

by wooden beams, upon which rested the frieze ornamented with figures in stucco. A middle room and two small side rooms corresponded to the vestibule, and into the middle room the sanctuary proper was built, the longitudinal wall of which was adorned with very interesting groups of figures. In three points, however, the temple of Xupá differs from its Palenque model:

First, The vaulted ceilings of the side chambers at the rear do not run parallel with that of the vestibule, but at right angles to it.

Secondly, The sanctuary is more massive (thick-walled) in its construction.

Thirdly, The figures on the longitudinal wall of the sanctuary are not in bas-relief, but incised.

In consequence of the fall of the façade as well as of the vaulted ceiling of the middle room, the entrance to the sanctuary was entirely blocked and the sanctuary itself was buried beneath the ruins. Being thus hidden from sight, it might have been preserved to posterity, if a few years ago inquisitive treasure-seekers from the village of Palenque and the monterías on the Cháncala, suspecting a hollow space within this heap of stones, had not made an opening from above, or directly through the vaulted ceiling. These people had not sense enough to surmise that an entrance should be made from in front! When these vandals—using the opening they had made—had descended into the inner chamber, which was painted fiery red, they found that its longitudinal wall was faced with seven narrow stone slabs, on the smooth surfaces of which an extremely interesting group of figures had been incised in outlines drawn with masterly skill. The fact that the thin slabs, which were only forty to forty-five centimetres wide, did not appear to be too heavy for transportation, excited the avarice of these men. Accordingly they decided to pry them off and to sell them secretly. They went to work in a most brutal fashion to execute this decision. It may be assumed that the centre of the mural picture represented an altar (or possibly a cross), which occupied the three middle stones, while at the right and left stood male and female figures, perhaps four in all. As the central portion was incomprehensible to these rogues, it appeared to them of but little value, and they broke the slabs in pieces! I found their fragments scattered about on top of the debris, but I found it impossible to make anything out of them. The slabs with figures seeming to be the most valuable, they dragged them out, but not possessing the proper means of transportation to carry them home, they hid part of them on the slope of the pyramid and others farther off in the forest, who knows where? Only a single slab did these vandals leave on the wall, because, in trying to pry it off with their crowbars, they had knocked off the entire face of the personage represented on it. This figure represents a man of rank, wearing a high helmet with a feather ornament, a necklace,

a breastplate of scales, etc. As the face has been entirely destroyed, this figure is worthless and I have made no drawing of it. I searched the terraces of the pyramid very thoroughly for the missing stones, and was fortunate enough to find one of them. This slab was ornamented with the outlines of a lovely female form, having a high and graceful head-dress, a pure Maya profile, a collar of net-work with an edge of beads, and a disk on the middle of the breast. Under her right arm she holds a small animal (bird?) prepared for a sacrificial gift. She wears the girdle with a mask in front and a St. Andrew's cross at the side, a skirt of net-work with bead fringe, etc. I have made a tracing of this single acquisition of my explorations (Fig. 4).

My annoyance at the ruthless destruction of the decorations of the sanctuary of the temple at Xupá will probably be shared by all Americanists. This crime was probably perpetrated somewhere about the year 1890, notwithstanding the local authorities of Palenque, or rather of El Salto de Agua, had repeated and strict injunctions from the central government to protect the ancient monuments.

It is probable that the temple was once crowned by an airy roof-comb of twofold character, erected on the roofs of the vaulted chambers, which was similar to that of the temples of Palenque. The entire structure viewed from the eastern environs must have been most imposing.

On the temple site itself I could discover no sacrificial altars or stelæ with figures of gods; I found only the remains of numerous smaller structures.

Before starting on the return journey from these ruins I made an excursion to the montería established on the Mistolhá by an American, McQueen. My object was in part to inquire of his men whether in their wanderings in this wilderness they had seen ruins, and in part to gratify my desire to photograph the magnificent waterfall formed by the river.

Mr. McQueen received me kindly and gave me a guide to the waterfall. As there had been heavy rains during the preceding days, we had difficulty in crossing the Mistolhá, in order to reach the waterfall from the right bank. The waterfall is about two leagues below the montería and is indeed a splendid sight. The boiling mass of water rushes down a wall of

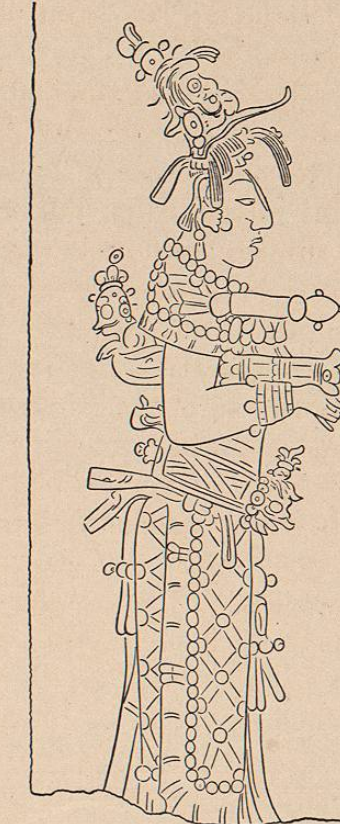


FIG. 4.—XUPÁ: INCISED CARVING UPON STONE SLAB, INNER CHAMBER OF TEMPLE. †

rock one hundred feet in height, piling up such vast masses of spray that it was well-nigh impossible to take a photograph. I finally succeeded, however, with great difficulty in taking one.

According to a statement of the men, "the petrification of a large antediluvian animal" is visible on a boulder when the water is low in the basin at the foot of the falls. An American told me, however, that this petrification was only about thirty centimetres long, and was a very distinct and pretty representation of a fish. While I was encamped near the waterfall all these rocks were under the water, and therefore I could not inspect the fossil.

The Mistolhá flows into the Baxcan, which in its turn is a tributary of the Rio de San Pedro Savana.

Having retraced our steps to the montería of Mr. McQueen, we rested there for a day, enjoying the agreeable society of that gentleman, and then we turned towards Sulusúm and Palenque.

V.

PETHÁ.

AFTER exploring the route from Chinikihá to Palenque, I found it necessary to return to my headquarters in Tenosique to organize a second expedition, — this time for the exclusive purpose of rediscovering the long since forgotten Lake of Pethá. Having engaged new men and procured fresh provisions, in the middle of August, 1898, I went for the second time to the montería La Reforma, where I had left my luggage. The rainy season in the mean time had set in in full force, the forest paths were soaked, and all the rivers and brooks were swollen. Nevertheless, very fine weather might be expected even at this season.

The first part of the road, which has been built by the firm of Romano from La Reforma to Tzendales, running directly through the wilderness, is excessively bad, because the workmen found no firm, stony soil, but only black forest loam. This ground is so boggy throughout the entire year that not even those who laid out the road ventured to use it with their horses or mules. Each traveller, therefore, at the beginning of this road endeavors to take certain circuitous paths leading from abandoned lumber camps, and only strikes into the actual *camino de los Tzendales* at the Choccolhá. We too followed the general practice, and when on the 27th of August I was able to start from La Reforma with my men and mules, after crossing the Chinikihá we took the narrow forest trail to the abandoned montería of El Clavo, about three leagues from La Reforma, where the forsaken huts afforded us sufficient shelter from the rain during the night.

On the second day of our journey, in spite of the wretched, miry, and, at times, also mountainous paths, we reached the Choccolhá, where the neighboring monterías have a ferryman who carries the traveller over in a cayuco. This ferry is called La Culebra and is about five leagues from El Clavo. But about three kilometres before we reached the Choccolhá, we were obliged with much difficulty to ford the greatly swollen Chancalá, for there was no cayuco here. At La Culebra we found protection from the rain at night in an open hut, *un galeron*, on the left bank. The ferryman's hut was on the opposite bank.

On the morning of the 29th of August we crossed the Choccolhá with the help of a large cayuco, loaded our pack animals, and from this point took the road to Tzendales, which was in a wretched state besides being very mountainous. Finally we took a forest trail on the right, and late in the afternoon we reached the montería of Las Tinieblas, which had been recently established on the right bank of the upper Choccolhá and — as I had learned — was at that time the most advanced post for those who wished to reach the Lake of Pethá. The distance from Culebra to Tinieblas I estimated at five leagues.

Las Tinieblas is a branch of the great lumber enterprise of Troncoso Cilveti y Ca., who had recently begun the exploitation of the forests along the Choccolhá and whose privileges extend to the vicinity of the Lake of Pethá. After I had explained the object of my coming to the encargado of the montería, we agreed to send a messenger on the following day to the administrator of the concession, Mr. Cayetano Irigoyen, who was fortunately just then staying at the neighboring montería La Ilusion, and whom I had informed of my intention when I was in Tzendales. In due time I received the following courteous reply from Mr. Irigoyen:

Troncoso Cilveti y Ca.
Corte de Maderas preciosas.
Chiapas.

La Ilusion, Agosto 30 de 1898.

Señor Don Teoberto Maler,
Montería Las Tinieblas.

MUY SEÑOR MIO, — Correspondo con gusto á su atenta de hoy en lá que me pide un práctico para su excursión á la laguna Pethá.

Obsequiando sus deseos, irá mañana nuestro dependiente Francisco Guillen para acompañarlo, aunque sus conocimientos prácticos en esos lugares no son muy precisos, pero sí creo suficientes para llegar bien al punto deseado: pues las mensuras de los terrenos de esta casa, en cuya apertura estuvo él, se aproximan á unos pocos kilómetros de la laguna.

Deseando le sea satisfactoria su visita á estos desiertos me repito su afectísimo amigo y servidor

CAYETANO IRIGOYEN.