

NEW EPIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE OF  
LATE CLASSIC MAYA POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

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Abstract

This paper presents a new hieroglyphic decipherment that has direct bearing on our understanding of the political and social structure of the Classic Maya. The hieroglyph to be discussed is a title carried by nobles of sites in the Usumacinta River drainage that seems to signify an elite political office below that of kings. While a literal reading of this "subsidiary" title cannot be made, it may specifically refer to the lesser rulers of small dependency sites under larger centers. From this interpretation it will be posited that the rough boundaries of certain ancient polities, namely those of Yaxchilan, Piedras Negras, Palenque, and perhaps Lacanha, can be at least partially reconstructed. This interpretation may also indicate some regional and temporal variation in the political organization in the Classic Maya lowlands.

## I. THE "SUBSIDIARY" TITLE GLYPH

From the beginning of this century Mayanists have worked to gather information which would shed light on the political organization, or types of organization, of the lowland Classic Maya. Many methods from both an archaeological and epigraphic standpoint have been used, for instance, to obtain evidence for a hierarchical "ranking" of Maya sites (Morley 1920, 1938:247; Marcus 1976; Adams and Jones 1981). While most would agree that the whole question of ancient political and territorial organization is too complex to be considered through any single aspect of Maya studies, it is certainly true that some of the most revealing sources of new information on such matters are the ancient Maya monumental inscriptions (Coe 1965; Culbert 1974: 74). This is especially true in light of the rapid advances made within the last decade in deciphering Maya hieroglyphic writing. This paper relies primarily on epigraphy and aims to stimulate fresh discussion and thought about this old and intriguing question in Maya studies.

The majority of Maya monumental inscriptions that we can now understand are basically of a political theme and content (Proskouriakoff 1960, 1963, 1964). They tell largely of the lives and deeds of celebrated kings and their families. The various methods used by the Maya for expressing political roles and definitions, in the art as well as the hieroglyphs, are now becoming more completely understood (Stuart 1982; Freidel and Schele 1982). It is therefore reasonable to expect that detailed

information concerning Classic Maya political structure would be reflected, in some degree, within the inscriptions. Until recently the only aspect of Maya political organization known to us has involved the highest levels of kingship, the ruler, with virtually no hints of the subordinate offices or other details of the presumed underlying political structure. This study examines some pertinent texts which reveal detailed aspects of such substructures in the ancient Maya political organization. Specifically, a glyphic title is to be discussed which appears to signify a proposed political office held by high royal officials who are not rulers<sup>1</sup>. This may have important implications on the organizational nature of Classic Maya states.

Within the hieroglyphic inscriptions of a number of sites in the western Maya Lowlands there is a certain hieroglyph which, in convenient epigraphic terminology, falls under the functional category of "title." This is so because the glyph is always found as a part of a larger group of glyphs called "name phrases," but in those cases it is never a personal name. There are, as will be seen, many names recorded in Maya texts which are accompanied by this glyph.

The hieroglyph in question can take two graphic forms (Figure 1), which are interchangeable. and, consequently, indistinct in their meaning. These two forms are in Thompson's system transcribed as: T1004 (Figure 1, a) and T25.181:178 (Figure 1, b). The different forms constitute an example of the substitution principle between signs in Maya writing for T1004<sup>2</sup> and T563a, which are known to be equivalent signs in contexts

other than this title (Lounsbury, personal communication 1978). Their ability to replace one another is based on one phonetic value, probably a consonant-vowel syllable, the two signs presumably share. This phonetic reading is unknown at this writing, but I suspect that the vowel involved is -a, as in the signs for ba, ca, na, etc. In the hieroglyph in question this sign precedes the sign T181, known to have the value ah or possibly h(a) (Knorozov 1955), as in the spelling ta-ah (or ta-h(a)) for tah, "torch" (Mathews, personal communication 1980). Often these two signs in the glyph, depending on its type of use, are followed by la or -al, T178. Together these signs would seem to "spell" a word -ah or, with the T178 suffix, -ahal. The missing initial consonant can be reconstructed once the phonetic value of T1004a and T563a is known.

### Inscriptions of the Yaxchilan Region

An example of the of this subsidiary glyph, as it shall be referred to, occurs in two related sculptures of Yaxchilan, Mexico: Lintel 8 and a step from Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 of the same site (Figure 2, a and b). Both these sculptures contain portraits of the same individual: the left-side figure on Lintel 8 is, on the basis of its glyphic captions, known to be the same person shown as a ball-player on the step. His name is expressed on Lintel 8 with the glyphs in the L-shape arrangement designated B1 through D3, and on the step he is similarly named with glyphs A3 to C1. Note that the name glyphs are the same, save some

difference in internal arrangement, and that the last glyph in each case (D3 and C1 respectively) is one of the two forms of the title under discussion.

The scene on Lintel 8 is significant to our understanding of this title for it reveals an obvious relationship, political or otherwise, between this individual and the ruler of Yaxchilan shown with him, "Bird-Jaguar" IV (Proskouriakoff 1964). While the precise relationship is not obvious from this example alone, it is clear that this personage was an important noble in the Yaxchilan political structure. I am certain, however, that this noble never became ruler himself, for his name is not that of any later king. Instead, he always appears on sculptures as a secondary figure to the ruler. This is an extremely important point to consider in determining the significance of the title. Indeed, this and all the examples to be cited below reveal that the title in question never accompanies the names of rulers, but only nobles who, by definition, are secondary to the ruler. Therefore the Yaxchilan evidence leads to the tentative "reading" of this glyph as a "secondary" or "subsidiary" title. This complementary association between the title and those who carry it is found frequently in other Maya inscriptions.

A more specific association between this title and secondary personages can probably be derived from an inspection of the hieroglyphic texts of La Pasadita, Guatemala. This site lies near the Usumacinta River very close to Yaxchilan, and, on the basis of its art style and location, the probability is very high that was a site under the political domain of Yaxchilan. The

only texts which are known from this site occur on three sculptured lintels which were first discussed together by Simpson (1976).

Each of these lintels show multiple figures with their name glyphs, but one particular personage is shown on all three. On Lintel 1 (Figure 3, a) one finds the record of a "capture" in the inscription, and the scene shows two figures standing victorious over a bound prisoner. The figure in frontal view holding the spear and shield is surely the protagonist named in the text, the Yaxchilan ruler "Bird-Jaguar" IV (Proskouriakoff 1963, 1964). The second standing figure, occupying an obvious lesser position than "Bird-Jaguar," is named with the two glyphs placed next to his figure labeled D and E. With these name glyphs, as will be seen, we can identify this person on the other two lintels as well.

La Pasadita Lintel 2 (Figure 3, b) shows again "Bird-Jaguar" IV, some years after the date on Lintel 1. He is here pictured in an act of auto-sacrifice (Stuart 1982). The second figure on Lintel 2 is named with glyphs zA4 and zA5, and it can be clearly seen that the name is similar to that of the figure on Lintel 1. The second glyph here is the subsidiary title, and, referring back to the caption on Lintel 1, it would seem that there the second damaged glyph (E) was the same title in its other graphic form.

The third lintel (Figure 3, c) is another which shows this same subsidiary character. A figure seated on the throne is named with glyphs A1 through E as the Yaxchilan ruler "Shield-Jaguar," the son and immediate successor to "Bird-Jaguar." This sculpture

may then record part of the actual accession ceremony of "Shield-Jaguar." Two other figures shown standing before the ruler present what may be the accouterment of the royal office: a headdress and instruments of bloodletting. The first in line of the standing nobles is named once again with two glyphs (F1, F2), identifying him as the same secondary individual seen on the previous two sculptures.

These three lintels are special for a number of reasons. First, they again show examples of the title in question with a person who is, again, certainly a subsidiary noble, thus strengthening the point made earlier with Yaxchilan texts. Also, we can see how this noble apparently kept his subsidiary status over the reigns of two Yaxchilan kings, thus suggesting an aspect of Maya politics which was independent of the actual reigns of the major rulers. The most significant, however, rests in the fact that these panels, all showing the same secondary individual, originate from a site which was surely secondary in political nature to Yaxchilan. Moreover, the La Pasadita individual is to my knowledge named only there, and not in the texts of Yaxchilan or its other dependency sites. The status of this individual and the similar relative status of La Pasadita is, I think, no coincidence. The situation strongly implies that secondary personage pictured with the Yaxchilan rulers at La Pasadita was actually the ruler of that secondary site. One could speculate that is shown with the Yaxchilan kings in order to document, at the small site he rules, his own political position and high status in relation to that of the Yaxchilan lords. While



the hypothesis that these were rulers of secondary sites cannot of course be proved, I believe it fits well with the situation presented. Moreover, it is supported by reviewing some texts of other "secondary" sites along the Usumacinta River.

The site of El Chicozapote, Mexico, is situated a short distance downstream from Yaxchilan, and for reasons to be presented below, I think it was, like La Pasadita, a site of secondary status to Yaxchilan. Unfortunately there are not many hieroglyphic texts from El Chicozapote; the longest is the apparently continuous inscription on Lintels 1 and 2. The latter sculpture has a very weathered text at its top, a portion of which is illustrated (Figure 4). This part of the inscription seems to contain two distinct names: the first, unfortunately eroded, is at B1 and A2, and the second at C1-D2. Between these two names is a clear example of the "subsidiary" glyph, but rather than standing alone as a title it seems to here express a relationship between the two persons named. The different function of this example is reflected in its prefix. This is the third person possessive pronoun u ("his, hers, its"), and its use in other contexts in the inscriptions demands that it here refer to the second of the two names. The "subsidiary" glyph would in the same way be expected to refer to the first name, apparently as a title.

By means of this grammatical structure, the El Chicozapote passage can be read as: 1) Name "A," 2) "the 'subsidiary' of" 3) Name "B." The relationship expressed is then based on political status, stating that the first named is a subsidiary of the

second named. The subject "A" then appears to occupy the same status as the other secondary nobles discussed so far. Thus, if El Chicozapote was indeed a site within the control of Yaxchilan we would expect the name of "B" to be that of a Yaxchilan ruler. Indeed, this second name may be elicited from the epithet, "the captor of (D1) 'Ahau' (G2)," a known reference to "Shield-Jaguar" II (Proskouriakoff 1963). The unfortunate condition of this text calls for a degree of tentativeness in the identification of this name. However, If read correctly, this one text then expresses in more explicit terms a political relationship identical to that postulated above between Yaxchilan and La Pasadita. From this discussion of inscriptions within the Yaxchilan area, one can begin to chart, in terms of specific geographical scope, the political control of that major site<sup>3</sup>.

### Inscriptions of the Piedras Negras Region

Piedras Negras is the next major center located downstream from Yaxchilan, and an investigation of its inscriptions results in both confirmations and extensions of some points made above.

Stela 5 of Piedras Negras, Guatemala, (Figure 5, a) portrays two individuals, one standing and facing another who sits on a two-headed jaguar throne. The dates on this monument fit within the reign of the fourth known ruler of Piedras Negras ("Ruler 4") (see Proskouriakoff 1960), and so there is little hesitation in indentifying the seated lord on the front of the monument as Ruler 4. The standing figure is named with a caption of three

glyphs placed above him (Figure 5, b), and it is clear that the third block, read after what are presumably his personal names, is a form of the subsidiary title. Thus, we have one other example of the association between this title and persons who are high nobles but are secondary to the ruler.

The figure named on the front of Stela 5 is also found on the famed Panel 3<sup>4</sup> of Piedras Negras (Figure 6, a). This wall panel shows a row of figures seated before a royal throne, in positions of secondary status to the enthroned ruler. These seated nobles are named with the incised glyphs placed below them (Figure 6, b), and one of the names is identical to that of the figure on Stela 5, here again with the subsidiary title. In addition, there are two other "subsidiary" glyphs to be found among the names of the seated figures, thus offering two more examples of the secondary status association of this title.

The site near Piedras Negras which best exemplifies the type of secondary status reflected in the texts of La Pasadita and El Chicozapote is that of El Cayo, Mexico, on the Usumacinta River. This site can be placed in this relative relationship to Piedras Negras for some of the same reasons noted above, one of which is the similarity of art style between the two sites. The most suggestive reason, however, is the common presence of the subsidiary title in its inscriptions.

There are two sculptures from El Cayo which contain decipherable inscriptions. Part of the inscription of Panel 2 (Figure 7) expresses a subsidiary relationship in exactly the same manner as the inscription noted above from El Chicozapote.

First, there is the name of an El Cayo ruler (glyphs B2, C2a), followed by "-ah(-al)" ("the 'subsidiary' of") at C2b. Most unfortunately, the section which follows at D1 is damaged and unreadable. Considering geographical relationships, art style, and chronology, it is very likely that this missing section of the text named Ruler 2 of Piedras Negras.

Another use of the "subsidiary" glyph, other than as a lone title or in a relationship glyph, is found on Panel 1 and it helps to define more specifically the notion of this subsidiary status. Two event records known to signify "accession" are present in this text (Figure 8, a) but before discussing these specifically let me for a moment review the expression as it is commonly known in other texts.

There exist in inscriptions a number of event expressions known to mean generally "accession" or "seating." One of the most common forms of this event is the so-called "toothache" glyph, as established by Proskouriakoff (1960). The "toothache" glyph seldom, if ever, stands alone as the whole accession expression; there is usually a glyph that follows which qualifies the accession for a particular office or position. This second part begins with T59, the locative preposition ti ("at, on, as, to, etc.") as identified by Thompson (1972: 38, 294), and then gives a record of the office or position attained. For example, the most common such office is ahau, "lord," or more specifically ahaulel "rulership," and an example is presented here (Figure 8, b).

On El Cayo Panel 1 the accession expressions, one will note,

do not have ahaulel as the office specified, but rather one indicated by the subsidiary title. Thus we might read each of the expressions at El Cayo as "he acceded as 'subsidiary'." This suggests that the title indicated more of a political office than a class differentiation or, less likely, that it was a class position which one could "accede." Moreover, it would seem that this "subsidiary" office was inherited, as was the royal office at the major sites. This is suggested by an El Cayo text which express a father-son relationship for two of the El Cayo rulers (Figure 8, c) (see Schele, Mathews, and Lounsbury 1977).

To summarize discussion of these texts, the three rulers of El Cayo mentioned between Panels 1 and 2 are all that are securely known from this site, and the fact that all three are referred to by the "subsidiary" glyph is good evidence in its own right that El Cayo was a secondary center under Piedras Negras. With this, as with Yaxchilan, one has the beginning of some solid epigraphic evidence of a detailed territorial organization.

### **Inscriptions of the Bonampak Region**

Another well known site of the Usumacinta area is of course Bonampak, where there are also some suggestive instances of the subsidiary title. The famed murals from Structure 1 offer more than a few examples. The title accompanies the name captions for many of the secondary attendant nobles shown in the complex scenes (Miller 1981). This fact would corroborate the proposed restrictions of this subsidiary title.

In the region surrounding Bonampak there are a number of sites which have inscriptions relevant to this discussion of the subsidiary title. One of these is Lacanha, the original location of a relief now in the collection of Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C. (Figure 9, a) (Coe and Benson 1966). The inscription, interestingly, exhibits all the uses of the subsidiary title discussed above, and so it is convenient as a base from which to summarize many of the points proposed so far. The protagonist of this inscription is named, in similar fashion as seen above at El Chicozapote and at El Cayo, as the "subsidiary" of the ruler "Knotted-eye Jaguar" (Figure 9, b). "Knotted-eye-Jaguar" was thus the contemporary ruler of higher status. In this inscription we also find references to the parents of the protagonist, and the names of both the father and the mother are accompanied by the subsidiary title (Figure 9, c). The final example of the title on this panel is in a "seating" expression, functioning identically to those noted at El Cayo, where it signifies the office to which the protagonist was previously inaugurated (Figure 9, d)<sup>5</sup>.

I have not yet discussed the presence of the subsidiary office title with the names of women, but it seems to be somewhat infrequent. Only two or three other instances are known to me; one being the mother of the Yaxchilan ruler "Shield-Jaguar" II. Admittedly, such instances of the glyph with women are more difficult to explain, but it is not unusual for women to hold so-called "offices" like this one. The wife of a Palenque ruler in fact was inaugurated into a certain office during the reign of

her spouse. The presence of the subsidiary title with women reflects, I believe, a more general theme underlying the office which is as yet unclear. A working hypothesis is that it merely signifies the "provincial" origin for these noble women. Thus, it is possible that the mother of "Shield-Jaguar," for example, came from La Pasadita, El Chicozapote, or some other dependency site within the political sphere of Yaxchilan. There would be a similar explanation for the woman recorded on this Lacanha panel. With more investigation this might provide some interesting data concerning the politics of royal marriage during the Classic Period.

In discussing the panel from Lacanha, I should also remark on the possible political relationships among the sites of that area. This would help in considering which site, if any of those known, was foremost in status among the others, and which of those others were subsidiaries or dependencies of it. Unfortunately there has been no careful archeological reconnaissance of the region, and so any attempt to determine the relative sizes of such sites as Bonampak and Lacanha would have to be supported through surveys. Nonetheless, some general remarks can be made. My personal view is that Bonampak was probably not the largest nor most important site of the region. Its relative importance in the region has probably been somewhat exaggerated, and understandably, by the presence of its magnificent murals. It is arguable that Bonampak is possibly smaller in size than Lacanha. On the basis of what is now known of this area (which is meager at best), I would place Lacanha as

the most likely candidate for its primary center (see Ruppert, Thompson, and Proskouriakoff 1955: 3-7 and Blom and Duby 1955 for brief descriptions of some of the sites in the area). The monuments and murals of Bonampak refer to major lords as their protagonists, but these rulers might have held their actual seats of power at Lacanha (At present the inscriptions of Lacanha neither confirm nor deny this). This can be likened to the lintels from La Pasadita where the Yaxchilan kings are the chief figures. However, I should strongly warn that the whole question of site hierarchy in this region is one to be kept open until more data <sup>is</sup> available.

The dependency site of Lacanha which the Dumbarton Oaks panel protagonist conceivably ruled could very well have been Bonampak itself. His hieroglyphic name is on one of the Lintels of Structure I at Bonampak (Mathews 1980) and also on a doorjamb of the same edifice as part of the murals (Figure 10, a and b). These places of record were certainly special, possibly reserved for mention of the Bonampak subsidiary ruler.

### Inscriptions of Other Sites

So far the inscriptions discussed have come from three principal site areas: Yaxchilan, Piedras Negras, and Lacanha-Bonampak. This is true because the texts of these areas exhibit in the clearest manner the various uses and contexts of the "subsidiary" glyph. There are, however, instances of the title at other sites.



Miraflores is a small site located a short distance to the northwest of Palenque, and a Late Classic panel from that site seems to name a subject as a subsidiary. The incomplete text on the panel expresses a "possessed" relationship, like those seen at El Chicozapote and Lacanha, and the name of the possessing king is clearly that of Pacal, the major ruler of Palenque (Figure 11). The implication that Miraflores was a dependency site. Also, we may now add Palenque to the list of probable "capitals," along with Yaxchilan, Piedras Negras, and perhaps Lacanha.

Pomona, Tabasco, is a large site located near the Usumacinta in the flatlands near the modern town of Tenosique. Not explored completely (and looted extensively), it nonetheless is noted for its fine sculpture, and particularly a fragmentary wall panel published by Lizardi Ramos (1963). This panel exhibits a subsidiary title in reference to a seated figure shown on the panel. There are a few slight indications that this site was also a "capital" along the lines of those others mentioned above.

These discussed centers are all situated in the western part of the Maya area, and so there seems to be a striking geographical restriction in the use of the subsidiary title. Some general implications of this will be reserved for discussion below.

For now, then, the following can be said of the title and its uses:

- 1) It is a title apparently signifying a political office

or status slightly below that of the major ruler, thus pointing to a second level in the political hierarchy during the Classic period.

- 2) This office or status, like that of the major ruler, was hereditary.
- 3) The holders of this title were sometimes rulers overseeing smaller sites under the domain of a certain larger regional "capital."

Until now I have limited my discussion to purely epigraphic matters, hopefully establishing some truths about the "subsidiary" glyph. These suggestions can stand alone, without extending them a step further toward more general implications. However, from some of the more basic findings discussed above <sup>concerning</sup> ~~of~~ power relationships between elite members (and consequently between certain sites), I now wish to make some suggestions about Maya state organization.

## II. SOME GEO-POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

When the Spanish first arrived in Yucatan in the early sixteenth century, the Maya inhabitants of the peninsula lived among sixteen or so separate territorial divisions, or what can loosely be called states (Roys 1965). Most of these provinces (in Maya either tzucubte or cuchcabal) were each ruled by a

hereditary ruler with the title halach uinic, "true man," or ahau, and the name of the ruling lineage was often that of the province itself. A small number of territories were governed as loose confederacies of towns and villages, and basically there was considerable variation in the political organization of these polities. In those provinces with centralized rule, the halach uinic placed his seat of power in the principal town that oversaw the smaller towns and villages surrounding it. These smaller settlements were in turn often ruled by sub-chiefs of the provincial ruler called batabs, whose duties were administrative, judicial, and to a large degree military (see Tozzer 1941: 299). As Roys notes (1943: 65), warfare between the provinces was common, and a major goal of the frequent short raids was to acquire captives for sacrifice.

How can this scenario of the territorial and political organization in northern Yucatan at the time of the conquest be applied, if at all, to conditions in the southern lowlands during the Classic period? Unfortunately the ethnohistorical record of the geo-political scene in Yucatan prior to that just described is expectedly vague and incomplete. The sixteen or so provinces were formed a century before the conquest at the fall of Mayapan, and that in turn had grown out of the "foreign" Itza control of Yucatan centered at Chichen Itza. No record exists in the native chronicles of Maya political organization prior to this.

The notion that states existed in the Maya Lowlands during the Classic period is not a new idea, and I believe it is one accepted by most Mayanists. Thompson (1954: 80-81) noted that

"regional styles of sculpture and glyphs ... point to cities having areas of influence." Before Berlin's identification of the Emblem Glyph (Berlin 1958), the point of art and architectural style was perhaps the most important in seeking to determine the political affiliations of certain sites. Even in recent years there has been little significant progress in the understanding of the specifics of site relationships. The detailed model of Marcus (1973, 1976) was the most ambitious attempt to bring a new light to the matter of territorial organization, and specifically the affiliation of secondary sites to certain "capitals." It is in this way that the existence of states <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ brought out by establishing hierarchical relationships between sites. Marcus' theory holds that a hierarchy of sites can be deduced by analyzing the actual distribution of Emblem Glyphs in Maya inscriptions. For instance, she notes that since the inscriptions of Tonina mention the Emblem Glyph of Palenque more frequently than the Palenque texts record the Emblem Glyph of Tonina, one might deduce that Tonina was under the political control of Palenque. My personal view is that many of Marcus' assumptions were hindered at the outset by the ambiguous nature of the Emblem Glyph -- a dilemma in functional interpretation that Berlin himself noted. Simply put, my belief is that we must wait until the Emblem Glyph is more literally understood before a complex organizational model based upon it can be justified.

The prior discussion of the subsidiary title in Classic inscriptions hinted at a possible organization somewhat like

those known at the time of Spanish contact. For example, we now have a more solid epigraphic basis for determining the relative importance of some sites, rather than relying solely on size comparison, monument counts, and other methods used in the past to solve this same problem. Many inscriptions discussed above have literally expressed subordinate relationships between individuals, and I am presuming that this can be extended to include the sites associated with those individuals. Thus, political relationships among these sites in the Usumacinta region have become clearer and are, hopefully, very much established. What follows is chiefly speculation which derives from the discussions of the first two sections above.

Comparing these above findings to the geo-political situation in northern Yucatan, one might infer that:

- 1) The "subsidiary" office members, as rulers of out lying sites, might be likened to the post-Mayapan batabs, both being subsidiary to the centralized ahau.
- 2) Because these "subsidiaries" of the Classic are apparently subsidiary to certain specific centers (and hence the sites they rule), it would follow that the title helps to define actual regions of power and influence, or actual states. The structure within these states would be comparable, on a superficial level at least, to that of a number of the later provinces of Yucatan.

Sites which, on the basis of inferences of the subsidiary title, can be considered secondary centers allow us to posit rather specific frontiers between site areas, what can be now called states. The site relationships given in Figure 12 are the results of those inferences.

There are some new items of information concerning Emblem Glyphs (the hieroglyphic "emblems" of specific sites) which are perhaps relevant to this discussion. First, great many more Emblem Glyphs have been identified since Berlin's original paper (Berlin 1958), and the current situation has been aptly summarized by Mathews (1984). Second, when one discusses Emblem Glyphs and their possible function as <sup>C</sup>either place names or family names, it must be realized that, above all else, Emblem Glyphs are personal titles. This is revealed most clearly by the ahau "lord" glyph affix (Lounsbury 1973), which make the Emblem Glyph read something like "the x lord." My own personal view on Emblem Glyphs, admittedly one which needs much more evidence to be fully justified, is that they are in their basic function some sort of family reference. The subsidiary title might enter into this discussion when it one realizes that the subsidiaries are known to carry the Emblem Glyph of the dominant ruler, and never, to my knowledge, the Emblem Glyph associated with a distinct site. If my view of Emblem Glyphs is correct, then perhaps these subsidiaries were in some way members of the ruling family of the dominant site. In any event, we can be sure that single Emblem Glyphs seem to be consistently associated with the individual

polities posited here on the basis of the subsidiary title. In this sense, Emblem Glyphs might be thought of true indications of distinct polities, as is suggested by Mathews (1984). This would be somewhat reminiscent of situation in Yucatan at the Conquest where the name of the native provinces were taken from the ruling family of that polity.

### III. CONCLUSIONS AND SPECULATIONS ON THE "SUBSIDIARY" TITLE

The main point of the above discussion has been to establish the probable existence of an elite office hierarchy within the political structure of the Late Classic Maya, specifically by suggesting a hitherto unknown level of political administration. With a more tentative tone I have put forth some speculations concerning Maya geo-political organization that are implied by this expanded view of the Maya political hierarchy

The political office associated by this title, while not completely understood as yet, is affiliated with secondary elite personages who were, at least in a many cases, probably the actual rulers of secondary sites outlying a major center site, or "capital." One is now able to roughly define the boundries of the polities which concievably existed under these "capitals."

There are some aspects of the subsidiary title which might warrant a bit of pure speculation. The most striking aspect would be is the geographical restriction of the glyph. Why is this

title or office found only in the western region of the Maya Lowlands? At this time the question cannot be answered, but I feel it must rest on some regional differences in political organization, or at least differences in recording such organization. Perhaps there exists a glyph in the inscriptions of the central Peten which works as a title to similar subsidiaries, but which is somehow distinct, either on semantic or linguistic grounds.

Besides the geographical restrictions of the subsidiary title, another noteworthy aspect is its chronological limits. The inscriptions discussed in this paper are from the middle of the Late Classic at the earliest. This is for the simple reason that there is no example of the subsidiary title in any text dating before about 9.10.0.0.0 in the Maya Long Count. Seldom is any hieroglyph so late in appearing in the Maya inscriptions. True, there are simply not many early inscriptions from this region; when more are found we might very well encounter examples. Another possibility is that we are here seeing that political organization was evolving through time in the Usumacinta area. Perhaps the nature of administration in the subsidiary centers was not formalized until the Late Classic period.

Toward the beginning of the Late Classic the "subsidiary" title appears in the inscriptions of the Usumacinta drainage, probably reflecting the emergence of dependency sites like El Cayo and La Pasadita. As a result of this, there seems to be some effort taken on the part of the Usumacinta polities to in effect "proclaim" in explicit terms their areas of influence. To perhaps



carry this beyond a reasonable limit, this might indirectly reflect the much larger trend in the Late Classic that reflects a growing individuality among major sites, especially notable in ceramic types (Willey et. al. 1967). As Willey notes, many lines of evidence "imply an ever-widening social gulf between Early and Late Classic" (Willey 1974: 421), and that there may have existed an increased rigidity in class ordering in the Late Classic. Indeed, this would seem to be just what is brought out clearly by the subsidiary title. It would be interesting to determine the archeological chronologies for these secondary centers, for I feel that they may have had little political or ceremonial significance before the Late Classic.

The sites of the Usumacinta area in particular have some of the earliest known "terminal dates" (Rands 1973), and perhaps the late emergence of the subsidiary title is a small indication of this early end. The apparent effort to establish the outlying secondary rulers, and thus define clearly the area of a "capital's" influence, may reflect rising political and economic tensions in the Usumacinta valley during the Classic that presaged the eventual causes of the collapse itself. Interestingly, the last monuments known from Piedras Negras (Stela 12), Yaxchilan (Lintel 10), and Bonampak (the murals) all have warfare as a primary theme.

It is ironic that the area of the Maya Lowlands for which we now have perhaps the most detailed epigraphic view of social and political organization (the Usumacinta drainage), is one of

the least studied in terms of settlement patterns and excavation. There has never even been a thorough archeological survey of any kind in this area. Once such a study is carried out in this region it may well corroborate and refine some of the suggestions made here.

### Notes

1. The general "subsidiary" significance of the glyph to be discussed in this paper was independently arrived at by Peter Mathews of Harvard University.
2. The sign T1004 as illustrated by Thompson (1962), is itself a combination of three distinct signs. T181 and T178 are both infixed into the profile face element which alone has no number. Thompson's grouping is understandable since the face sign is rare in contexts other than the subsidiary title. In those other instances, it is probable that the face sign by itself is a substitute for T563a.

A value of ca has been proposed by Lounsbury (Personal Communication 1978) for these two signs. I disagree with this interpretation because there seems to be no functional overlap between T563a and any established ca signs. Moreover, T563a (in its occasional halvrð form) is graphically distinct from the similar sign T25 ca.
3. One relevant site which I have not discussed, primarily because of the lack of sources on it, is Lashtunich. This is the name of the site near Yaxchilan which Dana and Ginger Lamb (1951) dubbed the "lost city," and indeed it remains so today to archeologists. The Lamb's description of their discovery is unfortunately so

vague that the site's exact location is impossible to know (it is possible, however, that it is an unknown part of La Pasadita). One useful aspect of their find was the publication of two photographs of a sculpture whose inscription is somewhat legible. The text of the sculpture, interestingly, contains the Yaxchilan Emblem Glyph and a reference to a "subsidiary". Thus one can deduce that Lashtunich was like La Pasadita and El Chicozapote in being a secondary site to Yaxchilan.

4. Piedras Negras Panel 1 is more commonly known, of course, as Lintel 1. However, due to the obvious fact that this sculpture (and others to be discussed) is no lintel, I have here used the term "panel" in the interests of more appropriate terminology.
5. This reading of Lacanha Panel 1 would call for some minor revisions in the dynastic sequence of Bonampak as reconstructed by Mathews (1980). First, it has been established that the protagonist of Lacanha Panel 1 was not "Knotted-eye Jaguar," but his subsidiary. Thus the two dates 9.15.11.17.3 (accession) and 9.15.15.0.0 would be in direct association with the subsidiary noble. This would imply that "Knotted-eye Jaguar" was nevertheless ruling over him at 9.15.15.0.0, but it would leave his accession date open question. On Lintel 3 of Bonampak there is a reference to "Knotted-eye Jaguar" in

association with the date 9.15.9.13.14, which would suggest that he was ruling at this time. The subsidiary protagonist of Lacanha Panel 1 is named also on Lintel 3, some two and one half years before his accession as "subsidiary". As would be expected, he does not carry the subsidiary title on Lintel 3.

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### Captions to Illustrations

Figure 1. The two variants of the "subsidiary" hieroglyph: (a) T1004; (b) T25.181:178.

Figure 2. (a) Yaxchilan Lintel 8 (after Graham and Von Euw 1977); (b) Yaxchilan H.S. 2, Step X (after Graham 1982).

Figure 3. (a) La Pasadita Lintel 1; (b) La Pasadita Lintel 2; (c) New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art) Panel. The name of the secondary individual shown on each lintel is isolated next to the respective sculpture. (Drawings of lintels by Ian Graham)

Figure 4. Part of the inscription on El Chicozapote Lintel 2.

Figure 5. (a) Piedras Negras Stela 5; (b) Detail of hieroglyphic caption.

Figure 6. (a) Piedras Negras Panel 3 (after Morley 1938); (b) Name captions of seated nobles.

Figure 7. (a) A portion of the inscription of El Cayo Panel 2, expressing that the protagonist is the "subsidiary" of a certain ruler, almost certainly one of Piedras Negras.

Figure 8. (a) Two "accession" records from El Cayo Panel 2; (b) An "accession" expression commonly used in reference to major rulers; (c) A parentage expression from El Cayo Panel 1. The child is named with glyphs A11 and B11 and the father with glyphs A15-B16. Note that the father carries the subsidiary title.

Figure 9. (a) Lacanha Panel 1; (b) Passage recording the relationship between the subsidiary and the ruler; (c) Names of the subsidiary's father (E-I) and mother (J2-J4); (d) The "accession" record of the subsidiary.

Figure 10. Examples of the name of the Lacanha Panel 1 subsidiary in the texts of Bonampak. (a) Lintel 3 of Structure 1; (b) West doorjamb of Room 1.

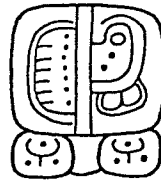
Figure 11. The text of a sculptured panel from Miraflores, Chiapas. This expresses the subsidiary relationship between a personage presumably from Miraflores (glyph A) and Pacal (glyphs C-E), the ruler of Palenque.

Figure 12. Map of portions of the Usumacinta and Lacanha Rivers, showing the locations of "capital" sites (shown as solid symbols) in relation to those secondary centers (empty symbols) discussed in this paper. With the polity affiliations of these secondary sites established, one can tentatively draw the rough frontiers of the respective territorial units, here designated by dashed lines. The secondary sites here located probably represent a small percentage of those which actually exist in this relatively unexplored area.

FIGURE 1  
FIGURE 1



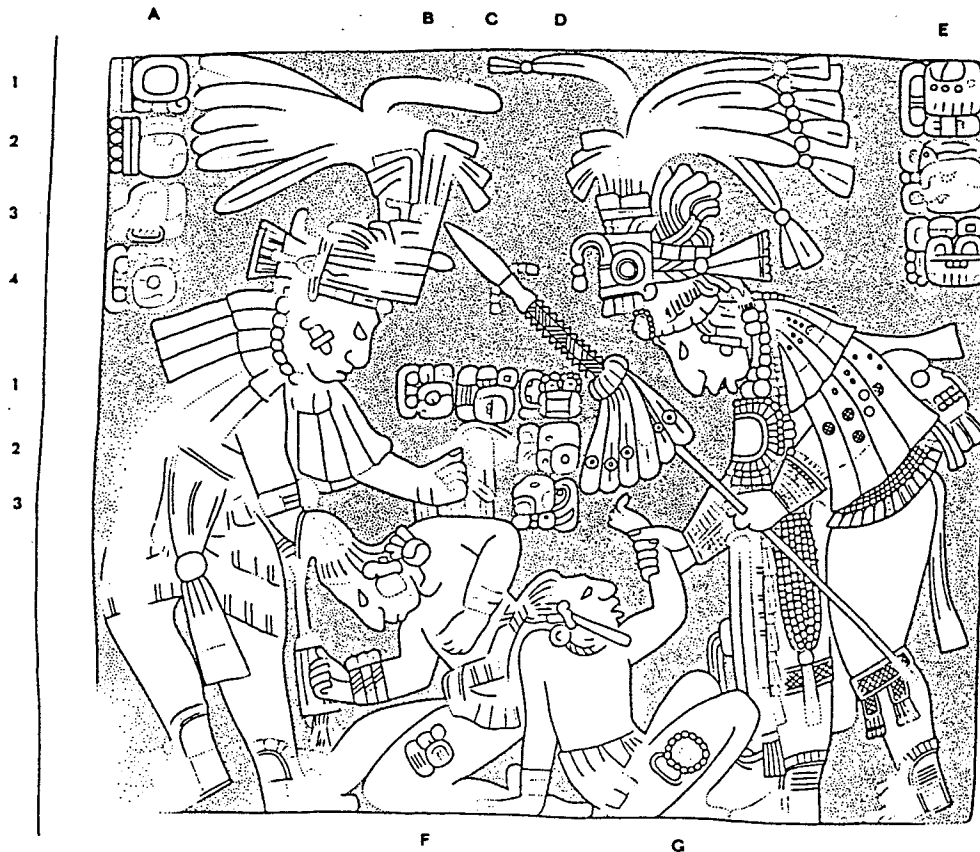
A



B



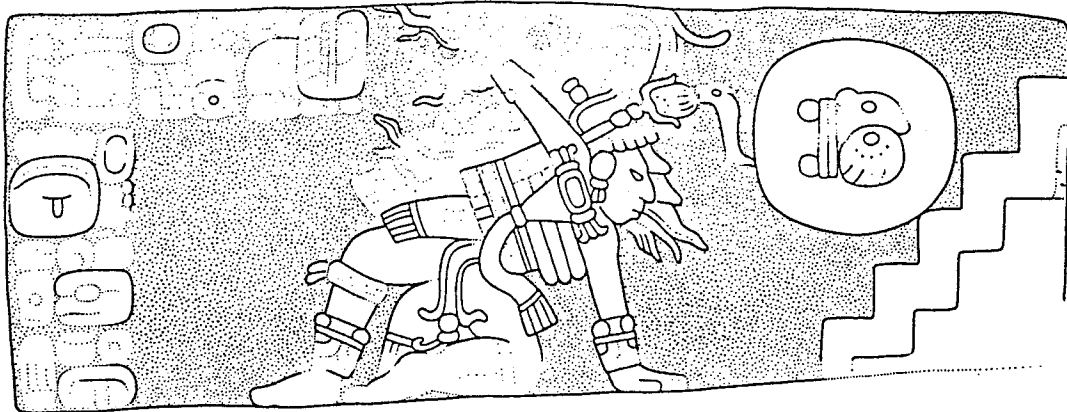
FIGURE 2



a.  
Yaxchilan,  
Lint. 8

A

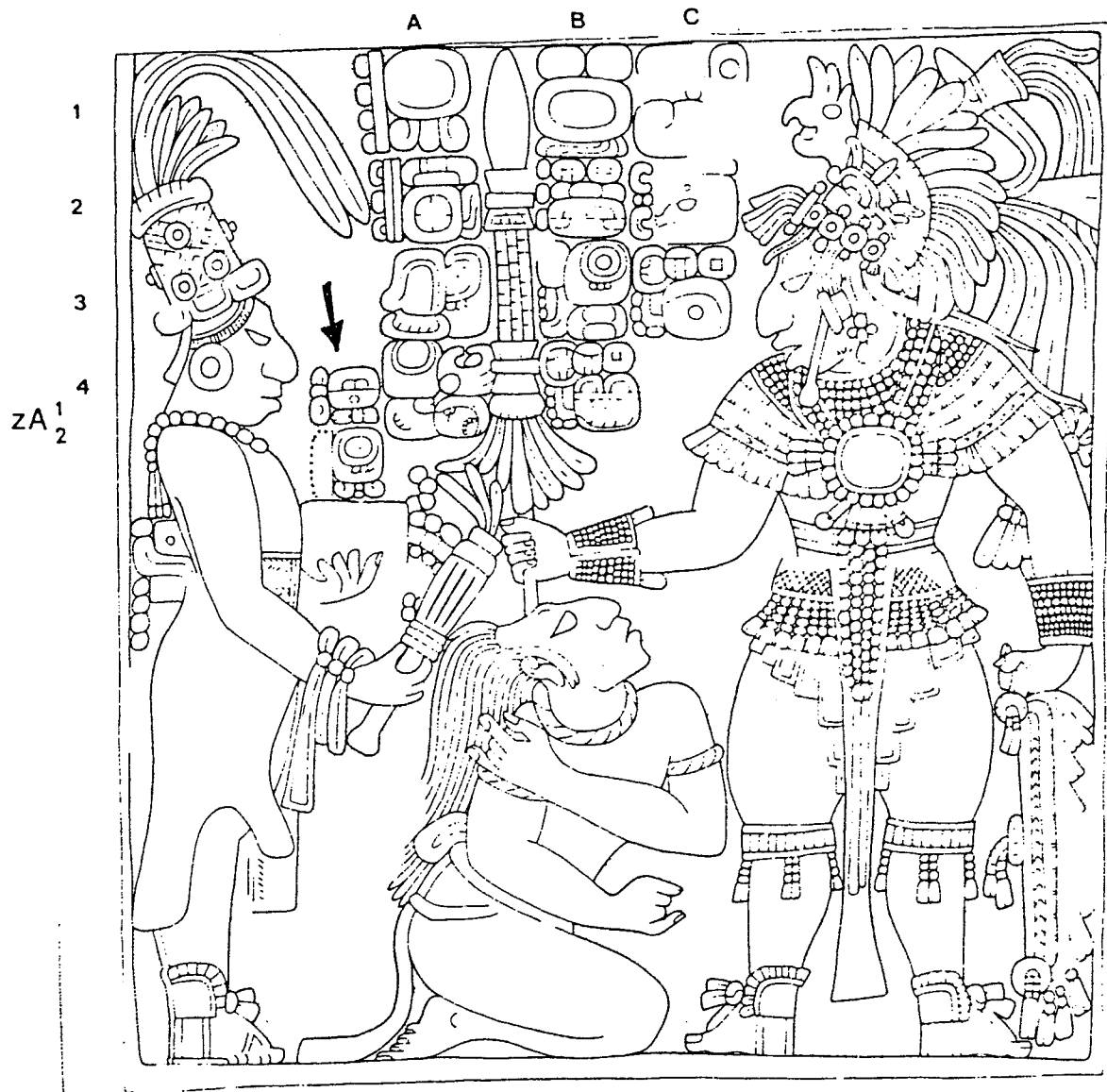
A B C ↓ D



b. Step X

B

FIGURE 3a



La Pasadita, Lintel 1

A 1-9

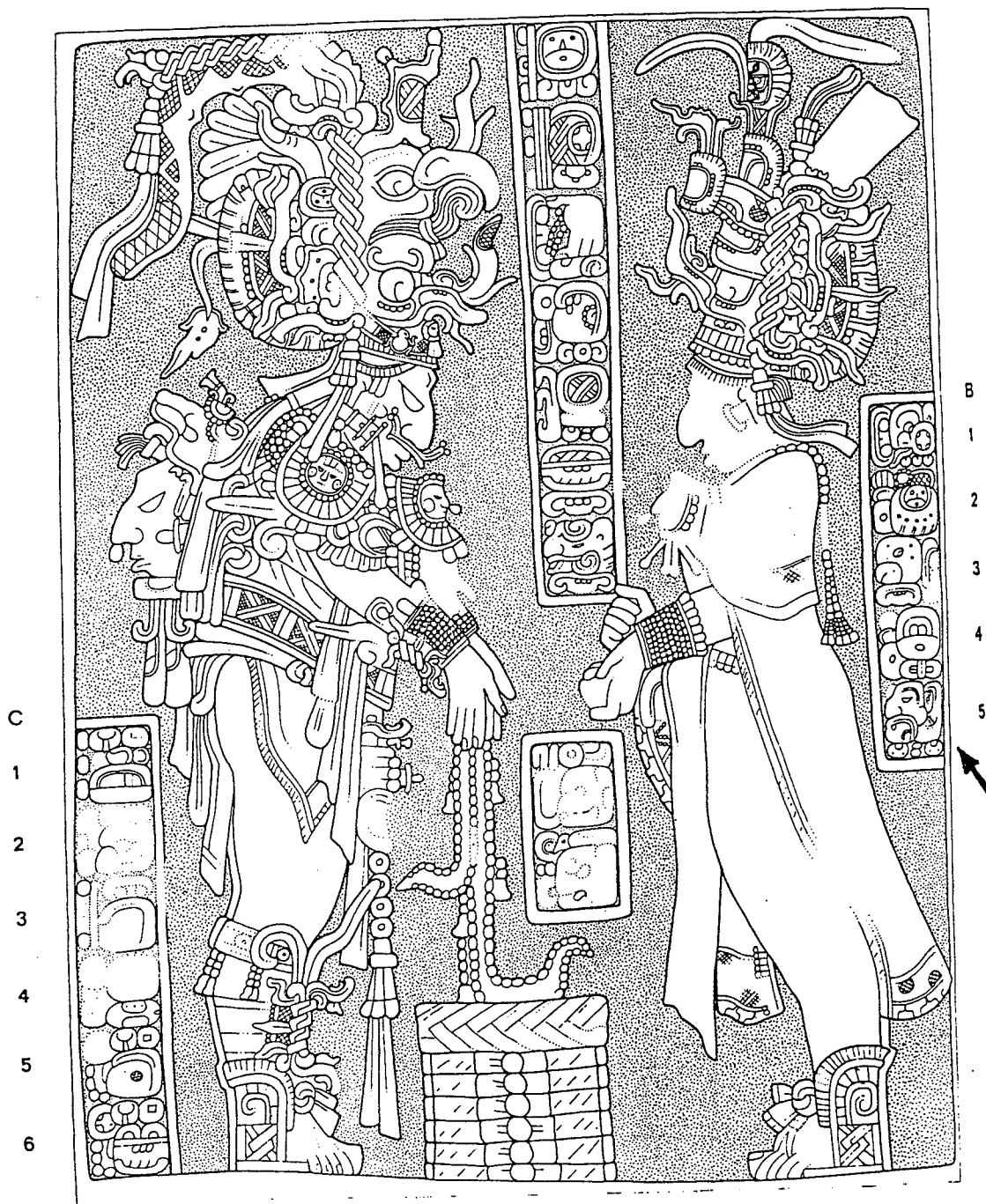
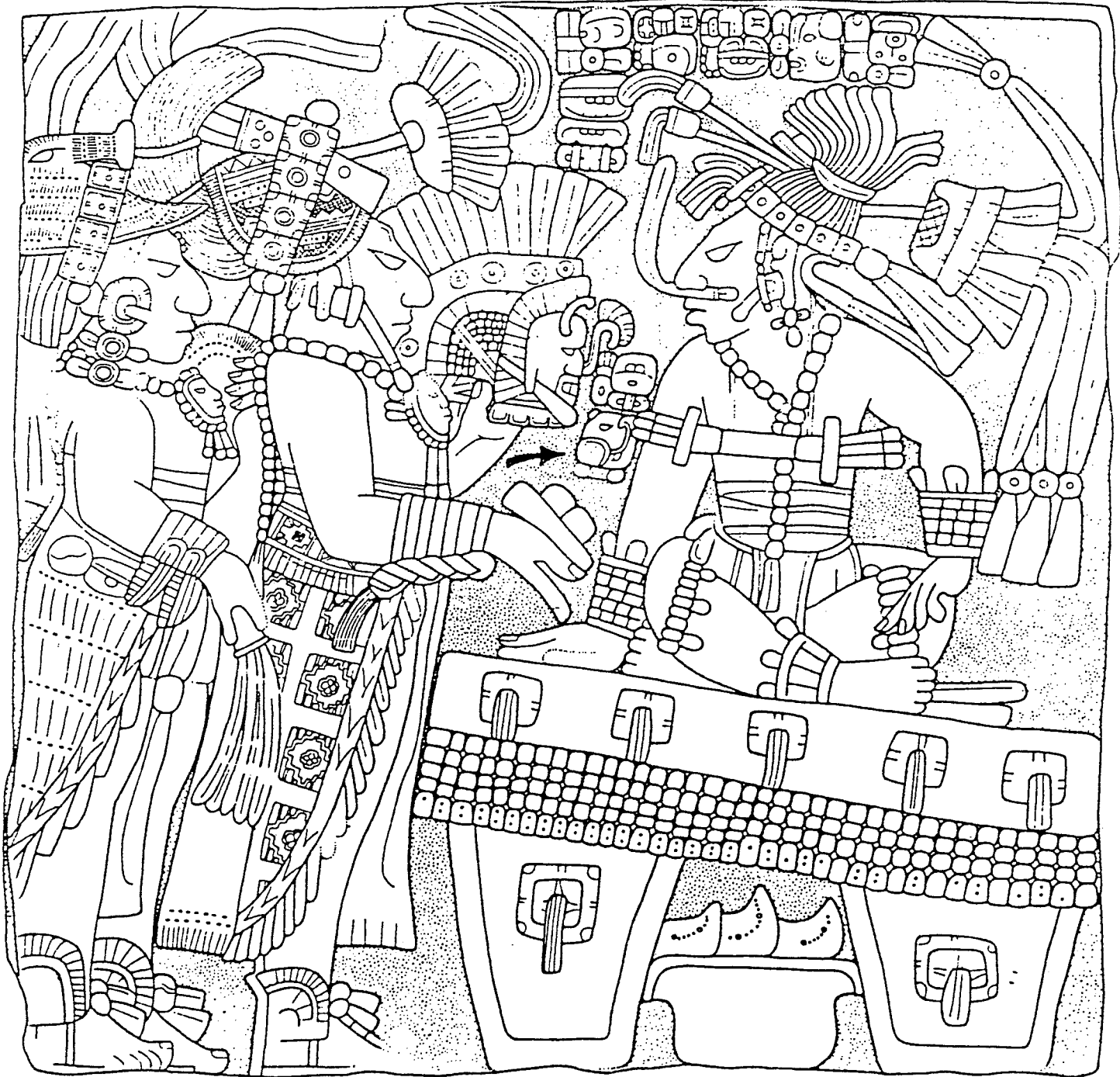


Figure 3. Bloodletting event as shown on La Pasadita Lintel 2. Drawing courtesy of the Graham and the Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions.

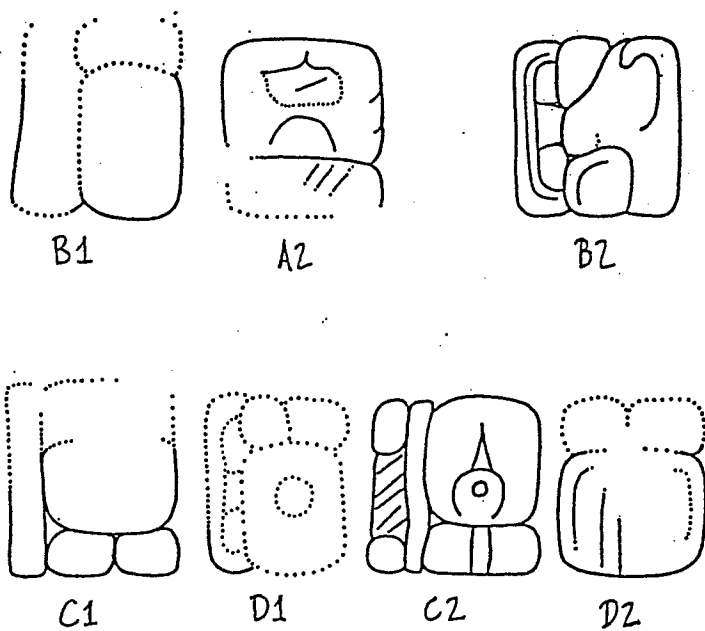
FIGURE 3c

A B C D E

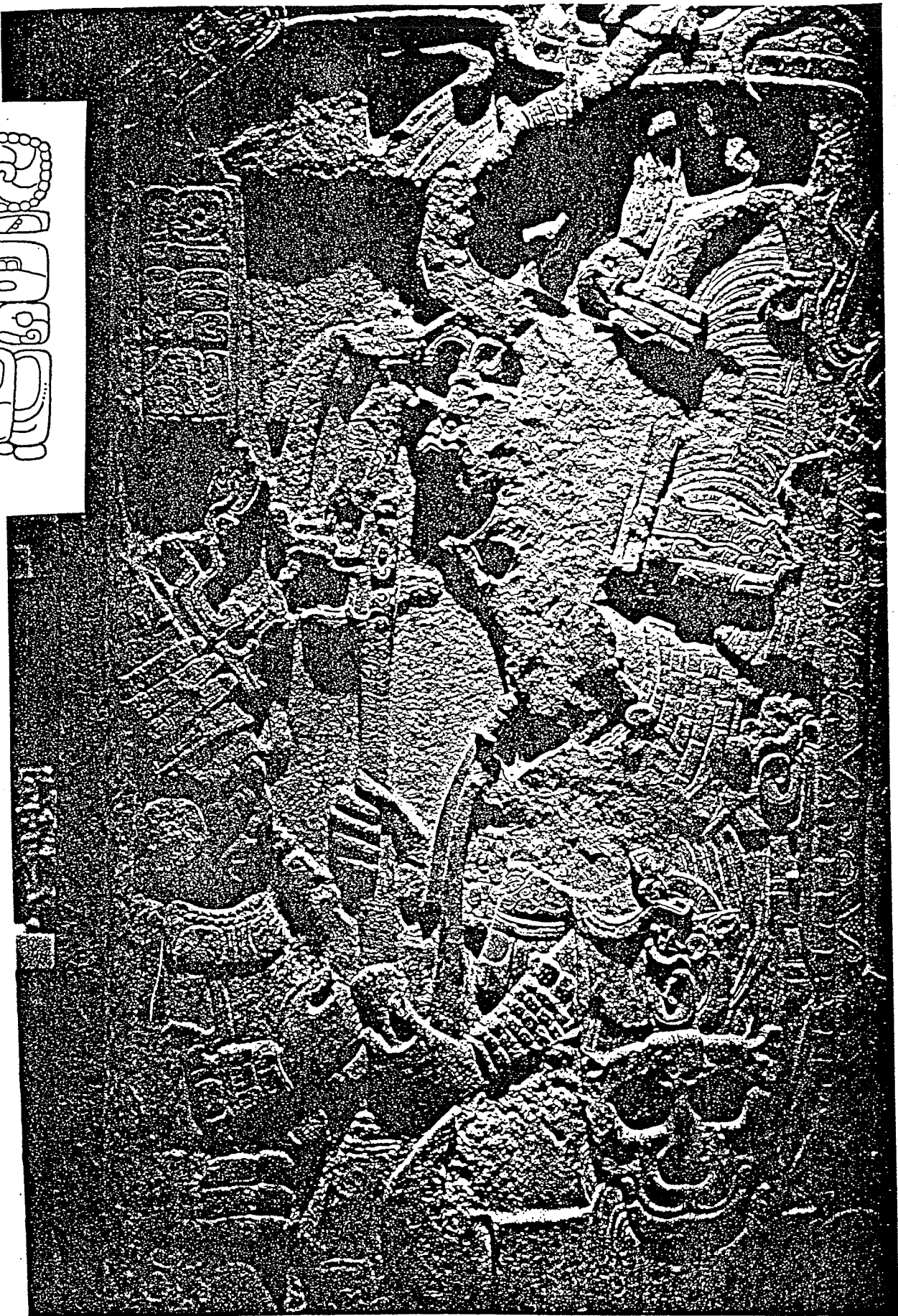
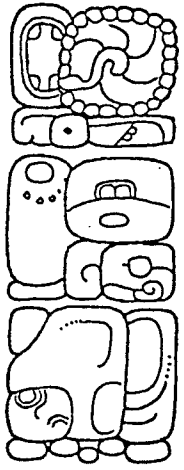


La Pasadita Lintel 3 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC)

(Drawing by Ian Graham)



El Chicorapote lintel



A

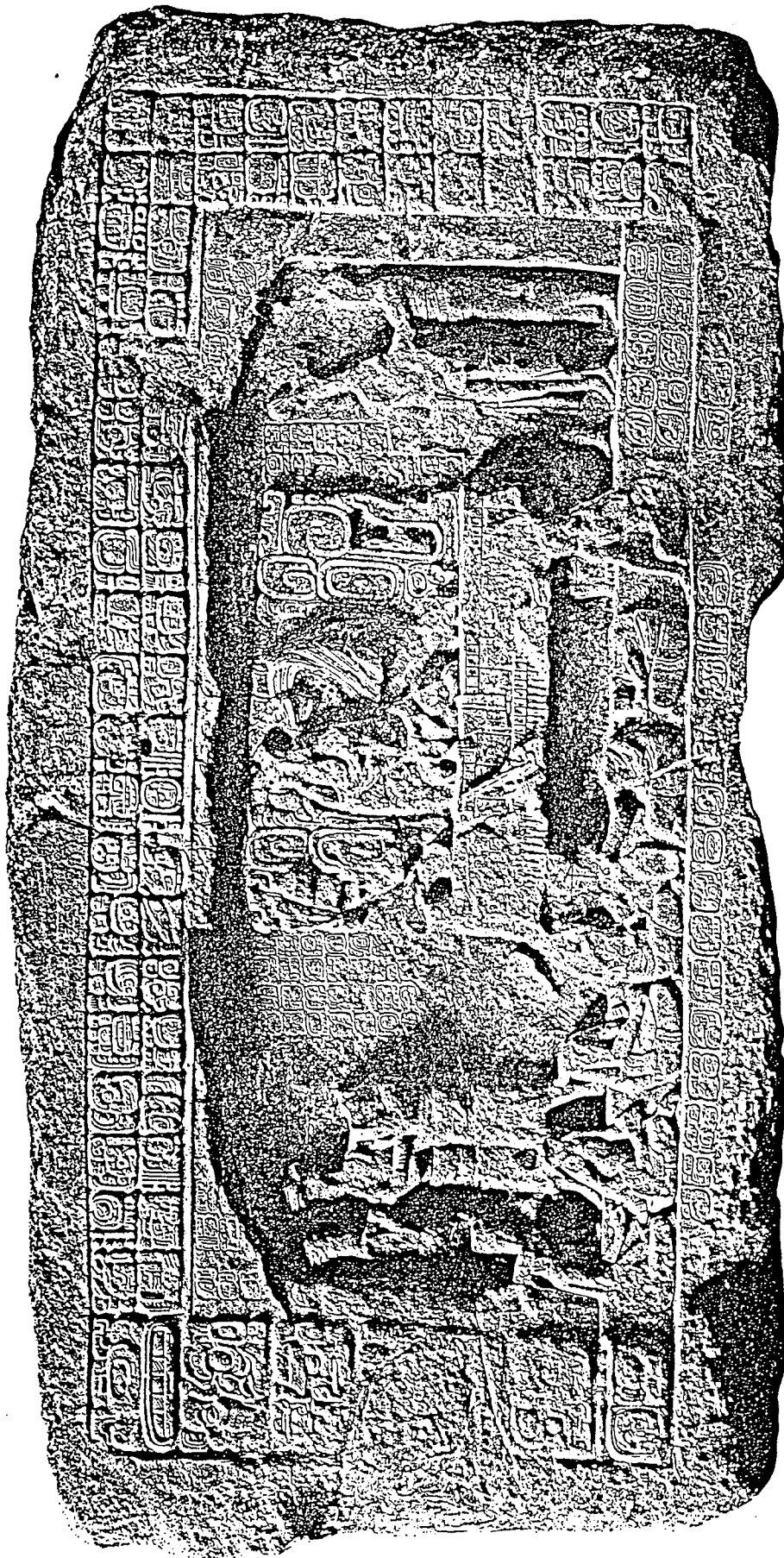
Piedras Negras, St. 5

(110)

FIGURE 6

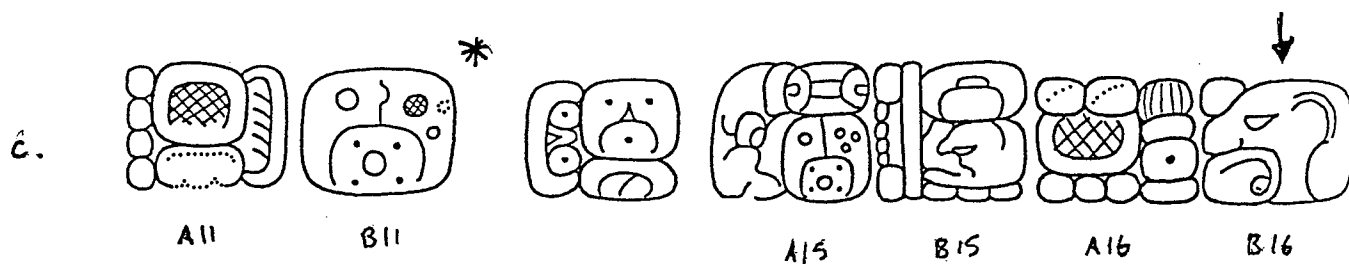
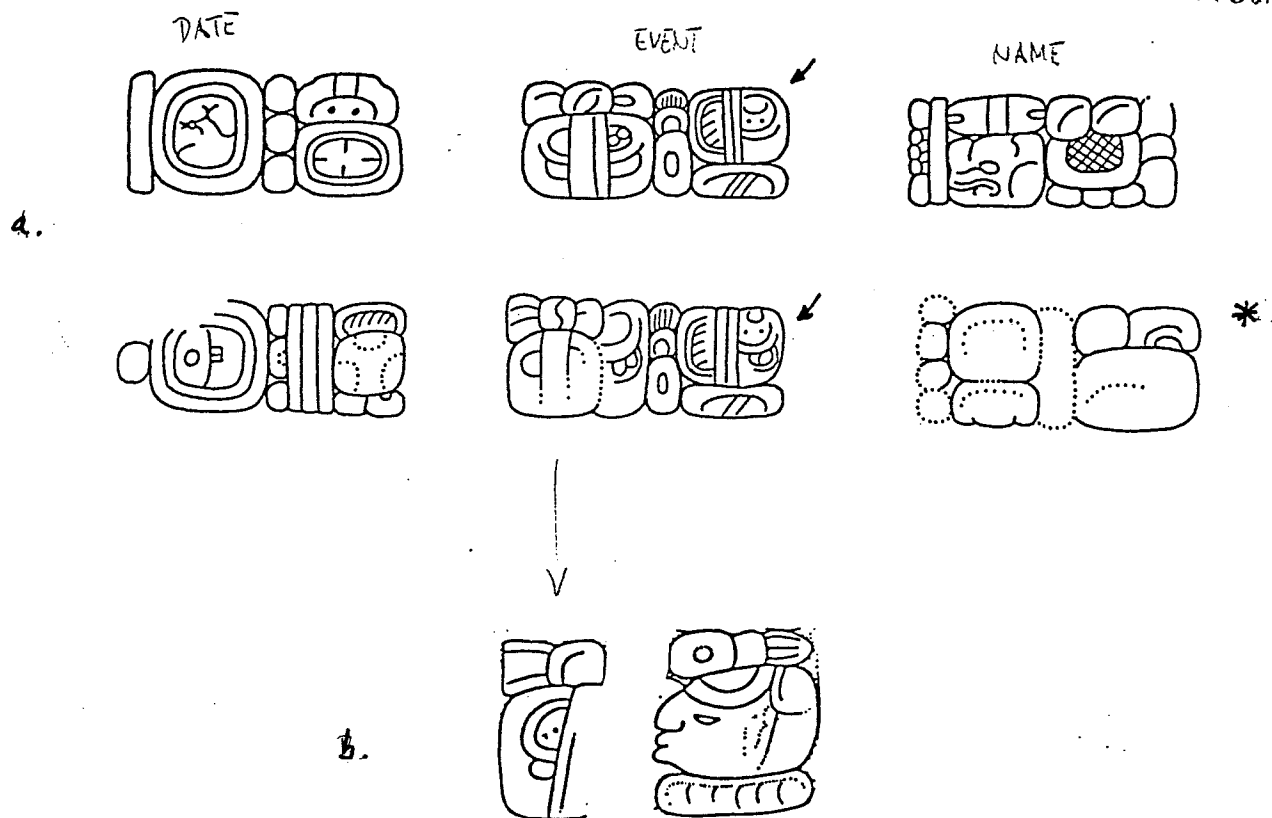
A

3 to be 100



Piedras Negras Panel 3

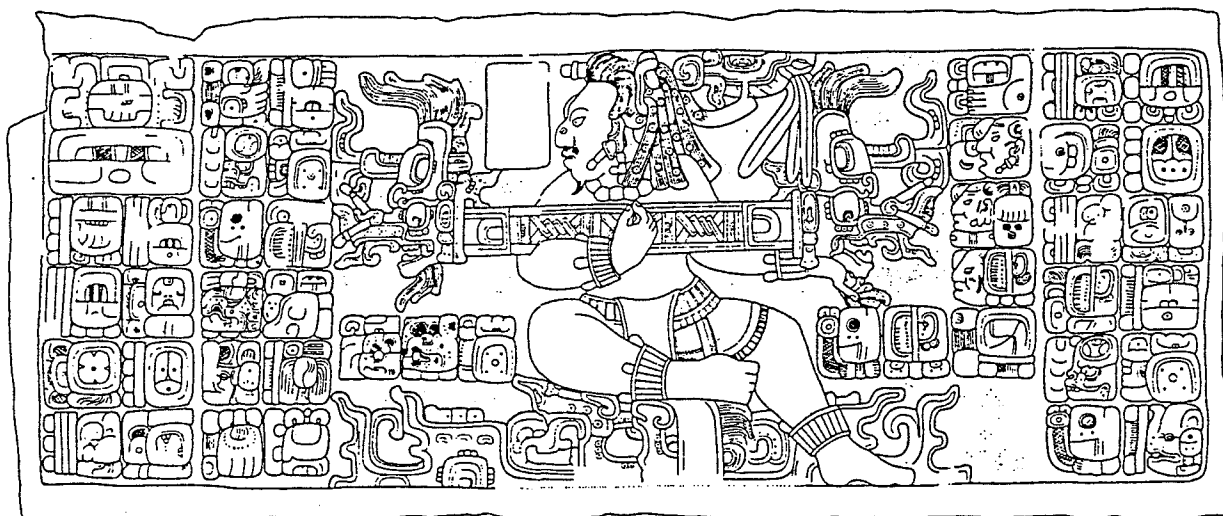




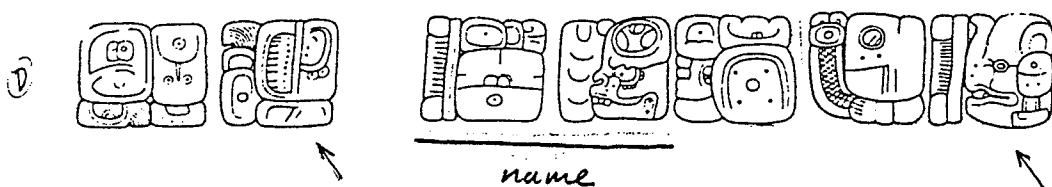
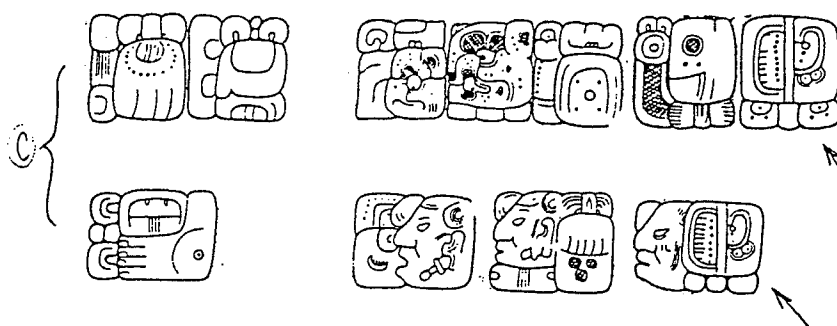
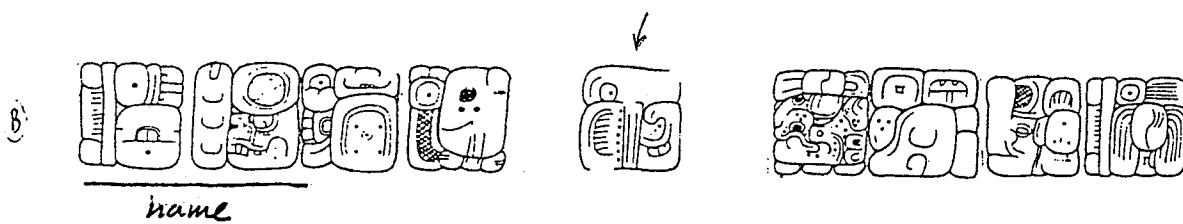
note this name is identical to that of the ruler named with the second accession in a. (\*)



FIGURE 9

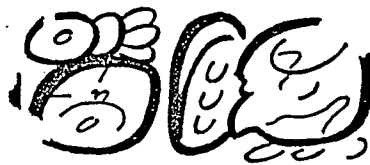


A



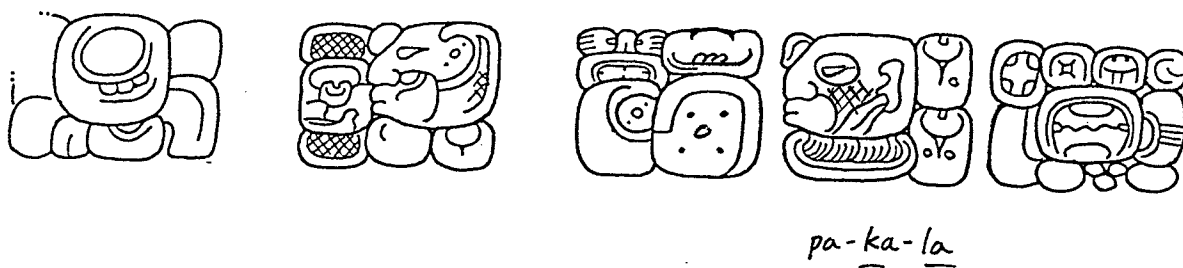


A.



B.

Compare with name of ruler  
underlined in Figure 9



Miraflores inscription

FIGURE 12

