our mutual need to grow, a step that helped to free each of us to follow our own destinies.

The next time we met was in Cuba in 1967, during your sabbatical. It was your first visit to the island since the triumph of the revolution in 1959. On your return there, you lived like a prince—recognized, admired, in a suite in the Habana Libre Hotel, eating steak and lobster

along with the other important guests of the Cuban government. I remember you even had a car at the door of the hotel with a private chauffeur.

In the meantime, I was living much closer to the way most Cubans lived, sharing with them not only the wonderful achievements since the revolution but also the daily frustrations, mistakes, and criticisms. These I saw not just as seeds for counterrevolution, but also as the most precious and important elements necessary to keep the revolution alive.

Our experiences in Cuba, then, were very different, and this fact created more distance between us. But even then, I considered it a healthy process for our mutual independence and freedom. By then you had also formed a new family of your own, and I had begun sharing my life with a companion named Gerda.

After six or seven months, we all went back to Mexico, and the distance between us was growing wider. I had no interest in continuing the study of economics because I knew the school was becoming a training center for administrators, a trampoline for political leaders, teachers, and school directors to get into the party's sanctioned institutions.

None of these alternatives pleased me—I only wanted to take free courses for no particular career. I wanted a nonspecialized education. I wanted to become a whole human being, not just part of a politico-economic machine. Thoroughly frustrated, I finally I decided to leave the university altogether. I decided to leave Mexico and the influence of you and your friends who had served as my primary teachers until then, and to enter into the open university of the world.

My post-graduate studies abroad lasted seven years, from 1968 to 1975, and those studies took me to no less than four continents and twenty-five different countries. During those years, I confronted many social realities: war, revolution, affluence, and hunger, as well as societies both primitive and industrial, capitalist and socialist. My journeys forced me to use my head, hands, and spirit to survive, meeting and sharing with people from almost unbelievably different backgrounds and ideologies. This was an education that no university could have offered. Also during those years, my first two children were born: Odin and Mayura, your grandchildren, one on each side of the world.

During the seven years I was gone, I remember, we communicated by letter, from one side of the planet to the other. By this time, your Seminar on Mayan Culture had become the very important Center for Mayan Studies, and your well-deserved fame took you all over the globe. Yet my journeys and yours were as different from each other as our experiences in Cuba had been. I always respected the whys and hows of your life, but in all those years I could never make you understand the whys and hows of mine.

During those seven years, we met only once, by coincidence, at the London airport between flights. You were waiting for a plane to take you to Paris, I for a flight to New Delhi. During the two hours we together, you met my son and daughter, your two new grandchildren, and I met your new son, my half-brother Claudio.

Unfortunately, during that short time, we shared only our differences. I tried to help you see some of the things that moved my life, some of my visions and needs, but we ended taking our own flights, each feeling frustrated over our mutual lack of comprehension. Neither of us had given the other what we both wanted most to share: our love.

Years later, in 1975, when we met again in Mexico City, I hardly recognized my home or my friends. I felt like a foreigner in my own country. Many people I knew had chosen to travel paths I would not even consider possible for myself, nor would these former friends have considered my road possible for them.

Each time I came to visit you at the Center of Mayan Studies, you seemed glad to see me, but I also know that my long hair, earrings, and way of dressing caused you great confusion. Your own hair had become longer, too, in those years—long and silvery, like the aura that surrounded you. Yet in spite of your brilliant light, I always felt your uneasiness and never understood it. It was an uneasiness that did not correspond to your age, wisdom, or achievements. I would have loved to see you calm and wise in your last years, your serenity unaffected by the little things in life.

After those two years in Mexico, once more I felt the need to leave the country. Yet I also felt that I might not see you again, and this caused me some anxiety because I truly wanted our relationship to be clear. I wanted us to be able to leave one another with feelings of mutual acceptance and respect.

I left in 1976, and we maintained a periodic correspondence. It lacked the intensity of previous years but fortunately it also lacked the ideological and emotional clashes. Ours was a long, slow process of mutual acceptance. I sent you copies of my poems, essays, and published articles, and you sent me copies of your more recent books. We even talked about future projects that might bring us together again. It was a careful and loving process of polishing our mutual respect, of slowly coming together.

Our last letters were all gentle ones—the first such letters in ten years of correspondence. And finally, in one of your last letters, you sent me proof of your acceptance—an acceptance that I had not known since I was a teenager. Your “yes” finally healed a wound between us that had been open for many long and painful years. And it did not require me to change my lifestyle or beliefs. It was an uncompromising yes, a yes that had no bait, no hook.

When a father says yes to his son, this is more important than any social affirmation. It may be even more important than a yes from the spiritual realms, for our father is one with us, and we cannot complete our own growth process if our earthly father continues to reject us and refuses to give us this acknowledgment.

Only two months ago, in June, you called your visiting grandchildren to your office at the museum to give them a gift. It was a book called *The Night Guardians*, which included a couple of real-life stories about the adventures of the archaeologist who discovered the Royal Tomb of Palenque. “For my dear little grandchildren, Odin and Mayura,” you wrote, “as a remembrance from a great adventure lived by your own grandfather.”

Your present arrived along with my two children when they came to visit me in Arizona. Since then, I have never missed an opportunity to show it to people I sense might benefit from seeing it.

When we were camping in the land of the Hopi, for example, near the ancient town of Oraibi, some of the Hopi elders came to visit our camp. I showed them the illustrations of Palenque with great pride. They were very impressed and showed great interest in what I had to tell them about the Maya. Some of them—especially one of their leaders called White Bear, who was then governor of Oraibi—told me that he thought one of their sacred cities, “the mysterious red city of the

Hopi, a city in the south called Palatkwapi," could very well have been the center of Palenque.

My last words to you were sent from the land of the Hopi, the People of Peace. Then, two days ago, came word of your death. Jorge said you had died in Montreal. He said your wish was to be cremated and have your ashes taken to some place near the Tomb of Palenque.

I know that even in this moment that I write you, many people are paying homage to your memory, and that your body will be traveling for the last time from Canada to Mexico. I also know that in Mexico your spirit will begin traveling to the clouds with the smoke, and that your ashes will return to the land of power, that sacred center that you yourself unearthed and gave back to humanity.

Thus closes a perfect cycle as the tears roll down my face and I wonder about the magic of life and death. Wise and impeccable warrior, my very dear doctor, you are a part of me, just as I am a part of my own children, just as we both will be a part of their children. I will love you forever.

Yours always,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alberto". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Alberto".

## APPENDIX D: DESCENDANTS OF JOSE FRANCISCO RUZ Y AMORES

### *Generation No. 1*

**1. José Francisco Ruz y<sup>1</sup> Amores** was born November 20, 1830 in La Havana, Cuba, and died June 09, 1904 in Paris, France. He married **Micaela Mas**.

Child of José Amores and Micaela Mas is:

- + 2        i. Francisco Alberto Ruz y<sup>2</sup> Mas, born July 17, 1863 in Cuba; died in Saint-Antoine d'Auberoche, Dordogne.

### *Generation No. 2*

**2. Francisco Alberto Ruz y<sup>2</sup> Mas** (José Francisco Ruz y<sup>1</sup> Amores) was born July 17, 1863 in Cuba, and died in Saint-Antoine d'Auberoche, Dordogne. He married **Louise Lhuillier**.

Children of Francisco Mas and Louise Lhuillier are:

- + 3        i. Alberto Ruz<sup>3</sup> Lhuillier, born January 27, 1906 in Paris, France; died August 25, 1979 in Montreal, Canada.
- 4        ii. Susanne Ruz Lhuillier.
- 5        iii. Lily Ruz Lhuillier.
- 6        iv. Michel Ruz Lhuillier.

### *Generation No. 3*

**3. Alberto Ruz<sup>3</sup> Lhuillier** (Francisco Alberto Ruz y<sup>2</sup> Mas, José Francisco Ruz y<sup>1</sup> Amores) was born January 27, 1906 in Paris, France, and died August 25, 1979 in Montreal, Canada. He married **(1) Calixta Guiteras Holmes**, daughter of Calixto Gener and María Holmes. He married **(2) Syliva Rendón**. He married **(3) Blanca Buenfil Blengio** 1943, daughter of Roque Martínez and Gertrudis de Buenfil. He married **(4) Celia Gutierrez** 1943 in Campeche.

Children of Alberto Lhuillier and Blanca Blengio are:

- + 7        i. Alberto Buenfil<sup>4</sup> Ruz, born September 11, 1945 in México City, México.
- 8        ii. Jorge Buenfil Ruz, born May 23, 1947.

Child of Alberto Lhuillier and Celia Gutierrez is:

- 9        i. Claudio Gutierrez<sup>4</sup> Ruz, born 1970.

*Generation No. 4*

**7. Alberto Buenfil<sup>4</sup> Ruz** (Alberto Ruz<sup>3</sup> Lhuillier, Francisco Alberto Ruz y<sup>2</sup> Mas, Jose Francisco Ruz y<sup>1</sup> Amores) was born September 11, 1945 in México City, México. He partnered with **(1) Gerda Hansberg Torres**. He partnered with **(2) Alessandra Piccione Comneno d'Otranto**. He partnered with **(3) Lourdes Ondategui**. He partnered with **(4) Veronica Sacta Campos** 2003.

Children of Alberto Ruz and Gerda Torres are:

- + 10 i. Odin Govina Ruz<sup>5</sup> Hansberg, born 1971 in Lund, Sweden.
- + 11 ii. Mayura Natalia Ruz Hansberg, born 1973 in Las Palmas, Canary Islands.

Child of Alberto Ruz and Alessandra d'Otranto is:

- 12 i. Ana Ixchel Ruz<sup>5</sup> Comneno, born 1982 in México City, México.

Child of Alberto Ruz and Lourdes Ondategui is:

- 13 i. Aitor Solkin Ruz<sup>5</sup> Ondategui, born 1991 in Huehucóyotl, Morales.

*Generation No. 5*

**10. Odin Govina Ruz<sup>5</sup> Hansberg** (Alberto Buenfil<sup>4</sup> Ruz, Alberto Ruz<sup>3</sup> Lhuillier, Francisco Alberto Ruz y<sup>2</sup> Mas, Jose Francisco Ruz y<sup>1</sup> Amores) was born 1971 in Lund, Sweden. He partnered with **(1) Kena Acosta**. He partnered with **(2) Sadie Kauffman**.

Child of Odin Hansberg and Kena Acosta is:

- 14 i. Arun AMitab Ruz<sup>6</sup> Acosta, born 1995 in Orissi, India.

Child of Odin Hansberg and Sadie Kauffman is:

- 15 i. Blanca Nayelli Ruz<sup>6</sup> Kauffman, born 2009 in Huehuecoyotl.

**11. Mayura Natalia Ruz<sup>5</sup> Hansberg** (Alberto Buenfil<sup>4</sup> Ruz, Alberto Ruz<sup>3</sup> Lhuillier, Francisco Alberto Ruz y<sup>2</sup> Mas, Jose Francisco Ruz y<sup>1</sup> Amores) was born 1973 in Las Palmas, Canary Islands. She married **David Buenfil**.

Children of Mayura Hansberg and David Buenfil are:

- 16 i. Sebastian Buenfil<sup>6</sup> Ruz, born 2004 in D.F. México City, México.
- 17 ii. Amaya Buenfil Ruz, born 2006 in D.F. México City, México.
- 18 iii. Ilan Buenfil Ruz, born 2010 in Bogota, Columbia.

**APPENDIX E: UNDATED MEMORANDUM GIVEN TO MR. NELSON A. ROCKEFELLER BY  
MRS. COVARRUBIAS**

COPY

Undated memorandum given to Mr. Nelson A. Rockefeller by Mrs. Covarrubias

"Three-year program for intensive exploration of the ruins of Palenque."

	Private	Institute of A.	State Govt.	Total
1st year:	\$ 100,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 200,000
2nd year:	50,000	25,000	25,000	100,000
3rd year:	50,000	25,000	25,000	100,000
	\$ 200,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$400,000

"The amount allotted for the first year would include the construction of a model camp equipped for reasonably comfortable jungle life for investigators and visitors, with laboratories and a small museum, as well as the purchase of exploration materials and instruments, trucks included, and construction materials such as cement, steel, etc., not only for the new installations but for the repair and preservation of the ruins. Due to the lack of convenient transportation facilities such materials are more expensive than in other parts of Mexico, since they have to come to the State of Tabasco, which in itself has very few communications, and from there by river and mule back to Palenque, or by cargo planes.

"The work of exploration during the first three years would be intensive and would be conducted by a relatively large staff of specialists, including the key workers, who would be chosen from the staff of Monte Alban, since they have already a 12 year experience in this type of work. Palenque requires a special treatment, since the jungle has to be cleared, special roads built to bring in heavy construction materials, large architectural structures of stone and stucco would have to be consolidated as soon as cleared to prevent their destruction. The roads (and a branch railway connecting Tabasco with Campeche and passing near Palenque) would be built by both the State and Federal Governments.

"After the three years of intensive work the explorations would take their normal pace, financed entirely by the Institute of Anthropology and the State Government, preferably in equal parts.

"The program is due to begin next winter (1947-1948) but the Maya specialist of the Institute is already in Yucatan engaged in the reconstruction of the buildings of Uxmal, so that he can learn the peculiar technique of reconstructing the elaborate Maya facades."

**APPENDIX F: ESTUDIO PRELIMINAR DE LOS RESTOS OSTEOLÓGICOS ENCONTRADOS  
EN LA TUMBA DEL TEMPLO DE LA INSCRIPCIONES, PALENQUE**

## A P E N D I C E

ESTUDIO PRELIMINAR DE LOS RESTOS OSTEOLOGICOS ENCONTRADOS EN  
LA TUMBA DEL TEMPLO DE LAS INSCRIPCIONES, PALENQUEEUSEBIO DÁVALOS H.  
y ARTURO ROMANO

Ocupando la porción central de la cámara funeraria se encuentra un sarcófago monolítico rectangular, en el centro del cual se talló una cavidad oblonga alargada terminando en su extremo distal en forma de cola de pez. Dicha forma da idea de que fué tallada expresamente para el cadáver que en ella se depositó, ya que sus dimensiones son apenas un poco mayores que el esqueleto en ella encontrado. En el borde superior y siguiendo el contorno del sarcófago existe un marco entrante de aproximadamente diez y medio centímetros de profundidad por otros tantos de altura y que tiene como función dar cabida a la tapa, la que elaborada con el mismo material y también monolítica, cubre el sepulcro. Toda la superficie interior del recipiente mortuorio se halla finamente pulida y pintada con un pigmento rojo, probablemente cinabrio.

En el piso, que se encuentra a treinta y seis centímetros de profundidad con respecto al borde en donde descansaba la tapa, se halla el esqueleto de un individuo adulto, de aproximadamente cuarenta o cincuenta años, del sexo masculino, yacente en decúbito dorsal, con los brazos extendidos a lo largo del cuerpo, teniendo la mano derecha en pronación y la izquierda en supinación; las extremidades inferiores en extensión completa y los pies en posición forzada hacia afuera de la línea media. El estado general de los restos óseos es francamente deleznable aun cuando se mantienen *in situ* todas las piezas que forman el esqueleto. Excepción hecha del húmero derecho, el resto de los huesos se encuentra en su lugar normal de acuerdo con la posición anotada. El citado húmero se aparta del sitio de articulación, en su extremidad proximal, seis centímetros; en cambio casi todos los demás huesos se mantienen en contacto con su articulación respectiva.

El cráneo está fragmentado tanto en sus porciones cupulares como en las basales, y algunos de sus fragmentos esparcidos fuera de sitio, lo que

impide percibir si existía o no deformación intencional del mismo. La porción facial se conserva en buena parte y la mandíbula aparece íntegra apoyando su porción mentoneana sobre el cuerpo de la séptima vértebra cervical. Es robusta, de mentón saliente y cuadrangular característica de su sexo. Su estado de conservación permitió obtener los siguientes datos métricos:

Anchura bigoniaca .....	98 mm.
Longitud de la rama ascendente derecha .....	58 ..
Anchura mínima de la rama ascendente derecha .....	29 ..
Anchura mínima de la rama ascendente izquierda .....	29 ..
Altura de la sínfisis .....	30 ..
Altura del cuerpo mandibular derecho (alvéolo reabsorbido) .....	17 ..
Altura del cuerpo mandibular izquierdo (alvéolo reabsorbido) .....	21 ..

Las piezas dentarias, bien desarrolladas y escasamente desgastadas en su superficie masticatoria, se encuentran *in situ*. El incisivo medio inferior se halla desviado con su cara lingual orientada hacia la línea media. Los alvéolos correspondientes a las segundas molares, derecha e izquierda inferiores, se encuentran reabsorbidos.

A partir de la séptima vértebra cervical pueden observarse todas las vértebras dorsales en posición, conservando incluso la curva de concavidad izquierda característica; las vértebras lumbares, así como las sacrococcigeas están cubiertas por una delgada película, probablemente la tela que cubría esa región. Circundan al esqueleto, en la porción alta del tórax, un gran número de cuentas tubulares y esféricas así como otros objetos de jade que impiden observar en su totalidad ambos omóplatos, clavículas y parte de las costillas. De entre tales objetos emergen las porciones articulares de los omóplatos y en la porción media, la extremidad proximal de la clavícula derecha. El húmero derecho, el mejor conservado, presenta fisuras bastante amplias de dirección longitudinal en su porción diafisiaria, así como otra en sentido transversal que separa en forma irregular la extremidad distal del resto del hueso. El húmero izquierdo, ligeramente separado de su articulación escapular, se encuentra aún más fragmentado e incompleto. En su tercio medio y en la extremidad distal, se halla cubierto por los restos de lo que aparenta ser una tela. En vista de

que ambos omóplatos parecen conservarse en la posición original, tomamos la distancia entre ambas caras articulares, resultado ésta ser de trescientos veintidós milímetros. La separación inter-humeral a la altura de la porción interna de las cabezas, es de trescientos ochenta y cinco milímetros, cifra que resulta alta ya que, como lo anotamos, el húmero derecho está separado sesenta milímetros de su correspondiente articulación. El cúbito derecho conserva su posición original y el radio correspondiente se halla desplazado diagonalmente, con la extremidad proximal dirigida hacia la línea media y situado debajo del cúbito debido a la pronación de la mano. Dicho cúbito se presenta muy fisurado en sentido longitudinal y fragmentado en su porción distal a la altura de su entrecruzamiento con el radio respectivo. A este último hueso le falta la epífisis proximal y se encuentra, además, fragmentado en tres porciones casi equidistantes. Los huesos del antebrazo izquierdo son poco visibles debido al acúmulo de cuentas de jade que los cubren y cuyo peso parece haberlos reducido a fragmentos muy pequeños. Los huesos del carpo, metacarpo y falanges han mantenido su contacto articular normal y su estado de conservación puede decirse, que es el mejor de todo el esqueleto. Varios de los anillos de jade conservan incluidas las falanges que los portaban. Respecto a la pelvis, su estado de fragmentación es máximo, aunque el material de desintegración permite darse idea de sus características, ya que permanece *in situ*. Las porciones menos mal conservadas son un fragmento de la cresta ilíaca derecha, las regiones cotiloideas mantenidas en contacto articular, así como parte de la porción isquio-pubiana. Los fragmentos anteriores, así como el material de desintegración evidencian que se trata de una pelvis estrecha, fuerte y de gruesas paredes, datos que confirman el sexo masculino del esqueleto. Entre ambas cabezas femorales existe una distancia de ciento dieciocho milímetros. Los fémures son robustos y se conservan paralelos uno al lado del otro, separados en la porción media por una distancia de ciento sesenta milímetros y en la porción condílea por ochenta milímetros. El estado de conservación de ambos fémures es pésimo ya que están fragmentados en múltiples partes y en avanzada desintegración. Las rótulas se mantienen *in situ*; la izquierda íntegra, aun cuando deleznable, tiene un diámetro transversal de cincuenta milímetros por cuarenta y cinco de longitud, lo que da idea de su buen desarrollo; la derecha no permite mediciones. Ambas tibias y peronés son igualmente robustos. Las tibias se encuentran hacia afuera y los peronés en la margen interna de las mismas, posición ésta debida a la

actitud forzada, hacia afuera, de ambos pies. Los huesos que componen estos últimos, se hallan todos, en posición, estando los calcáneos muy mal conservados y en estado de desintegración. En mejores condiciones están los astrágalos así como los demás huesos del tarso, metatarso y falanges.

En vista del pésimo estado de conservación del esqueleto y con el único propósito de poder tener una idea aproximada de la talla del sujeto, se tomó la longitud que separa a la parte más alta del cráneo del extremo del calcáneo izquierdo, resultando ésta de mil setecientos treinta milímetros. Por otra parte, la robustez de los huesos y la posición que guardaban éstos sugieren la posibilidad de que se trata de un individuo de alta talla, bien proporcionado, sin lesiones patológicas aparentes y de fuerte estructura ósea.

Todas las observaciones anteriores fueron hechas manteniéndose *in situ* el total del contenido de la tumba, incluso los objetos ornamentales y de ofrenda, lo que da al presente informe un carácter preliminar.

Los datos arqueológicos relacionados con el entierro, permiten atribuir al mismo una gran antigüedad. Esta, así como el estado de intensa y permanente humedad que ha tenido la cámara sepulcral, han hecho desaparecer en su totalidad cualquier vestigio de materia orgánica. Para tratar de manipular los restos óseos y con el fin de conservar hasta donde fuese posible, su estructura, se estuvieron bañando todas las piezas con una solución diluída de cemento Duco, lográndose resultados sólo parcialmente satisfactorios.

Complementa este informe la documentación gráfica obtenida *in situ* (Ver Informe de Alberto Ruz: láms. XXVI y XXVII, y fig. 10).

**APPENDIX G: REPORT ON WORK OF THE COMMISSION FOR STUDY OF MAYA WRITING**

90-845

(TRANSLATION)

(March 29, 1966)

REPORT ON WORK OF THE COMMISSION FOR STUDY OF MAYAN WRITING (CEEM)  
December 1964 to February 1966

At the start of the 1964-1965 work period the following elements were available for further research:

1. Restructure of the continuity of the sections and pages of the Dresden, Madrid and Paris codices;
2. General analysis of sentences and definition of the reading sequence of the sentences on the tablets;
3. System of identification of the elements of Mayan writing and establishment of criteria to consider its variances;
4. Experimental catalogue of the elements of Mayan writing based on the catalogues of Thompson, Knorozov, Zimmermann, and the Novosibirsk's group and more recent research of CEEM;
5. System of transcription and codification of Mayan writing;
6. Experimental concordance of 14 pages of the Dresden codex;
7. Tentative enumeration of the elements and sequences of linguistic material of Chilam Balam of Chumayel;
8. General strategic plan and specific works for subsequent research.

On the basis of the above, the working group of the CEEM -- within the established plan of work made known at the November 1965 CEEM joint session -- performed the following tasks:

1. Codification of the elements of Mayan writing present in the Dresden and Madrid codices, assigning a key to each element for easy handling in electronic computers;
2. Modification and amplification of the codification system and transcription of graphic elements and of the localizing system of each element on the tablet.

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90-865

3. Integration of the catalogue of writing elements with the keys assigned to them in accordance with a pre-established classifying criterion;
4. Preparation of tables for the identification of the keys assigned by CEM in comparison with the catalogues of Thompson, Khorosov, Zimmermann and the Novosibirsk's group;
5. Transcription on perforated cards of the Dresden and Madrid codices;
6. Analysis of the internal structure of glyph "sentences" on the basis of the concordance tentatively made previously;
7. Establishment of a system of transcription for colonial Mayan manuscripts;
8. Establishment of the system of codification for identifying and localizing graphic elements with a relation to the codex, manuscript or monument where they are found, with identification of the place and historical horizon whence they came;
9. Preparation of a dictionary of elements of colonial Mayan language on the basis of the Dictionaries of Pío Pérez and Metul;
10. Coded transcription on perforated cards, of Chilam Balam of Chumayel, Reys' edition.
11. Enumeration of phonetic elements and sequences up to 5 elements from the linguistic material included in the Chilam Balam of Chumayel;
12. Comparison of the Reys' version of the Chilam Balam of Chumayel with a facsimile of the document to establish the "cut" of the elements of colonial writing, keeping in mind any possible relation of these "cuts" with the elements of Mayan writing;
13. Transcription of the paleographic version by Barrera Vázquez of the Chilames of Tizimín and Ixil, which CEM acquired from said researcher;

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- 14. Transcription of the texts of the ceremony of Blankanche;
- 15. Publication of:
  - a) "New 'plastic' classification of Mayan glyphs" by Juan José Rendón and Amalia Spescha, with appendix by Daniel Gazes (Studies of Mayan Culture, Volume V, 1965, that includes:
    - a. Transcription systems
    - b. Criteria of Classification
    - c. Catalogue (cf. 3)
    - d. Comparative tables of the CEEM's catalogue with others (cf. 3,4)
    - e. Identification tables of pages in accordance with Escalante, in comparison with those of Zimmermann (cf. 1 of previous works)
    - f. System of codification for the identification and localizing of graphic elements with relation to the codex, manuscript or monument where they are found with identification of place and historical horizon whence they came (cf. 8)
  - b) "Structural analysis of a sample of Mayan Writing" by Juan José Rendón and Leonardo Manrique (Annals of Anthropology of the UNAMA, Volume 3, 1966, in the process of being printed), that includes:
    - a. Classification of glyphs in accordance with its structural function in the sample of 14 pages of the Dresden codex (cf. 6 of previous works and 6)
    - b. Tables of frequency of elements of Mayan writing in the said sample.
    - c. Tables of transcription for the structures in the sample.

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The following works are in process:

1. Study of the identification of glyphs with personages on the basis of studies of other researchers and conclusions of CEEM;
2. Systematic study of the identifying elements of the personages of the Dresden and Madrid codices;
3. Linguistic structure analysis of colonial Mayan;
4. Analysis of the results of the enumeration of phonetics and sequences of the Chilam Balam of Chumyel;
5. Programming of the enumeration of morphemes, words and their sequences;
6. Completion of the programming for the preparation of concordance of the codices and transcription of manuscripts;
7. Study of amplification of the dictionary of colonial Mayan elements, and final writing for publications.

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