

could be no question of a projecting lower story. I now thought it might be a fallen stela, and I began to examine the upper surface of the mysterious stone. After some of the débris had been cleared away, the beginnings of a magnificent low relief made their appearance. But then I found that the horizontal arrangement of the glyphs on the front face excluded the possibility that the stone had ever stood in a vertical position. Now it became clear to me that I had before me a sacrificial stone, which had been laid upon the platform. The reader will, I am sure, think it quite natural that I did not come to this conclusion at once, if he takes into consideration the fact that this is the only sacrificial slab of its kind which has ever been found in Yāxchilan.

After clearing away the rubbish, which had been piled up high over the stone for centuries, and had mercifully protected it from the rain and the

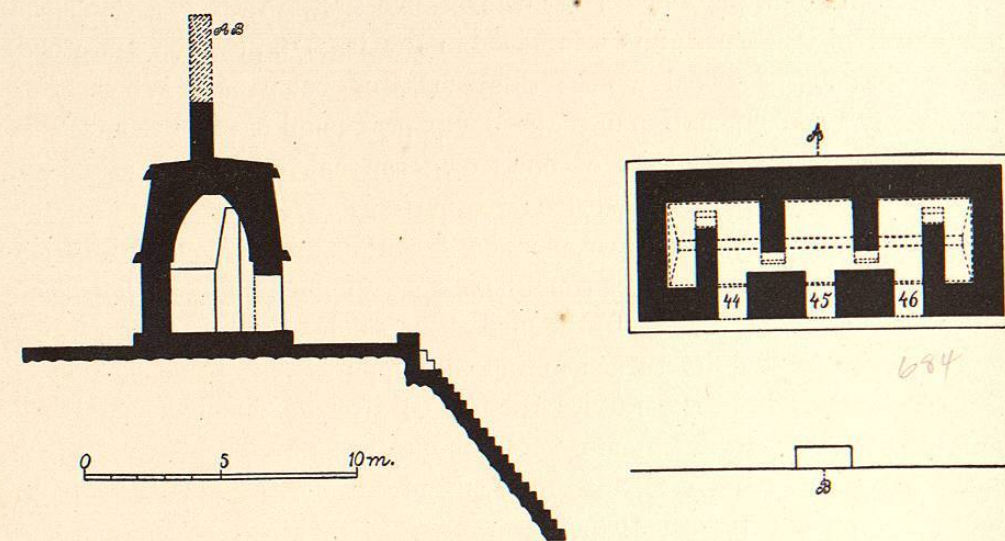


FIG. 68.—STRUCTURE 44: SECTION AND GROUND-PLAN (RESTORED).

mischief of man, we succeeded in setting it up on one of its narrow side-faces, and in taking an excellent photograph of its upper surface. Length of stone, 198 cm.; breadth, 75 cm.; thickness, 30 cm.

The low relief of the skyward face has a base of symbolical, grotesque faces and scroll-work. In the middle of the ornamental base is a large oval containing the expressive profile face of a god. A grotesque animal's face with great open jaws adjoins one side of the oval, and a scroll the other; below the oval, there is another large profile head of glyphic significance, with a second head attached to the forehead, and quite in the corner of the same side is a little oval containing a mammal, while, placed obliquely, in the other corner is another grotesque face.

Above the ornamental base kneels a man of high rank who, to judge by his bound arms, is destined (perhaps voluntarily) to be sacrificed. If he is an enemy he is receiving a certain amount of honorable deference, since

he holds in his right hand a handsome round fan of feather-work, and besides has not been deprived of his head-dress adorned with feathers. The bow of his sash falls down in front, and upon it are incised two glyphs. This figure is represented in front view, excepting the face. Above this victim intended for sacrifice rise two rows of five glyphs each, above which is the initial glyph occupying a space equal to that of two of the others. This inscription forms one half of the surface of the sculpture above the ornamental base, while the other half is filled out by two rows of thirteen glyphs each, — a total of thirty-seven large glyphs.

Under the protecting rubbish the sculpture was so well preserved that the nicest details of the glyphs are still perfectly distinct, and my photograph can be made available for purposes of deciphering. As already stated, nothing like this has been found on any of the other temple terraces.

The subjects represented on the three lintels indicate that this temple (No. 44) was used chiefly for sacrificial purposes. Which god it was to whom sacrifices were here made, might possibly be disclosed by the half-length picture in the oval described above.

Structure 45. This structure is separated from the 44th by a narrow passage one metre in width. It consists of a rather long vestibule with a single entrance and a very narrow apartment of the same length, with an entrance from the vestibule. The vestibule is half fallen down, but the steep triangular vaulting of the rear apartment is still well preserved. The large lintel of the front entrance has, unfortunately, no design.

Structure 46. A few metres from the left flank of Structure 45 and on a lower level stands Structure 46. This is of considerable size and its façade likewise faces northeast. Three doorways in the façade open into the front apartment and a doorway in the middle wall leads to the rear apartment. The lintels of this structure also are unsculptured.

Structure 47. From the platform of Structure 46 a stairway leads down to that large general terrace, which I call the second from the top. From here the populace probably witnessed the rites performed upon the platform of Temple 44. This terrace is crossed, at a right angle to the left wing of Structure 46, by a small, now ruined edifice (No. 47) which must naturally have faced southeast.

Structures 48 and 49. Now turning back behind Structures 46 and 45 we arrive at a little platform upon which are two structures now converted into two heaps of stones. One of them, No. 48, is placed transversely to No. 46; the other, No. 49, runs parallel with 45. Leaving this smaller plateau and mounting a few metres higher, we reach the larger plateau, which is

surrounded on all sides by structures toward which Structures 44, 43, and 42 turn their backs.

Structure 50. The northwest side of the plateau is occupied by the heap of ruins, No. 50.

Structure 51. This large structure occupies the southwest side of the plateau. This construction, facing north-northeast, belongs to the category of those massive terraces which I have described under 4, 5, and 8. A broad stairway leads to a first terrace or platform. Above this rises a second, the actual upper terrace, upon which probably stood three lesser constructions (temples?) which have now fallen.

Structure 52. This wholly ruined structure on the southeast side of the plateau formed the connecting link with Structure 42 with which this description was begun.

While from the platform of Structure 51 there is a very good view in the direction of the neighboring southwestern mountains, Temples 42 and 44 afford a magnificent survey of the endless mountain chains which cross and re-cross the wilderness between Yāxchilan and Peten-Itza. The river below is naturally invisible. It follows from my description that with the striving for architectural effects, strategical requirements were also taken into consideration in the plan of the city. Thus the Lesser Acropolis formed for those times an impregnable citadel. I believe that the city, defended by inhabitants so well versed in the arts of war, was never conquered by an enemy during the long period of its existence.

It seems scarcely necessary to give an abbreviated list of the principal structures, since most of them can be easily remembered by their simplified names, such as "Labyrinth," "Red Shore Temple," "Bird Temple," "Temple of Ketsalkoatl," "South Temples, I, II, III," etc. In addition to the principal structures, there are countless smaller ruins and foundation walls. It also seems superfluous to place in a special list the circular altars which were formerly covered with interesting inscriptions and sculptures, numbering many more than a hundred, since they have now lost all interest, owing to the action of the elements.

However, a list of the stelæ and lintels, giving a review of the whole, may be deemed advisable by some of my readers, especially as it has been quite impossible to give numbers to the sculptures corresponding with each other or with those of the structures.

LIST OF THE STELÆ OF YĀXCHILAN, EXAMINED 1897-1900.

STELÆ BELONGING TO THE ARCHITECTURAL COMPLEX OF THE TEMPLE OF KETSALKOATL. (STRUCTURE 33.)

Stela 1 (Plate LXIX). Human side destroyed. Deity side: peculiar ornamental base; above it, the beneficent god with chest of good fortune and rope of honey; a supplicant. Upper finish: two ovals with human figures; a half-length figure; eight heads in profile; 23 glyphs + 3 incised ones preserved.

Stela 2 (Plate LXXII, 1). Deity side destroyed. Human side: the armless warrior. The glyph of the base and eight additional glyphs.

STELÆ BELONGING TO THE TEMPLE OF THE BIRD SACRIFICE. (STRUCTURE 20.)

Stela 3. Human side destroyed. Deity side: the beneficent god with chest of good fortune and honey rope; a man and woman supplicating; upper part shattered; seven glyphs.

Stela 4 (Plate LXX). Human side destroyed. Deity side: symbolical base with the sign of the sawfish; beneficent god with chest of good fortune and honey rope; a male and female supplicant; middle portion destroyed; magnificent finish; two small ovals with human figures, a half-length figure, eight profiles; seven well-preserved glyphs on background.

Stela 5. Human side destroyed. Deity side: the deity (?) holds in his right hand a lance upon which is transfixing an animal's head; his ornaments are eight medallions, partly round and partly square; nine glyphs at the top.

Stela 6 (Plate LXXI). Human side destroyed. Deity side: beneficent god with chest of good fortune and honey rope; no supplicant at his side, but a personage of rank sitting Turkish fashion serves as the ornamental base; upper finish similar to that of Stelæ 1, 4, and 10; 9 large glyphs + 10 smaller ones.

Stela 7. Human side destroyed. Deity side: the base exhibits the monkey and the rabbit in ovals of scroll-work; the beneficent god, with the chest of good fortune at his feet, lays the honey rope (a net?) over the face of the supplicant; top entirely destroyed; twenty glyphs preserved.

STELÆ BELONGING TO THE TEMPLE OF SEPULCHRAL PYRAMID 18.

Stela 8. Broken and scaled off; probably sculptured only on one side; oval containing half-length figure; not photographed.

STELÆ BELONGING TO SEPULCHRAL PYRAMID 36.

Stela 9 (Plate LXXII, 3). Human side destroyed. Deity side: beneficent god with horn of plenty in each hand.

SOUTH TEMPLE I. (STRUCTURE 39.)

Stela 10 (Plate LXXIII). Human side: fourteen glyphs as a base; a warrior of high rank, one of a lesser grade, and two other personages; upper finish destroyed. Deity side: the nice detail of the work has been effaced on the lower two thirds. Principal personage in front view, and two secondary figures; upper finish preserved; two ovals with little figures, a large head in profile, and eight other faces in profile.