

HISTORICAL DATA IN THE INSCRIPTIONS OF YAXCHILAN

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PART II

THE REIGNS OF BIRD-JAGUAR AND HIS SUCCESSORS

This article is a continuation of Part I, and the two should be read in sequence. Since some of my colleagues feel that it needs an introduction of its own to explain my unorthodox treatment of Maya texts, a brief re-statement of its aims is in order. It is essentially a rapid survey of inscriptions of Yaxchilan, made with the object of discovering the *general nature of* the historical material we can expect to find in them. The discussion is based on relationships between certain groups of hieroglyphs, the sculptured motifs associated with them, and the arrangement of monuments and buildings on which they appear. I have tried to present the complex patterns to the reader as compactly and vividly as possible by incorporating them in a historical narrative. Since we can't actually read the texts, this narrative does not have the authenticity of a true history. Its main purpose is to point out the potential significance of certain relationships and to tie the pattern together so that its various ramifications can be simultaneously perceived. For this reason I have made no attempt to defend my interpretations either by discussing other possibilities that have occurred to me or by giving in full the grounds for every choice of alternative. I have, however, pointed out in each case the relationship relevant to the meaning of a given text, and have noted ambiguities and contradictions that my interpretations have failed to resolve. The argument for the basic hypothesis that the texts are largely historical and that the human figures depicted were real persons is presented in my article of 1960.¹ The application of this hypothesis to Yaxchilan does not result in its decisive substantiation,

but neither has it produced any serious contradiction that would put it in question. Resting, therefore, upon its premises, and assuming that the reader is now prepared to take my historical assertions with a grain of salt, the narrative continues:

On 11Ahau 8Zec, 9.16.1.0.0, ten years after the death of *Shield-Jaguar*, whose reign is described in Part 1, a new ruler, *Bird-Jaguar*, took office at Yaxchilan. In the following years there was vigorous activity in building and sculpture in the ceremonial center of town. Administration and diplomacy, rather than conquest, seem to have been the main preoccupations of the new ruler, and many lintels carved during his reign deal with the distribution of honors and the establishment of status relations among members of important families.

Unlike *Shield-Jaguar*, whose origins remain obscure, *Bird-Jaguar* took pains to commemorate his ancestry, which he traced from very early local beginnings, and he recorded repeatedly the date of his accession. On lintels of Structure 10 (4, Pl.112, a,b,c) the date of his birth (1, p.468) is given by the Initial Series 9.13.17.12.10 8Oc 13Yax. On Lintel 30 at E2,F2, there is also a date 1Ben 1Chen (9.13.16.10.13), which marks an 819-day period, and which probably served as a base for the divination of the destiny of his life. East, at F3, is given as the direction, and red, at E4, as the color.² *Bird-Jaguar's* name includes the glyph 12(or 229), 683a:109 at H2, which is almost always used in references to him. A secondary series leads to the statement of his accession at H5, when 3Ben-ich katun at J1b is added to his name (Fig. 1). The next date, 9.16.13.0.0 at J3,I4, is probably the current tun date, and 13Ahau 18Cumku at K4,L4, gives the end of the current katun.

On Stela 11 are described some events that preceded the accession. The back of the monument depicts a triumphal scene that took place the year before on 1Imix 19Xul, 9.15.19.1.1, when *Bird-Jaguar*, wearing a sunmask, appeared before three kneeling prisoners, probably symbolizing his subject peoples (3,Pl. 44, 1). Above this scene are portraits of *Shield-Jaguar* and of his consort. If I was right in construing obituary passages on Structure 24, the woman was still living at the time of the event, and her place in the sky seems rather anticipatory, but since *Bird-Jaguar's* accession followed close upon her demise, and may even have been dependent upon it, we may assume that

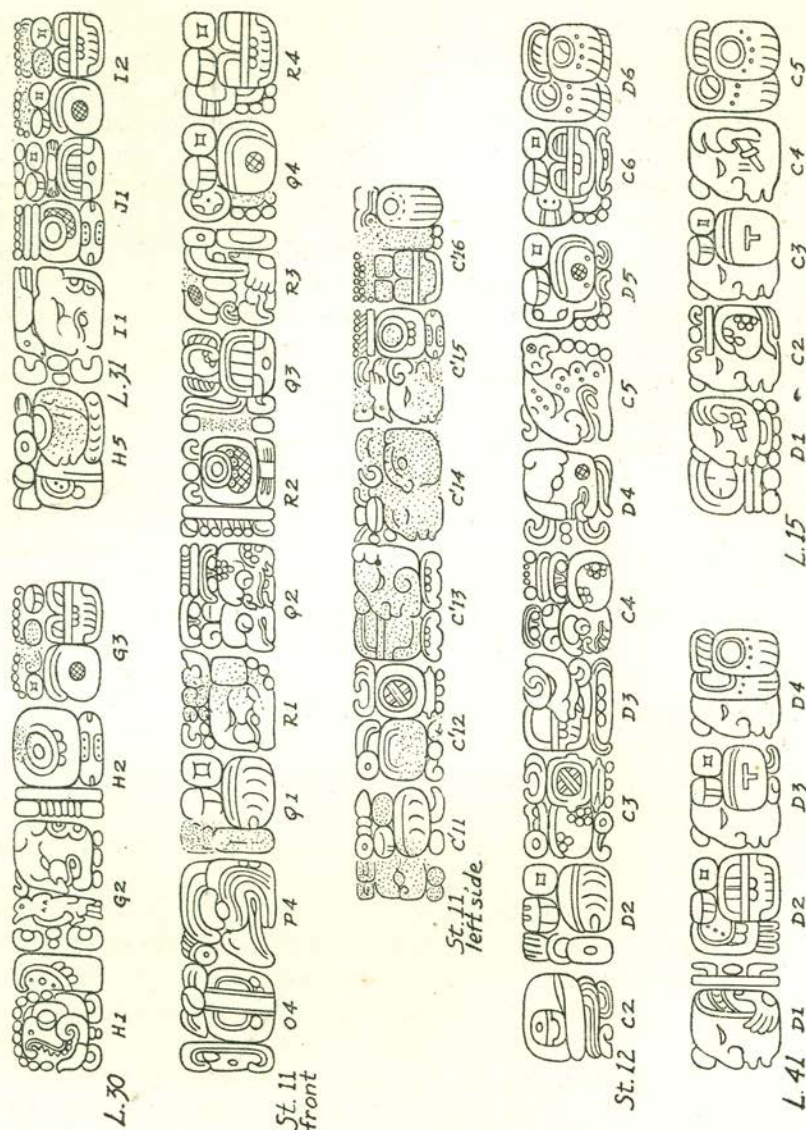


Fig. 1. L.30,31: Notations of the "birth" and "accession" of *Bird-Jaguar*. Note the addition of 3 *Ben-ich katun* after the accession. St. 11, front: Accession of *Bird-Jaguar*. Note interpolation of Vulture glyph between the Toothache glyph and the Affix cluster. Q2 is the Captor expression. R2 may be a variant of H2 of L.30. R3 is the so-called "Batab" glyph. St. 11, left side: Notation after second Initial Series. C'12b is the bird-claw glyph; C'13, the Sky-god expression. St. 12: Notation of accession? Note Sky-god expression, as on St. 11, and substitution of bat for bird in front of the Jaguar glyph. L.41,15: Two notations referring to the *Ik-sign* woman associated with *Bird-Jaguar*. Some may find significant the variation "Uac-U (moon?)" and "Uac-Cu (Cauac)" in the two notations.

the portraits are independent of the date and refer to the main theme of the monument: the manner in which *Bird-Jaguar* achieved his office. This, however, is by no means clear. The identity of the two figures on the front of the monument and the reference to the date 12Cib 19Yaxkin, 9.15.9.17.16 at the younger man's feet are ambiguous. If the older man is *Shield-Jaguar*, the scene may refer to the transfer of his power to *Bird-Jaguar*, but this would not explain the lapse of time before the office was acknowledged, nor the arrangement of the text, placing a *Shield-Jaguar* glyph with the younger figure. The alternative seems to be that the young man was the true heir, and that *Bird-Jaguar* could not be formally acclaimed as ruler until the way was cleared of the younger man's claim. Although the statement of accession in the panel below makes reference only to *Bird-Jaguar* himself, and to *Shield-Jaguar* and his consort, implying that he was their direct and proper successor, I doubt that this eliminates the possibility of an interim reign, which the dates seem to indicate. The very fact that such trouble was taken to document the circumstances of the succession creates the impression that there was something unusual in it that required explication. As we shall see later, Lintel 16 of Structure 21 suggest that *Bird-Jaguar* did not acquire his office without opposition.

A further complication is introduced by a second Initial Series record of the accession on the sides of the monument (4, Pl. 102d,e and figure 1), with a different lunar series and a different notation after the date.

At C'4, C'5, an 819-day period date, 1Ix 7Uo, 9.15.19.14.14 probably gives the augury for the reign. The direction is north, and the color, white. The glyphs for the event include, at C'11b, the usual affix cluster that denotes accession, but whether it is preceded by the "toothache" glyph or by the "seating of-" expression, 644:116, which occurs with the same date on Stela 12, is not clear. Moreover, six glyphs are interposed between the statement of the event and the *Bird-Jaguar* glyph at C'15a. Four of these are used also on Stela 12, where they can be read more clearly (figure 1). The two at C3 on Stela 12, 87:528:61 and 291:552:292?, are used only with *Bird-Jaguar's* name. Those at D3, 561a:23 and 1013, here combined, occur in similar expressions with the names of other rulers and apparently relate the foregoing glyphs to the names. I will refer to this as the

Sky-God expression. The question then arises whether the interposed glyphs on stelae 11 and 12 merely give additional information about *Bird-Jaguar*, or if they refer the event to some other individual, whose relation to him is stated. Although I believe that the former is true and that such expressions merely expand the ruler's name, I will use the name *Bird-claw Jaguar*, whenever the expression appears, since one of its most conspicuous signs is the bird-claw prefix 291 on the second glyph at C3. Parenthetically, one should note that the element in the augural notation which Kelley and Berlin interpret as "white" is attached to this glyph, though this does not clarify its meaning for me.

Another irregularity in the Stela 12 inscription, which does not, however, occur on Stela 11, is the substitution at D4 of the bat for the bird in the Jaguar's name. The *Bat-Jaguar* glyph occurs also on Lintel 3 at Piedras Negras, but nowhere else at Yaxchilan. I suspect that it is a mere substitution, since in other respects the inscriptions on Stela 12 and on the sides of Stela 11 are so much alike, but the possibility that another individual is involved should, perhaps, be kept in mind.

Stela 12 records also the death of *Shield-Jaguar*, and Stela 13, which has no date, presents his portrait. All three monuments are conspicuously placed on the highest eminence of the town in front of Structure 40, which stands next to Structure 41, a building evidently serving as a memorial to the conquests of *Shield-Jaguar*.

Shield-Jaguar is featured also on the central lintel 32 of Structure 13, which is adjacent to Structure 10, with its record of the birth and accession of *Bird-Jaguar*. The date and the motif of this lintel were discussed in Part 1, where it was suggested that it was intended to show the relationship of *Bird-Jaguar* to *Shield-Jaguar* and his consort. The other two lintels of this building are probably intended as a single composition. Lintel 33 (3, Pl.63), with a date 5Cimi 19Yaxkin (9.16.16.1.6) shows *Bird-claw Jaguar*, holding a staff as on Stela 11, and Lintel 50 (4, Pl.114a) shows a bearded man with a similar staff. This lintel has no date, and the inscription is too badly eroded to yield the name of the personage portrayed, who presumably is another senior male relative of the Jaguar.

Bird-Jaguar's pride of descent did not stop at this display of his immediate relatives and progenitors. To demonstrate the ancient origins of his family, he had built another structure, 22, placing it again next to one dedicated to *Shield-Jaguar*. In this structure, he reset some very old lintels, and over the central doorway placed a new one, which spelled out his connection with an ancient ancestral or legendary personage. The oldest lintels appear to be 18 and 19, for they are incised in a very archaic style. Lintels 20 and 22, on which the glyphs are raised in relief, are probably somewhat later. The Initial Series on Lintel 20 is entirely destroyed, so that its date is unknown, but Lintel 22 on which the text is continued is comparable in style to the lintels of Structure 12, which record a date in Katun 4. The script is also similar to that of Stela 31 at Tikal, which contains a number of nearly identical glyphs. The texts that survive on Lintels 18 and 22, although they belong to different sets of lintels, both feature a hieroglyph composed of an animal head with a bird pecking at its forehead (Fig. 2). This is almost certainly a name or title of some sort, and must have had a special meaning for *Bird-Jaguar*, since he preserved these inscriptions with such care. The text on Lintel 18 continues with a listing of three other names, each followed by a long-nosed animal head. The first two are compounds of animal skulls, and the third is a compound of the bat-glyph, similar to that used on Stela 12 with the Jaguar's name. The later Lintel 21 over the central doorway (3, Pl.56) features two dates about three centuries apart, each followed by a name that includes the *Sky-God* expression. *Bird-claw Jaguar* is named with the later date, 9.16.1.0.9, and with the earlier is a name beginning with an animal-skull, preceded by an unknown sign and 674, at B2, and a glyph with the coefficient 7 at C1. At C2 is a Jaguar glyph and the passage ends with the emblems of Yaxchilan (Fig. 2). Whatever may be recorded here, surely what is implied is a connection or comparison between the contemporary ruler and a great ruler of the past, possibly even one of the legendary or historic founders of the city.

More information on this point is contained in the very interesting inscription of Structure 12, which has seven early lintels. On two of these, 47 and 48 (4, Pl.113b,c) there is an Initial Series: 9.4.11.8.16, 2Cib 19Pax. The event glyph, though unfamiliar, contains a variant of the affix cluster that usually

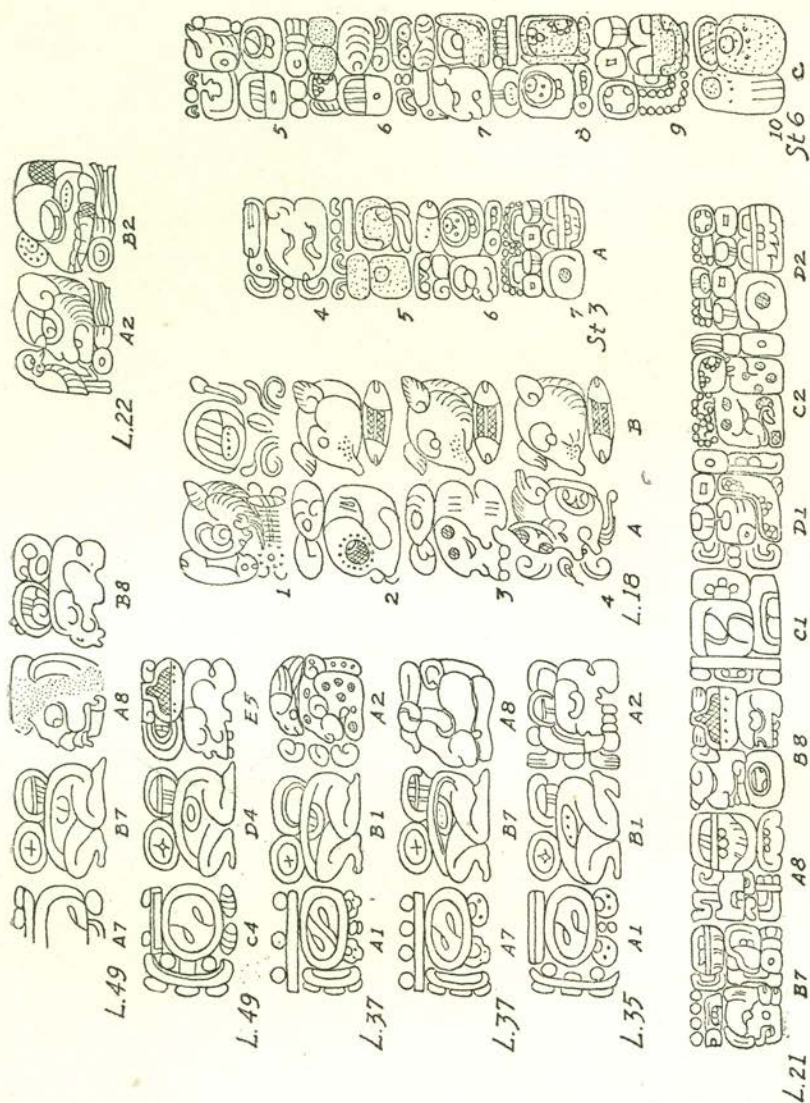


Fig. 2. L.49,37,35: Numbered expressions introducing various Jaguar glyphs. Note identity of E5, Lintel 49, to B8, Lintel 21 below. A2, Lintel 37, is the Bird-Jaguar glyph. A8 occurs on L.46. These may be names of founders of lineages of a Jaguar clan. L.22,18: Note similarity of the first glyphs and on L.18, three names that include a Jaguar-skull and the bat glyph. I suspect the long-nose animal glyph may designate the three as sons (or ancestors?) of the first. L.21: Notation after early date. Note Sky-god expression leading to name of early ruler, and Jaguar glyph at C2, which may designate the clan. St. 6: On 1Uayeb, completion of (U?) 2 Katuns from accession of *Bird-Jaguar* (II). St. 3: Name of *Bird-Jaguar* (II?) after 1st Katun anniversary.

indicates the accession of a ruler, so the text may have something to do with the commencement of a reign. There is a considerable gap in the text caused by the destruction of most of Lintel 34 and part of 49. The preserved portions of Lintels 49 (4, Pl.113d), 37 (3, Pl.64) and 35 (5, Pl.1) present a consecutive list of numbered expressions followed by different names, all of which are compounds of the jaguar glyph or of an animal skull, probably the skull of the jaguar (Fig. 2). The first legible name is an animal skull with a double superfix, following the expression which is probably number 6. N° 7 is followed by the name of the early ruler mentioned on Lintel 21, a skull and 674 compound, and N° 8 by the name *Bird-Jaguar*. N° 9 is a jaguar head with a band tied through the eye, a name which is associated with symbols of death on Lintel 46, which records one of the conquests of *Shield-Jaguar*. The tenth, and last, name is again a compound of an animal skull. In the intervening texts, glyphs occur which resemble the Emblem glyphs for Piedras Negras and for Tikal and various others that seem to be names of persons.

Glancing over this text, one is struck by the rhythmic repetition of certain expressions, by the identity of the form of statement concerned with different personages, and by the two isolated dates 1Cauac 7Yaxkin and 1Cimi 14Muan, unconnected by secondary series. All this suggests a legendary account rather than current narrative, and engenders the thought that the names may be those of the "first men" who became heads of different lineages after the founding of the town. It is not clear why *Bird-Jaguar* singled out not his namesake but the name that preceded his, but this may have some connection with the fact that no two consecutive rulers of Yaxchilan bear the same Jaguar name.

Contemporary records of the early rulers are lost to us now, but there seems to have been one other *Bird-Jaguar* (whom I will call *Bird-Jaguar II*), who ruled in Katun 11, and who is portrayed on Stela 6 (4, Pl. 101d). The inscription is somewhat eroded. I read the Initial Series as 9.11.16.10.13 5Ben 1Uayeb, differently from Morley, who apparently missed the month sign. Following the date is a statement that it is the second Katun anniversary of the accession of *Bird-Jaguar* (Fig. 2). If I interpret this clause correctly, it cannot refer to the accession of the *Bird-Jaguar* who reigned in Katun 16, whom

we must now call "*Bird-Jaguar III*" or "*Bird-Jaguar the Great*," for his anniversary would fall on a day Ahau. My reading places the date exactly 2 Katuns before the divinatory date 1Ben 1Chen on Lintel 30, but backward-counted anniversaries are unheard of, so this must be mere coincidence. The stylistic position of the monument, which was estimated as 9.14.0.0.0 + 2 Katuns⁸ is not sufficiently decisive to place it either with the records of the known *Bird-Jaguar* or in an earlier era. Rather than put aside this inscription as too uncertain to be relied upon, I prefer to consider the possibility of an earlier ruler who bore the same name, even though this may throw some doubt on the late placement of some of the lintels I have attributed to *Bird-Jaguar the Great*. Actually, however, all the inscriptions of his reign are either linked in some way to the records on Stelae 11 and 12 or contain the compound glyph 12.683a:109, which seems to be peculiarly his own. It may be that the *Bird-claw* expression also distinguishes him from earlier rulers.

The only monument about which I am gravely in doubt is Stela 3. It records the first Katun anniversary of an accession of a *Bird-Jaguar* whose name lacks the glyph mentioned above and contains a Captor expression apparently identical to that on Stela 6 and different from that which usually goes with the great *Bird-Jaguar*. Unfortunately the upper half of this monument is missing and there is no date. My stylistic appraisal placed it at 9.16.10.0.0, which is consistent with 9.17.1.0.0, the anniversary of *Bird-Jaguar the Great*, but the text seems to contradict this estimate, linking the monument with the earlier *Bird-Jaguar* whose first anniversary would have occurred on 9.10.16.10.13. Perhaps an examination of the upper fragments of Stela 3 would revise the stylistic estimate or would uncover a date that would solve the problem, but at present I see no wholly satisfactory way out of the dilemma.

Leaving it unresolved, let us return to events in Katun 16, and the themes expressed in sculpture during the reign of *Bird-Jaguar the Great*. There are at least three general themes expressed in six distinct figure arrangements. One is the theme of capture or conquest, which can be represented in actual capture scenes, as on Lintel 8, or can be symbolized by accoutrement of war and figures of prisoners as on Lintels 41 and 16. The Capture Glyph accompanies both types of representation (Fig. 4). The second theme involves relationship between the ruler

and another person, either a woman holding a large bundle in her arms (Lintels 1,5,7, and 54) or a male figure, man or boy, holding varying insignia, often the same as those held by the ruler (Lintels 2,3,6,9,42,52, and the pair of lintels 33 and 50). A specific glyph: 516:103 (or 102) goes with both arrangements, but it is not a complete expression in itself, and is usually combined with other glyphs. The main sign seems to be derived from the head of a turtle, for on Lintel 2, the glyph reads 743:102.181 (cf. Fig. 4, L.2 and L.54). The use of the suffix 181 suggests that it can take a verbal form. The third category of motif refers to sacrificial rites. The blood-letting rite, performed by a woman (Lintel 17) is signified by glyph 712.314 (Fig. 4; L.24). A rite symbolized by the serpent, either held in the arms of a figure or with a human figure issuing from its mouth, is associated with glyph 714 (Fig. 4, L.25, L.15), and sometimes involves the fire symbol 563, the human sacrifice symbol 597 and various god-glyphs. This rite apparently refers to ancestral figures or deified individuals.

The capture theme occurs in combination with either of the other two, but ritual scenes and scenes associated with the sign 516 do not occur together. It may be significant that three of the structures that present ritual scenes are aligned on one terrace facing the river and overlooking the main plaza of Yaxchilan, and the fourth is at the river's edge. Structures 1, 42, and 33, on the other hand, featuring the woman-and-bundle motif or showing *Bird-Jaguar* with other men, are located at a distance from each other on separate high eminences.

Structures 1 and 42 seem to be concerned primarily with the battle companion of *Bird-Jaguar* shown on Lintel 8. On the central lintels of both buildings he is shown in the presence of *Bird-Jaguar*. Although his name on Lintel 42 (Fig. 3) is largely destroyed, a portion of his prisoner's name identifies him, as well as the mustache he wears, which is a very rare feature on Maya portraits. The last glyph of his name (630.181) may be an abstract form of the personified glyph 1004a that ends his name on Lintels 8 and 6. It is curious to observe that the dates (and presumably the events) recorded in these two buildings are associated with the dress and accoutrement of *Bird-Jaguar*, rather than with the person with whom he appears. The date 12Ahau 8Yaxkin, 9.16.1.2.0 on the central lintel of Structure 42, portraying the battle-companion, is recorded in Structure 1

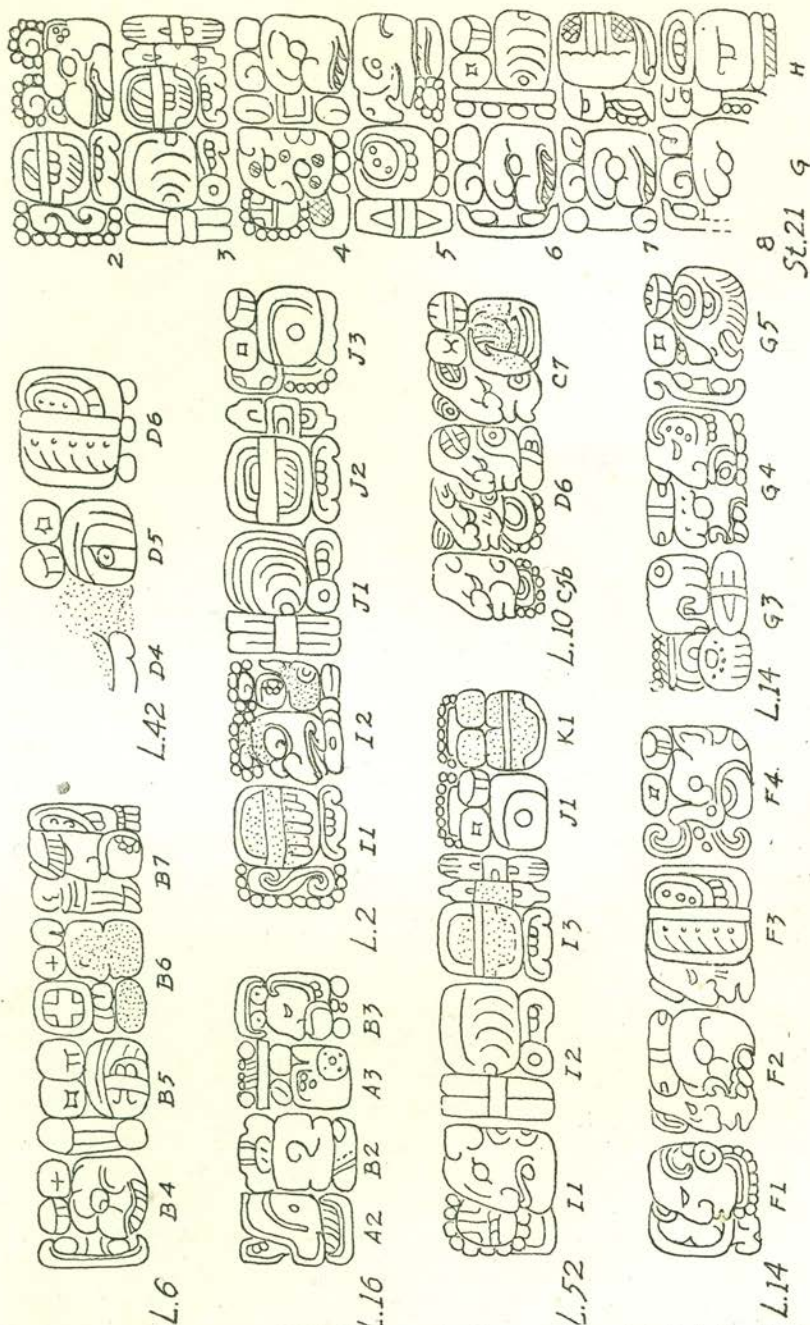


Fig. 3. L.6,42: Names of *Bird-Jaguar's* battle-companion of L.8. L.16: Capture of man of *Moon-sign* family. Note that Capture-glyph lacks "lunar" postfix. Second glyph could be part of Capture expression or part of name. L.2,52, and St. 21: Names of *Shield-Jaguar's* descendant. Note that glyphs J1, J2 on L.2 retain their relative position in all three notations. L.10: Name of woman. Note peculiar placing of the eyes in this late and cursive script. L.14: Names of man and woman. Note similarity of glyphs F2, F3 and G4. G5 is probably a variant of the Yaxchilan Emblem glyph.

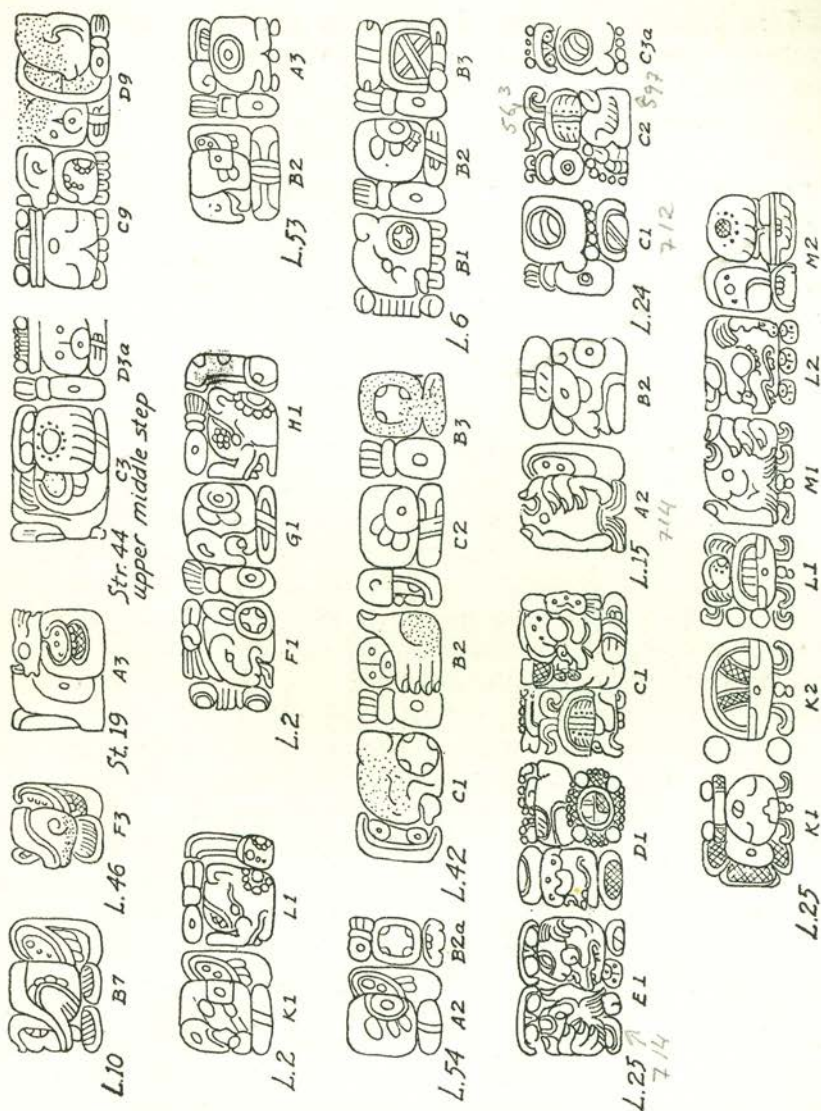


Fig. 4. L.10,46, and St. 19: Variations of the Capture glyph after date of occurrence. Str. 44: "Capture of *Ahau*" after date of occurrence and after secondary series. Can these be read (as per Knorozov): "chucachucuc," or are these equivalent expressions: ca-U(moon)=cu (cauac)? as suggested for L.41,15? L.2,53: Turtle-glyph in various contexts. L.54,42,6: "Normal" form of Turtle glyph in similar contexts. L.25: *Hand-and-fish* glyph after date of occurrence and after secondary series. Note fire-glyph at Cla. L.15: *Hand-and-fish* glyph after occurrence. L.24: *Blood-sacrifice* glyph and associated symbols. C2b1 is the *Fire* glyph; C2b2 is the *Human-sacrifice* glyph.

with the picture of a woman holding a bundle on Lintel 5 (3, Pl.49). Conversely, the date 8Cimi 14Mac, 9.16.1.8.6 on the central lintel of Structure 1 (3, Pl.50) is recorded with the picture of a woman holding a bowl containing a sacrificial cord on Lintel 43 (3, Pl.67). There is no lintel in Structure 42 corresponding to Lintel 7, which again shows *Bird-Jaguar* with a woman holding a bundle two days later.

The relation or the event signified by the bundle motif is not yet clear. In Part I, I have referred to the woman associated with *Shield-Jaguar* in such scenes as his "wife", but this was merely a convenient form of reference. This relationship could be inferred only if we accept the earliest position, 9.13.5.12.13, for the date on Lintel 32. If we give it the later position, . . . 9.13.17.15.13, the motif may refer to the acknowledgment of the birth of an heir, for *Bird-Jaguar* was born just 63 days earlier. A third possibility, and one which I am inclined to favor, is that the bundle scene is a giving in marriage, or an acknowledgment of a daughter-in-law, with the bundle signifying a property settlement. This accords better both with the advanced age of *Shield-Jaguar* at the time of *Bird-Jaguar's* birth, and with the fact that *Bird-Jaguar* is associated with four different women in such scenes, three of which occur in a single year.

Although the data offer us no clear choice among the various possibilities, there is a general indication in the sculptures of Structures 1 and 42, that *Bird-Jaguar* was negotiating family alliances with some of his powerful subjects or neighbors, and specifically with the group to which his young battle-companion belonged. The last glyph of his name, *1004a* (??) or variants of it such as *1025a*, or *630.181*, occur with a number of other personages, some of them women, and one, depicted on Lintel 14 (Fig. 3), subsequently himself became a ruler or one of the Lords judging by the fact that the Yaxchilan Emblem is used in his name. It is also interesting to observe that when *Bat-Jaguar* (who may be *Bird-Jaguar* himself or his representative) held his audience at Piedras Negras, as shown on Lintel 3, glyph *1004a* appears in the names of three of the personages seated in front of his throne. I will refer to all persons that have this glyph in their names as members of the *Moon-sign family*, though actually there may be more than one significant variant of this glyph, and we have no real knowledge of what it signifies. We know only that its occurrence is clustered about persons

associated with *Bird-Jaguar* and his successor, and that it seldom, if ever, appears in other Yaxchilan texts.

Another young person, who later himself became a ruler, and whom *Bird-Jaguar* honored in the early years of his reign, often includes in his name the sign of *Shield-Jaguar*, usually with a slight alteration of the prefix. The expression 145.188.87, followed by the sky-glyph: 561.184.74, is more characteristic of his name, but I will call him *SJ's descendant* even when the *Shield-Jaguar* glyph is omitted. His name usually ends with Yaxchilan emblem glyphs, which suggests that he was of the ruling family. *SJ's descendant* first appears on Lintel 2 (Fig. 3) of Structure 33 on the occasion of the fifth tun anniversary of *Bird-Jaguar's* accession, which is explicitly stated at D1,E1. The abbreviated expression for accession: 59.168:188 used at Piedras Negras here takes the form: 59.747:188, the vulture glyph 747 being used also in the record of the accession on Stela 11 (see Fig. 1). The *Shield-Jaguar* glyph does not occur on Lintel 2, but it is included in a long passage referring to a woman with a bundle who is portrayed with *Bird-Jaguar* on Lintel 1 (3, Pl.46), on the date of the accession. Lintel 3 (3, Pl.48) presents *Bird-Jaguar* with a man of the *Moon-sign* family, whose glyphs are different from those of the battle companion pictured on Lintel 8, but who, like the young man on Lintel 42 seems to wear a mustache. The date is the fifth tun of Katun 16. Structure 33 is placed on a high eminence overlooking the plaza, and one might conjecture that it commemorated the recognition of *SJ's descendant* as the heir and successor to *Bird-Jaguar*. Judging by his short stature, he was probably still a child, and the other two individuals with *Bird-Jaguar* may have been his parents, though we have no confirmation of this in later sculptures.

Still another young person is introduced on Lintel 9 (3, Pl.53) of Structure 2, a small building on a terrace below Structure 1, but on this young man we have no further information. He is seen exchanging staffs with *Bird-Jaguar*, as did the young man on Stela 11. The date 1Eb 0Mol (written "completion of Yaxkin") is probably 9.16.17.6.12, and is the latest date recorded in *Bird-Jaguar's* lifetime. It may or may not be significant that in both cases the motif shortly precedes the death of a ruler.

Ritual motifs are presented in *Bird-Jaguar's* reign in Structures 21 and 16. The sculptures in Structure 21 parallel those of Structure 23, which deals with *Shield-Jaguar*, and the two buildings stand on the same general level on either side of Structure 22. *Bird-Jaguar* seems to have followed fairly consistently a policy of emulating his predecessor. As in Structure 23, two women are shown performing sacrificial rites, and in both cases there is an association with a capture that occurred early in the ruler's career. On the central lintel of Structure 21, Lintel 16 (6, Pl.84), the capture scene suggests the castigation of a prisoner, whose attitude expresses fear or pain. The date 6Caban 5Pop falls on 9.16.0.13.17, soon after the triumphal scene on Stela 11, and only 83 days before *Bird-Jaguar's* accession. The prisoner is of the *Moon-sign* family (Fig 3), and it seems that the singular honor afforded *Bird-Jaguar's* later companion in battle may have served to reinstate a group, one of whose members had opposed *Bird-Jaguar* and had been humbled by him during the struggle for succession. On Lintel 15 of this structure (6, Pl.83), we see a serpent-rite performed by the same woman that is pictured on Lintel 41 on the occasion of the capture of *Jeweled Skull* (Fig. 1). Her glyphs include the numeral 6 attached to a winged Cauac glyph or inverted after a feminine headsign, and a *Ben-ich Ik* compound (168:503). To read the date, Morley alters the month coefficient to agree with the day Manik. I believe, however, that the day sign could be Kan and that the date is better read as 4Kan 12Zip, 9.16.17.2.4. This date is some years later than the capture scene, but it is consistent with the late character of the carving, and with the date on the front of Lintel 25, which is also much later than the capture with which it is indirectly associated. On the third lintel of Structure 21, Lintel 17 (6, Pl.85), the woman pictured on Lintel 43 performs a blood-letting rite. Her name is identified by the Ix sign, 524. There is no date in the text on this lintel and the statement of the event is difficult to make out. B1 could conceivably be 59.712:142?:24, the glyph characteristic of the rite, but at A3 there is a glyph with the suffix 181, which probably refers to the occasion for the sacrifice, but which unfortunately is not legible. In composition it looks like the *Upended-frog* glyph that signifies birth, and one might recall that the date of a similar blood-letting rite on Lintel 24 falls soon after the birth of *Bird-Jaguar*, and I have suggested in Part 1 of this

paper that it may represent a purification ceremony after a birth. A similar or identical glyph occurs in connection with a serpent-rite on Lintel 13, which will be discussed later.

Structure 16, which features the serpent motif and the *Hand-and-fish* glyph on all three of its lintels is set at a distance from the main concentration of buildings, facing a large open square. Two women and a man are seated holding two-headed serpents with god-figures in their jaws. The man is central, and from the inscription we gather that he is *Bird-claw Jaguar* (Lintel 39; 3, Pl.65). On Lintel 38 (marked 40 in Maler) is the name of the woman with the *Ik* sign, and on Lintel 40 (38 in Maler) is a woman of the *Moon-sign* family. The compositions recall ancestral portraits on stelae, and since these portraits may be posthumous, I hesitate to suggest positions for the dates associated with them. It is possible, as Morley suggests, that the date on the central lintel is the same date as on Lintel 14, 4Imix 4Mol, but Lintel 14 belongs to a later reign and makes no mention of *Bird-Jaguar*. I prefer to leave the reading of all three dates in question until we understand better the meaning of the *Hand-and-fish* glyph.

From Lintel 9, we know that *Bird-Jaguar* lived at least until 9.16.17.6.12, but since 3 is the only number that occurs with his *Ben-ich katun* notations, he probably died before the end of Katun 17. If the arrangement that Maler calls the "beneficent god" motif was normally erected at Yaxchilan on the Hotuns, as seems probable, we could expect at most 3 such stelae in his reign. Actually, Stela 1 is the only such monument that we can confidently identify. This stela, in addition to its Lahuntun end, 9.16.10.0.0, records also an 819-day period on 1 Oc 18Pop, . . . 9.16.8.16.10. As on Stela 11, the direction is North, and the color, white. Stela 4, ascribed by Morley to the same Lahuntun end, probably belongs to a later reign. On one of its front fragments is a date ?Ben or Akbal 16Kankin. The immediately preceding glyphs are destroyed, but at A2,B2 (4, Pl.101c) are glyphs of the lunar series, which, in conjunction with the motif of the stela, strongly suggest that the date may mark an 819-day period. Although Morley notes that the coefficient of the day must be high, I think it is possible to read the date as 1 Akbal 16Kankin, with the position 9.17.4.15.3, which would place it at the end of an 819-day period and make it the divination date for the Hotun end 9.17.5.0.0.

Stela 4 stands in a group which also includes Stelae 5,6, and 7. Stela 6 is an earlier monument, which marks the anniversary of the accession of *Bird-Jaguar II*, but both Stela 5 and Stela 7 are late monuments belonging to the reign of *Bird-Jaguar's* successor, the young man on Lintel 2 that we called *SJ's descendant*. The naming of a woman of the *Moon-sign* family on Stela 4 is further reason for considering it a late monument, for although such names first appear in *Bird-Jaguar's* reign, they are even more strongly associated with *SJ's descendant*. We see another such name on Stela 7, followed by the name of *Bird-Jaguar*, and preceded by the name of *SJ's descendant*. This recalls the arrangement of names on Stela 11, where *Shield-Jaguar* and his consort were mentioned at the end of the statement of accession, and suggests that Stela 7 may be the accession monument of *SJ's descendant* as well as the time-marker for Katun 17.

The new ruler is here named captor of two prisoners, and it appears from other records that, like his famous namesake, he engaged in numerous conflicts and paid little attention to the arts, which in his reign declined rapidly, with texts becoming increasingly corrupt and difficult to make out. Stela 5 (4, Pl.101b), although it does not mention his full name, seems to have his variant of the *Shield-Jaguar* glyph at D1. It is undoubtedly a late monument, and the best position for the date 7Chuen 19Kayab is 9.18.6.5.11. Although there is no confirmation of his rule having lasted so long, I am inclined to ascribe this monument to his reign rather than to the reign of his successor. On both sides of the monument he is shown with prisoners, in conformity with his martial character.

In the inscription on Stela 21, a fragment found in front of Structure 44 which commemorates *Shield-Jaguar's* conquests, he boasts of being captor of no less than four persons or peoples (Fig. 3). The position of the date ?Ben 1Pax is uncertain, but 10Ben 1Pax, 9.17.1.15.13, and 13Ben 1Pax, 9.17.18.1.13, agree best both with the high day-coefficient and the probable period of his reign.

With the possible exception of Structure 20, there are no sculptured lintels in the main group to testify to his interest in building activities, and the only structure that we can confidently ascribe to his initiative is Structure 54, a small building set at some distance up-river, though I am inclined to think that the adjacent Structure 55 was also built during his reign. Although

on the central lintel of the latter structure, Lintel 52 (4, . . . P1.115b), he plays a secondary role vis-a-vis *Bird-Jaguar*, and Morley's reading of the date ?Ahau 18Pop as 9.16.15.0.0 is probably correct, the *Fist glyph*, 93.672:?, at D1 with the *Jaguar's* name, as well as the irregular spacing of the glyphs, suggest that the carving was made later. Lintel 53 (4, P1.115a) repeats the motif of *Shield-Jaguar* with his woman and bundle that was used by *Bird-Jaguar* on Lintel 32, and Lintel 51 depicts a woman seated on a mask and holding a serpent, which is probably another ancestral portrait. The ensemble seems designed to demonstrate the family origins of *SJ's descendant*, and suggests that he and *Bird-Jaguar* were related to *Shield-Jaguar* through a common female ancestor.

In Structure 54 on Lintel 54 (4, P1.115d), it is *Bird-Jaguar* who is shown with a woman holding a bundle and this woman is of the *Moon-sign* family. I suspect that this and other lintels of Structure 54 have to do with marriage arrangements of *SJ's descendant* and of his kin. The date on Lintel 54 is 8Ahau 8Zots, and if this is the same date as that on Lintel 3, 9.16.5.0.0, the ruler was probably still a small child, and unless infant engagements were practiced, the lady is more likely his mother than his fiancée. On Lintel 57, however (4, P1.178Fc) we see another young woman of the *Moon-sign* family standing in front of a throne on which an older woman is seated. The main inscription is eroded, but ends with the name of *SJ's descendant*, showing that at this time he was already in power. Moreover, on Lintel 58, he is the main figure of two, and is clearly the reigning lord. Since the date on the central lintel is the end of a Hotun, and there appear to be no other dates, it would normally be accepted as the "dedicatory date" of the building. The examination of non-calendrical matter in the texts and the consideration of the historical situations that it reveals throws grave doubt on the wisdom of applying the concept of "dedicatory dates" to all sculptures. It is possible, of course, that Structure 54 was built during *Bird-Jaguar's* reign, and its subordinate position could be explained by the lower status of *SJ's descendant* at the time, but in the lack of a *Ben-ich katun* notation in his name, and in his portrait on Lintel 2, I find strong indications that he was still a young man at the turn of the katun, and could hardly have been concerned with architecture as early as 9.16.5.0.0. The date in this context is clearly historical, and one

can find further confirmation of this by noting the contrast in style between Lintels 54 and 58. I do not mean to imply that these lintels were carved at different times or by different sculptors, but it seems very likely that the older motif featuring *Bird-Jaguar* was copied from family records, which constrained somewhat the full expression of the artist's style. In this connection one might notice that both on Lintel 32 and on Lintel 53, which present *Shield-Jaguar* in contexts dealing with later reigns, the inscription are bordered, whereas on other lintels of the same building the borders are dropped. Apparently borders were going out of style, but were still retained when earlier records were used.

As the standard Classic canons of art are relaxed during the reign of *SJ's descendant*, perhaps in consequence of his extreme preoccupation with war, there are conflicting tendencies: on the one hand, toward rigidity and simplification in sculpture, as on Lintel 58, and on the other hand, toward flamboyance and exaggeration of inessential detail, which already was foreshadowed in the last years of *Bird-Jaguar's* reign in the design of Lintel 9. Irregular blocking of glyphs and their curvilinear, often careless, execution is a salient feature of this decadence, which reaches its peak in the carvings of Structure 20. This building, like Structures 23 and 21 aligned with it, features the serpent-rite associated with a capture, but a second serpent-rite is here substituted for the blood-letting rite of the other two buildings. The names of *Bird-Jaguar* and of *SJ's descendant* both appear on the central lintel, but it is not certain whether the structure was built in the reign of *SJ's descendant* or in the reign of still another lord whose name is on Lintel 14 (Fig. 3). This lord belongs to the *Moon-sign* family, but after his name is a glyph that I take to be the bird-variant of the Yaxchilan Emblem glyph that occurs also on Lintels 41 and 53. Whether the use of Emblem glyphs is confined to persons of the ruling family is of course not certain. The date 4Imix 4Mol, which may also be the date on Lintel 39, can be 9.15.10.0.1, as Morley suggests, or a date one Calendar Round later: 9.18.2.13.1. An even later position is possible, though, I believe, unlikely. Two women are mentioned in the text, one of whom shares with the ruler a skull-compound glyph, but whether this is the woman who is shown with him performing the rite, or if perhaps the portrait in the jaws of the serpent is a woman to whom these

glyphs refer is problematical. The scene on Lintel 14 is probably related to the capture scene on Lintel 12 (4, Pl.109a), which shows a lord with four prisoners. Unfortunately, there is no date, and I can make nothing of the inscription or of the names of the prisoners inscribed on their bodies.

The arrangement of the text on Lintel 13 (4, Pl.109b) suggests that the principal figure is that of *Bird-Jaguar* and that the woman with him is of the *Moon-sign* family. Although the scene depicts a serpent-rite, the usual *Hand-and-fish* glyph is not present, and instead we seem to have at A3 the glyph observed on Lintel 17 which resembles an *Upended-frog* glyph, followed by the name of *SJ's descendant*. I am not at all certain of this identification, but if it is a birth-date glyph, the best reading of the date 1 ? 13Pop would be 1Chicchan 13Pop, 9.16.0.14.5, which would make *SJ's descendant* about five years old when he appears on Lintel 2, and barely 20 when he begins his reign. In view of the association of the serpent-rite with capture motifs, it may be well to mention that this date is only 8 days later than the castigation scene on Lintel 16. Morley, however, reads the day as Ahau, and it could equally well be Oc, in which case the position 9.16.13.17.10 could be suggested for it, though it holds no significant associations.

The character of the feminine face-glyphs on Lintel 13 approaches the cursive and decadent style of Lintel 10 in Structure 3 (3, Pl.54), and it is probably the same woman, characterized by a feminine face-glyph with a cross on the head, that is mentioned on both lintels (Fig. 3). Morley considered the script of Lintel 10 to be archaic, but Beyer⁷ read the dates correctly placing them in tun 17 of Katun 18. The text may prove to be one of the most informative at Yaxchilan if it can ever be deciphered. It treats with a captor or captors of a number of persons or groups designated by various compounds of the Macaw glyph (744), though only one capture is actually recorded. If the Captor glyph really implies conquest, this may be a record of the subjugation of an entire new region to the lords of Yaxchilan. The conflict apparently began in the reign of *SJ's descendant*, for on Stela 21 at B4-H5 (Fig. 3), and perhaps also on Stela 5, he is named captor of a Macaw. It would be interesting to identify the Macaws, for in spite of the impressive record of their capture, Lintel 10 is the last inscription we find at Yax-

chilan, and the city may have fallen eventually into the hands of this enemy.

This rough sketch of what the Yaxchilan inscriptions seem to be about brings up some interesting questions about the social organization of the ancient Maya, and points out certain subjects that might yield results if investigated in detail. The overwhelming preponderance of a specific Jaguar-clause at a given period of time indicates that power and honor were concentrated in a single office, and that the rule of the city was strongly autocratic. The preservation of old records, the reference to an ancient ruler on Lintel 21, and the posthumous use of the woman-and-bundle motif all suggest that descent was of prime importance in the acquisition of power, and that it was either bilateral or included reckoning through the female line. It is not unlikely that compound Jaguar glyphs were lineage designations of a more general Jaguar clan. However, Jaguar glyphs have wide distribution and this conclusion needs checking with their occurrence in other contexts.

I have been unable to trace definite familial relationships indicated in name clauses, and their structure needs further elucidation before we can identify individuals with confidence and find links of kinship among them. The Captor expression can now be disregarded in this connection since it was shown to be associated with the taking of prisoners, and probably constitutes an acquired title, but the significance of the *Sky-god* expression, of the Batab glyph and of various other elements needs more concentrated study.

The theme of war is strongly represented at Yaxchilan, and seems to be involved in the succession of rulers. It might be well to look in other contexts for the Imix compound that occurs with prisoners, for its significance here is not at all clear.

One of the main difficulties remains the problem of the *Ben-ich Katuns*. My suggestion that they refer to the age of rulers does not give altogether satisfactory results, but a historical interpretation of some sort offers more latitude for adjustment to their irregular spacing than does one based on the long count or on cyclical events, and they seem to be more closely associated with names of rulers than with the dates recorded.

A promising lead to further investigation is the observation that glyphs designating events tend to change their affixes when they stand after a secondary series, suggesting a change in gram-

DATES PERTAINING TO THE REIGNS OF BIRD-JAGUAR AND
HIS SUCCESSORS

BJ — *Bird-Jaguar*; SJd — *Shield-Jaguar's descendant*; MSF — persons with names ending in glyph 1004a, 630.181, etc.

Monument	Morley date	Accepted date	Event glyph	Motif
L.30	9.13.16.10.13	9.13.16.10.13	819-day pd.	glyphs only
L.29	9.13.17.12.10	9.13.17.12.10	<i>Upended-frog</i>	glyphs only
St.11	9.15.9.17.16	9.15.9.17.16	<i>Turtle</i>	Ruler; young man; torch staffs
St.12	9.15.10.17.14	9.15.10.17.14	(Death of SJ?)	eroded figure
<i>Shield-Jaguar's</i> reign ends, interregnum begins.				
St.11	9.15.15.0.0	9.15.15.0.0	illegible	see St. 11 above
St.11	9.15.19.1.1	9.15.19.1.1	unknown	BJ with sun-mask; 3 captives
St.11	9.15.19.14.14	9.15.19.14.14	819-day pd.	
L.16	9.13.8.0.17(??)	9.16.0.13.17	<i>Capture</i>	BJ; captive
L.13	9.15.7.11.0(??)	9.16.0.14.5	illegible	BJ and woman; serpent-rite
<i>Bird-Jaguar's</i> reign begins.				
St.11	9.16.1.0.0	9.16.1.0.0	<i>Toothache</i>	see St. 11 above
St.11	9.16.1.0.0	9.16.1.0.0	illegible	see St. 11 above
St.12	9.16.1.0.0	9.16.1.0.0	<i>Seating of-</i>	eroded figure
L.30	9.16.1.0.0	9.16.1.0.0	<i>Toothache</i>	glyphs only
L.1	9.16.1.0.0	9.16.1.0.0	<i>Turtle</i>	BJ; woman and bundle
L.21	9.16.1.0.9	9.16.1.0.9	unknown	glyphs only
L.42	9.13.8.7.0(??)	9.16.1.2.0	<i>Turtle</i>	BJ; young MSF man
L.5	9.10.15.12.0(??)	9.16.1.2.0	<i>Turtle</i>	BJ; woman and bundle
L.6	9.10.16.0.6(??)	9.16.1.8.6	<i>Turtle</i>	BJ; young MSF man
L.43	9.13.8.13.6(??)	9.16.1.8.6	<i>destroyed</i>	BJ; woman with bowl
L.7	9.10.16.0.8(??)	9.16.1.8.8	<i>Turtle</i>	BJ; woman and bundle

Monument	Mortley date	Accepted date	Event glyph	Motif
L.8	9.10.18.11. 1(??)	9.16. 4. 1. 1	Capture	BJ and MSf man; captives
L.41	9.13.11. 6. 1(??)	9.16. 4. 1. 1	Capture	BJ with spear; <i>Ik sign</i> woman
L.3	9.16. 5. 0. 0	9.16. 5. 0. 0	Turtle?	BJ; MSf man
L.54	9.16. 5. 0. 0	9.16. 5. 0. 0	Turtle	BJ; woman and bundle
L.2	9.16. 6. 0. 0	9.16. 6. 0. 0	Turtle	BJ; SJD
St.1	9.16. 9.16.15(??)	9.16. 8.16.10	819-day pd.	
St.1	9.16.10. 0. 0	9.16.10. 0. 0	Hand scattering grain	"beneficent god" (ruler)
L.31	9.16.13. 0. 0	9.16.13. 0. 0	End 13 tuns	glyphs only
L.52	9.16.15. 0. 0	9.16.15. 0. 0?	illegible	BJ; SJD
L.33	9.10.10.11. 6(??)	9.16.16. 1. 6	illegible	BJ; torch staff (see L.50)
L.15	9.13. 8. 3. 7(??)	9.16.17. 2. 4	Hand-and-fish	<i>Ik-sign</i> woman; serpent rite
L.9	9.12.12. 2.12(??)	9.16.17. 6.12	Turtle?	BJ; young man, torch staffs

Bird-Jaguar's reign ends. Reign of Shield-Jaguar's descendant begins.

L.31	9.17. 0. 0. 0	9.17. 0. 0. 0	Completion katun 17	glyphs only
St.7	9.16.10. 0. 0(??)	(9.17. 0. 0. 0)	missing	"beneficent god" (SJD)
St.21	9.17. 1.15.13 or	missing	missing
St.4	9.16.10. 0. 0(??)	9.17.18. 1.13	819-day pd.	"beneficent god" (ruler)
L.14	9.15.10. 0. 1(??)	9.17. 4.15. 3 (9.17. 5. 0. 0)	illegible	MSf ruler?; MSf woman; serpent-rite
St.5	9.13. 0.15.11(??)	9.18. 2.13. 1?	Capture	SJD?; captives
L.10	9.18.17.12. 6 9.18.17.13.10 9.18.17.13.14	Capture? unknown unknown	glyphs only

Yaxchilan destroyed ca. 9.19.0.0.0?

matical form. In this study I have not suggested linguistic equivalents for any of the signs, but of course a real understanding of the texts can come only when we have deciphered the characters. I hope that when a linguistic approach, combined with familiarity of Maya kinship systems, is focused on the inscriptions I have reviewed, this rough historical gouache may provide some useful leads and checks for proposed linguistic formulations.

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