

band on the lintel of the central doorway corresponds to the thickness of the lintel, and has white spaces left upon it in which red hands are painted.

The principal apartment of the temple is 13 m. 33 cm. long; 2 m. 60 cm. broad; 5 m. 60 cm. high.

A steep ogive vault, with three slight steps and truncated at the top, covers the whole structure, including the small, lateral chambers, which are 190-195 cm. broad, this breadth being a part of the length of the whole interior.

Since the roof-comb, as I have said, does not correspond with the front or the rear walls of the temple, but very nearly with the middle of the vaulted ceiling, the architects, wishing to relieve the latter of the enormous pressure brought to bear upon it, threw out, from the longitudinal rear wall within, four strong buttresses, which, together with the two partition walls of the lateral chambers, have certainly answered their purpose, for the structure still stands after the lapse of perhaps a thousand years. For a perfect comprehension of this remarkable construction I must refer the reader to my drawing of the plan (Fig. 56).

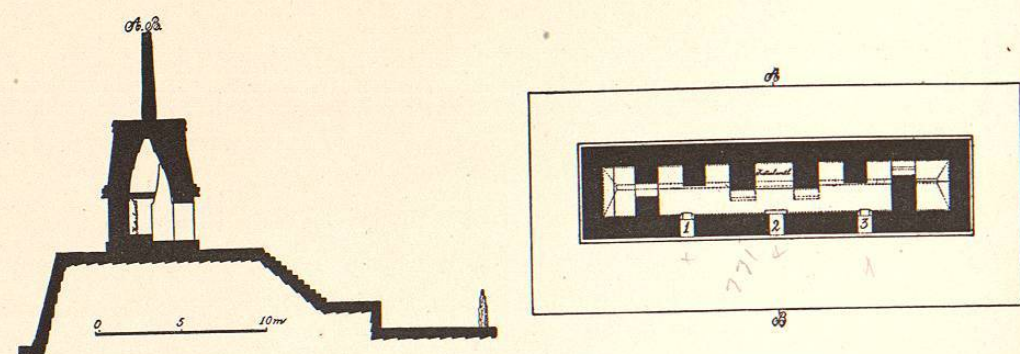


FIG. 56. — STRUCTURE 33, THE TEMPLE OF KETSALKOATL: SECTION AND GROUND-PLAN (RESTORED).

The two central buttresses are somewhat broader and of greater projection than the two lateral ones, which does not in the least impair the regularity of the plan of construction. This circumstance has been hitherto misunderstood by other travellers, who have not appreciated the symmetry of this arrangement, and whose drawings of the interior of the temple have shown exaggerated irregularities.

The interior walls were all covered with white stucco; but in the niches which are formed by the buttresses, faint remains of red scroll-work and figures can still be seen.

The central niche forming the sanctuary had, at a height of 240 cm., a horizontal ceiling of beams covered with a layer of plaster and thin slabs of stone. Upon a low step in this niche was seated the stone figure of Ketsalkoatl, the principal god of the Maya-Toltecs, executed entirely in the round

(Plate XLV, 1). The height of this figure is 220 cm.; therefore, with its head-dress, it must have nearly touched the ceiling.

The wood-cutters, to whose depredations in the ruined city I have alluded already, barbarously struck off the head of this image of the god, intending to take it to Tenosique. As they did not have the proper implements, they demolished the neck and the lower part of the face. After the head had been detached from the body, they found it too heavy and left it lying beside the prostrate figure. Whether the wooden ceiling had been destroyed by the same vandals, or whether it had been removed before their advent, I could not ascertain, and therefore it is impossible to determine whether the under side was plain or ornamented with interesting carvings.

The figure of Ketsalkoatl (Fig. 57) was placed upon the step of the niche, sitting cross-legged in Asiatic fashion, with dignified bearing, his hands with fans of feathers resting on his knees, from each of which depends a little ornamental chain. His wrists are adorned with cuffs; his broad girdle has a large face-mask in front, below which hang the pendants and the sash. The breast-cape is of scale-work and has an edge of beads at the top, which may also be regarded as a necklace. Three



FIG. 57. — KETSALKOATL (neck and lower part of face restored).

medallions with face-masks ornament the garment of scales; one in the centre with pendants below and at the sides, and one at each shoulder with

pendants only below. Below the central medallion, a narrow plate with three divisions at each end reaches quite across the breast.

The god has oblique eyes (that is, Chinese or Mongolian eyes), and his face is surmounted by a serpent's head, the upper jaw of which rests upon a head-band of rattles. The serpent's head also has a head-band with a large round flower in the centre and smaller ones above. An ornament of glyphic character in three parts is attached to each side of the serpent's head. Thick plumes of feathers surround the whole head-dress.

The hard, sandy limestone shows its natural whitish-grey color. Gay colors are no longer discernible. I made a very careful drawing of this representation of the god, as it would be extremely difficult to photograph it under present conditions. It is undeniable that these images of gods in Yāxchilan and Piedras Negras, sitting cross-legged in their niches, and wearing serpent head-dresses or turbans, are strongly suggestive of the Indo-Turanian representations of Buddha. At all events, the oblique eyes indicate Turanian origin, even though the historical reason why the principal god of the Maya-Toltecs (Ketsalkoatl?) displays the Turanian type may not be clear to us. But where history is mute, monuments are eloquent.

However that may be, Indians come even now from the remotest wilderness to lay down before this image of the god, their *cānal-vinic* ("Man from above," or "Man of heaven"), little sacrificial gifts, and to burn incense in tastefully ornamented vessels adorned with feathers, and to perform strange dances to the sound of the *tunkul*, during which they drink copiously of *x-balché* (*š-baltsé*). One of these dances is called by the monteros "la danza del pito-real," the dance of the toucan (Genus *Ramphastos*), because each of the participants wears the stuffed skin of this bird as a head-dress.

It is much to be regretted that no traveller has as yet succeeded in witnessing these remarkable rites. But the Indians come — no one knows whence. They suddenly appear, have their celebration, and vanish in the forests without leaving a trace that could be followed up.

The incense vessels exhibit certain differences according to the settlement from which they come (Plate LXXX, 2, where three are shown on the altar, and compare with Fig. 8 in Part I of this volume). They all have strangely formed human heads on the front. Masculine facial forms are most frequently observed, with strongly marked aquiline noses, ribbed bands across the foreheads, circular ear-plates, and a knob at the root of the nose and one on each cheek. There are also faces with feminine features, which are naturally treated differently. The main body of the vessel is usually smooth, though some have certain sunk designs. It may be assumed that most of them are decorated with bright colors, but as they are neither varnished nor glazed these disappear in time. The entire floor of the temple is covered with these clay incense vessels from all of which the heads have unfortunately been broken off. The mischievous visitors to these ruins —

who seem to harbor an inconceivable hostility towards every object which is clean and unimpaired — have the stupid habit of knocking off the heads of all the incense vessels which they find, in order either to throw them away or take them to their children for toys. It seems to be too much trouble for them to take away a vessel that is whole or uninjured.

The little windows of the roof-comb are also full of shards, which seems to indicate that incense is likewise burnt above, which no doubt produces a fantastic illumination at nocturnal feasts.

During my flying visit in 1895, I had the rare good fortune to find four quite new, brightly painted incense vessels in the niche of Ketsalkoatl, and four others in one of the chambers of the Shore Temple, which had been placed there two months before my arrival at Yāxchilan by Lacantuns, who had made a pilgrimage hither. On these vessels the facial expression was accentuated by red, black, and white lines, and the round body of the vessel was ornamented with perpendicular stripes of the same colors. In all of these vessels there were black remains of melted copal. The Mexican name for this black, melted mass is *chappopoll* (*tšapopotl*).

The three once gayly colored sculptures, which adorn the under side of the lintels of the three doorways, are unquestionably the most important feature of the temple.

The stelæ of Seibal and Piedras Negras are on as grand a scale as those of Yāxchilan, but in regard to the sculpture on the under side of the lintel, Yāxchilan stands alone. It is necessary to see these sculptures to convince one's self of the truth of this assertion. It is no exaggeration to say that in fineness of execution and general artistic value they can be compared with the best that Assyria and Egypt have produced.

*Lintel I, sculptured on the under side* (Plate XLVI). Height of sculpture, including border, 87 cm. (running with the width of the doorway, which is 90 cm.). Breadth, including border, 92 cm. (running with the thickness of the wall, which is 114 cm.).

A richly clad high priest holds with his right hand a little image toward a niche formed by rows of glyphs. The little image has a snouted face and wears a small helmet with plume of feathers; the leg by which it is held ends, as usual, in a serpent stretching forward. The Ahaucan wears buskins and leg-bands; a ribbed loin-cloth, richly ornamented; breast-cape of scales adorned with three medallions, with a larger one under the central one, half-hidden by the horizontal breast-plate; a cuff of scale-work on the right wrist, and on the left a cuff with a large face-mask. The head-dress consists of a tall calpac-shaped priest's hat with horizontal stripes, and a border at the lower edge, voluminous feather, and scroll-work at the back, and a tall crest and plume of feathers on top.

Behind the Ahaucan stands a young girl clad in a long sack-like garment, who holds with both hands the pouch with its sacrificial gifts. The pouch is