

rushing along at the most frightful speed, caused my men utterly to lose their heads, though they had always considered themselves excellent *vogas*. They were terribly frightened, and only the utmost exertion on my part had brought the trembling fellows thus far. Our attempt at towing the cayuco over the rapids was unsuccessful. It filled with water, the ropes broke, and, dashing to pieces against the rocks, it vanished in the whirling flood. It was no great loss. All my baggage, the paddles even, and my men, who had so greatly feared for their precious lives, were saved. Notwithstanding the accident, we could still consider ourselves very fortunate, for we had now passed the most dangerous rocky narrows and rapids. The rest of the voyage henceforth offered no great dangers.

In the meantime, however, I established my camp on the rocks and sent two of my men through the forest to Anaité, about two leagues distant, to procure another cayuco in which to continue my voyage. They succeeded in obtaining a large one, which I afterward bought for sixty pesos, from a ranchero, José María Jiménez, who had settled somewhat farther up the river. The men were accompanied on their return by my old friend Lamberto de La Cruz of Anaité, and another cayuco arrived at the same time with people on their way to El Cayo. Thus we were at last able to continue our voyage, though not without loss of time.

I was only half annoyed at my enforced stay of several days on the rocks, for the chasm cut by the river at this point affords such a magnificent sight that I was actually sorry to part from this scene of wild beauty. I had made good use of my time in collecting some rare specimens of butterflies and beetles, and I had been successful in capturing a male and a female of the great beetle called *el cornezuelo* in Tabasco. This beetle is probably the largest in America. It is not found in other parts of Mexico.

Guided by Lamberto de La Cruz, we now passed the rapids called *El Raudal chico*, which are smaller than those previously passed, but by no means without danger. Here also a high rock had to be surmounted on foot, while the cayuco was towed along by a long rope. From this point all danger ceased.

After allowing my men a day of rest at Anaité, we continued on our way to the ruins of Yāxchilan. Above Anaité the river, bordered on both sides by low mountain ranges, offers a succession of magnificent views, which further up are not again equalled in beauty. Arrived at the ruins, we all took up our quarters in the "Labyrinth."

First of all, I turned my attention to the terraces of the three South Temples, convinced that more stelæ and circular altars could be brought to light there. In point of fact I succeeded in excavating nine stelæ, so that the total number of stelæ found by me in Yāxchilan amounted to exactly twenty.

After being convinced that it was not possible to find more stelæ, — unless a group of more distant buildings should some day be discovered, —

I began a second very thorough search of the half and wholly ruined structures for lintel-carvings. Having familiarized myself with the method of construction employed in building the principal edifices, when drawing their several plans, it was a comparatively easy matter for me to find out, even with regard to the most shapeless mass of débris, whether I was dealing with a structure of one, two, or three entrances, where the latter must have been, and about how far their lintel-slabs must have fallen forward in the general downfall. Thus every excavation produced the sought-for lintel-slab with almost mathematical precision, without further loss of time. There only remained the question as to whether it was ornamented or plain.

In this way I succeeded in excavating no less than fourteen lintels, ornamented with the most interesting picture or inscription carvings imaginable, also a fragment of a fifteenth, the most important part of which had doubtless been carried off.

As sculptured lintels are never plentiful, and one is often glad enough to have found two or three, or even a single one, the result of my exploration may be looked upon as very extraordinary. The number of sculptured lintels found at Yāxchilan, after my second expedition, had accordingly increased to forty-six, inclusive of those that had been sawed off by previous visitors.

The work of these excavations had consumed three whole months, January, February, and March, 1900. Then everything had been photographed, several paper moulds had been made, and my general plan of Yāxchilan was completed.

While we actually suffered from famine during the first expedition, we fared very well this time, for we had a superfluity of provisions. I had brought along a little machine for grinding maize, *el azteca*, so that my men could daily make fresh maize bread, *tortillas*. José María Jiménez, who had settled a little way above the ruins, opposite the embouchure of the Yāxchilan, from time to time brought us maize, beans, bananas, and even a little pig. Besides, we frequently succeeded in shooting birds and little mammals, which afforded us savory roasts. Passing cayucos occasionally sold us spirits, which largely contributed toward keeping the men contented.

The present description of the ruins of Yāxchilan consists of the combined results of my exploration of the year 1897, and those of the explorations undertaken under the auspices of the Peabody Museum of Harvard University, in 1900. Only in this way can I succeed in giving a clear and complete idea of all that has hitherto been found in the ruined city.

The Usumatsintla at this point forms a large omega-like ( $\Omega$ ) bend which has a small additional curve. (See map of the river, Plate I of this volume.) Upon this little addition, which is intersected by slight mountainous elevations, lies the ruined city, the monumental structures of which are situated partly on the broad, levelled, curved embankment, and partly on the hill of the

Great and of the Lesser Acropolis, and its northeastern slopes, and partly on the foothills of an adjacent mountain range on the east, the tops of which, however, are without architectural remains.

As the entire city of ruins at the present time lies hidden under giant vegetation, which far exceeds that of the peninsula of Yucatan with its scarcity of water, I found it extremely difficult to comprehend the ground-plan. In reconstructing a plan of the site, I set down the groups of buildings, as they followed one upon the other, and thus finally arrived at a clear comprehension of the plan of the city (Plate XXXIX).

As it is impossible to take sight in any direction, my plan of the city naturally lays no claim to be drafted on scientific principles, but for purely practical purposes—that is, for finding all the buildings and sculptures investigated by me—it is quite sufficient.

In order to avoid confusion, we will proceed as follows in enumerating the buildings and sculptures.

I. The Curved Embankment and the Buildings on the Terraces of the northwestern slope of the adjacent mountain range, which, as it were, forms the southeastern termination of the embankment.

II. The chain of Temples near the foot of the northeastern slope of the mountain range of the Great and the Lesser Acropolis.

III. The Second Chain of Structures, situated somewhat higher up on the same slope.

IV. The Great Acropolis, which crowns the mountain ridge from the Temple of the headless figure of Ketsalkoatl as far as the three South Temples.

V. The Lesser Acropolis, which rises high above the right flank of the Labyrinth, and is connected with the Great Acropolis by a very much extended, saddle-shaped formation.

#### I. THE CURVED EMBANKMENT AND THE BUILDINGS ON THE TERRACES OF THE NORTHWESTERN SLOPE OF THE ADJACENT MOUNTAIN RANGE.

It is probable that during the last few centuries the river has eaten away about one hundred metres in width of the outer curve of the city,—that is, of the first embankment,—and on the other hand has deposited soil on the opposite shore belonging to Guatemala. It is therefore possible that during the most flourishing period of the city, the massive little circular structure—which was perhaps once surmounted by a small temple—stood close to the low foreshore even in the rainy season, while the first embankment extended to its immediate vicinity. Upon the now very much narrowed first embankment there are at present no monumental buildings, but I have reasons for thinking that some structures formerly stood on its edge, which, in consequence of the erosion, gradually fell into the river; for at the present

time, when the water is low, there can be seen at intervals along the rocky shore great heaps of stones (among which even lintel-slabs can be distinguished) which are evidently the remains of buildings which once stood above.

The first embankment rises about thirteen metres above the rocky bed of the river, and the second—the monumental curved embankment—can be reached by ascending five or six metres higher. The curved embankment consists of very extensive esplanades, filled up with stones where necessary, the monumental structures of which lie partly along the outer edge and partly at right angles to the latter.

It should be remarked here that the ancient Maya cities were, as a general thing, not cities of streets like the Asiatic cities, but cities of terraces. Street is not contiguous to street here, but terrace to terrace. Thus the plan of Yaxchilan is not based on a complex of streets, but on a system of terraces, and the earthwork terraces were connected with the esplanades of the embankments by means of stairways and other ascents.

*Structure 1. The Temple of the Four Sculptured Lintels 5, 6, 7, 8 (among them that of the Priest with the Double Crosses).* Southeast of the circular embank-

ment rises the adjacent mountain range, the northwest slope of which has been formed into great terraces, upon which I found the remains of a structure of considerable size. From the remains of the walls I endeavored to determine the ground-plan, and found that the edifice must have had a vestibule with three entrances in the façade, and two small chambers in the rear corresponding to it, and that there must have been a chamber with a single entrance running the length of each end of the building; that is, five chambers in all (Fig. 37).

Convinced that a structure built on such a plan must have been of some importance, I undertook extensive excavations along the line of the ruined façade, which had fronted north-northwest, in order to find out whether the three lintel-slabs, which according to my calculation must have been buried there, were or were not ornamented on the under side. The excavations were eminently successful. Three extremely interesting sculptured lintels were found, to which in the general enumeration, I gave the numbers 5, 6, and 7.

An excavation on the southwest side was without result. But as the chamber on that side faces a ravine, it is more than probable that its lintel was not important.

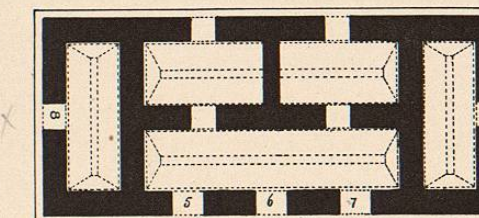


FIG. 37.—STRUCTURE 1: GROUND-PLAN.