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A Proposed Name for Rio Azul and a Glyph for "Water."

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In looking through the Rio Azul reports I recently noticed one of the toponyms in the tombs may represent the name of the location itself. One version of the glyph (Fig. 1) is located in Tomb 6 along with three other toponyms and the other appears in a xerox copy I have of another tomb which is not identified in my material. This toponym consists of Stuart's (1987) *witznal* glyph for "mountain place" preceded by a two sign combination. The upper sign was identified independently by Grube and Schele (1991) as phonetic *sa*. Peter Mathews (1979) identified this same sign functioning as *sak* in a month name on Tonina M69 (Fig. 2). The first sign is thus *sa* or *sak*.

The second sign is the dotted scroll that appears as a sign for the surface of water in the Tikal canoe scenes (Fig. 3), a identification that was first presented to me in 1972 by Clemency Coggin. Since this icon recurs consistently in water



Tomb 6 south wall
(drawing by B. Cannell)

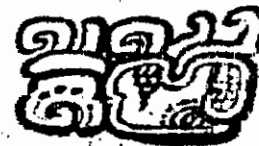


Fig. 1 Toponyms from Rio Azul

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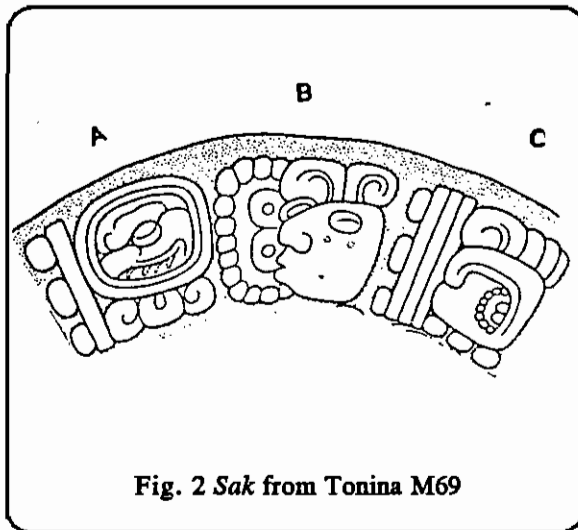


Fig. 2 Sak from Tonina M69

bands throughout the Classic period, I take it to represent a word for "water" or something like "lake" or "river." In this context, I propose it is *ha* "water" and that the name of the mountain is *sak ha witznal* or "Clear-Water Mountain." Today the nearby river is called Rio Azul in Spanish and Blue Creek in Belizean English, presumably because of the clarity of its waters. In Classical Maya "clear water" was *Sak Ha*. I think this was name of the river at the site and was used either for one of the major pyramidal structure in the city or for some hill or rise in the region.

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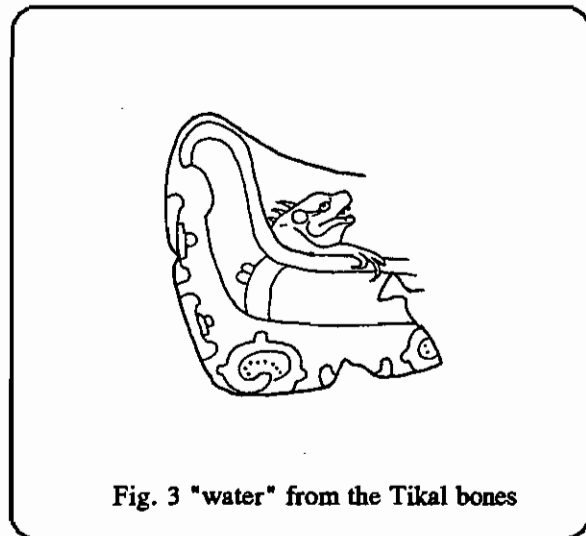


Fig. 3 "water" from the Tikal bones

1979 Tonina Dates: 1. A Glyph for the Period of 260 Days? *Maya Glyph Notes*, No. 8. MS provided by author.

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