Full-Figure Personified Maya Hieroglyphs

Bench Front of the "Harvard Bench" inside Copan Structure 9M-146 of Group 9M-18

Parque Arqueológico Copán

Copan Ruinas, Honduras

Nicholas Hellmuth



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Nicholas Hellmuth, March 2024

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Acknowledgements

We sincerely appreciate the permission from IHAH to photograph at night. You can get better photographs at night with a portable electric generator. We have donated these photos to IHAH and they are also available to Asociacion Copan and related institutions.

Parque Arqueológico de Copán, the Museo de Escultura de Copán and museum in the town of Copan Ruinas, Honduras are all great places to visit; local people are hospitable and I have enjoyed visiting the park and the village museum in the town of Copan Ruinas in the late 1960's, 1970's, 1990's, and again when digital cameras became available, to return with higher resolution.
We sincerely appreciate the assistance of the park rangers and local guides.

I also thank the capable team of FLAAR Mesoamerica who assisted with setting up the portable photo studio, lighting, etc.

We also appreciate the hospitality by the archaeologists working at Copan over decades.

During our early visits to photograph at Copan (1990's onwards), Oscar Cruz was the Regional Representative of IHAH. He was very helpful on each of our field trips.

For further information on the iconographic aspects and epigraphic aspects these have been covered by the capable iconographers, epigraphers and archaeologists that we include in the introductory bibliographies at the end of this report.

There are probably thousands of photos of this bench front. I would estimate that the various Copan projects have plenty of photos, including 3-dimensional scans. But to study details it helps to have photographs at larger size and in good resolution. In a peer-reviewed journal article the images are often never in color and tend to be very small. I recently was reading a book on Maya iconography by two capable epigraphers / iconographers and the illustrations were so tiny you could not see details whatsoever. This is the fault of the publishers, not the authors. So we prefer not to publish in commercial books; our goal is to show the Maya sculptures in good details (which starts with using good portable studio lighting and using a tripod so the camera is not vibrating). And publishing at full-page size in good resolution.

www.digital-photography.org shows our camera equipment over the years.

It will help children in Honduras and neighboring countries to learn about Maya cultural heritage.

One long-range goal is to "translate" iconographic, epigraphic, and archaeological documentation into Mayan Toons books by FLAAR (USA) and FLAAR Mesoamerica (Guatemala) to help school children around the world learn about the Classic Maya of Honduras with reliable archaeological and iconographic documentation (rather than copy-and-paste from normal websites.

But the first step is to find all the photos, scan them if done before digital cameras; process them so you can see the details at high resolution, and provide references in a bibliography to help professors and university students and the general public. But it would be great if primary and secondary school children also had this information in a format appropriate for their early years.

Our material for university students and professors is on:
www.maya-ethnobotany.org
www.maya-ethnozoology.org
www.maya-archaeology.org

Our material for school children is
www.MayanToons.org

Introduction

There are several masonry benches at the Maya ruins of Copan, Honduras that have a row of personified full-figure hieroglyphs across the front of the bench:

- Bench in House of the Bacabs, Str. 9N-8, has 16 glyph blocks with at least 27 personages plus several non-personified glyphs and 8 seated personages (1 at each end; the rest below), plus a complete bicephalic Cosmic Monster. The throne front and supports are relatively well preserved so all can in the future be identified.

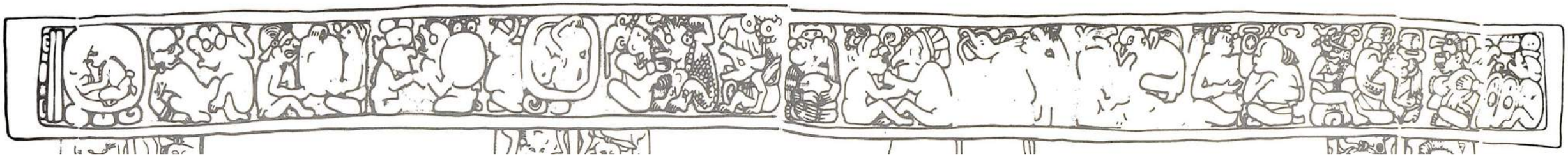
- Str. 9M-146, the "Harvard bench", has 13 glyph blocks of which half are eroded and thus need further analysis to show what is in the images. 26 deities, personages, and sacred birds are noticeable. Plus 8 supports of which six are adequately preserved and since most are repeats the eroded ones can be identified.

- Sky Band Motifs on Copan Structure 8N-66C Bench Front includes 9 glyph blocks and 4 supports with total of 16 well preserved personages, deities, animals or major symbols. These are more sculptures of personified celestial personages than a conventional hieroglyphic text. So this is more a Sky Band than a text (but it still can be "read").

So the bench of Str. 9M-146 has almost the same number of sacred images as that of the bench in the House of the Bacabs. Thus the bench of Str. 9M-146 has enough material for lots of epigraphic and iconographic research. The goal of the present FLAAR Report is to show each glyph block in high resolution photo with cross-lighting to help reveal details that now can be added to create additional drawing to help show which deities, which birds, and which motifs and glyph aspects are present. To identify every one of the 26 individuals is a separate study best handled in a year-long PhD level of research. I show the path: finding lots of other full-figure personified hieroglyphs and with them and face-variants plus scenes of deities elsewhere to identify more of the personages in the future.

The bench of 10K-4 has nice celestial symbols on sky band; earth band below, and two "sun god" heads plus two Cauac Monster heads; but no full-figure personified hieroglyphs. I do not yet have photos of this bench so we have no FLAAR Photo Archive Report. The excellent drawing by Barbara Fash shows everything (Webster 2023b: Fig. 4-6).

Dozens of archaeologists, epigraphers, and iconographers have photographed the hieroglyphs on the front of Copan Structure 9M-146. The FAMSI collection of Linda Schele photographs shows photos with what I estimate is natural light. She names them 1 through 12 (perhaps I did not find her photo of Block 13); I consider there are 13. Other altars at Copan have ABC names for their glyph blocks.



I have not yet found drawings of individual glyph blocks nor any other drawing of the entire scene. So this drawing by Barbara Fash is essential (Baudez 1994: Fig. 112,A).

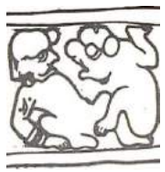
A





Block A. One full-figure person but interacting with a “baby” so actually two individuals.

B





Block B. Two full-figures: deity and Bufo Toad.

C





Block C. Two personages and giant (glyphic) bundle.

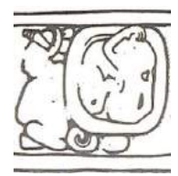
D





Block D. Two personages and round area.

E





Block E. Seated man in front of spider monkey in cartouche.

F





Block F. Mythical person in front of Bufo Toad.

G





Block G. Creature, personage and lots of glyphic affixes.

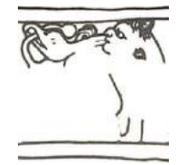
H





Block H. Personage and seated bird-man.

I





Block I. Bird at left with stem in beak; personage at right.

J





Block J. Bird at the right, with close-up of the glyphs it may be possible to improve.

K





Block K. Two individuals with lots of glyphic infixes.

L





Block L. At the right a deity in a Moon Crescent.

M





Block M K’awil at the left with bird, and bat emblem glyph of Copan at the right.

These small images below are a good demonstration that the photos ought to be “full page size” in order to facilitate helping epigraphers and iconographers. But a line drawing, even if small, can show helpful aspects. The goal is to combine the drawing with the photo in the sense of using photos of the digital era to update drawings of the pre-digital era. Many of the drawings in my 1987 PhD dissertation need to be updated now that digital documentation is available.

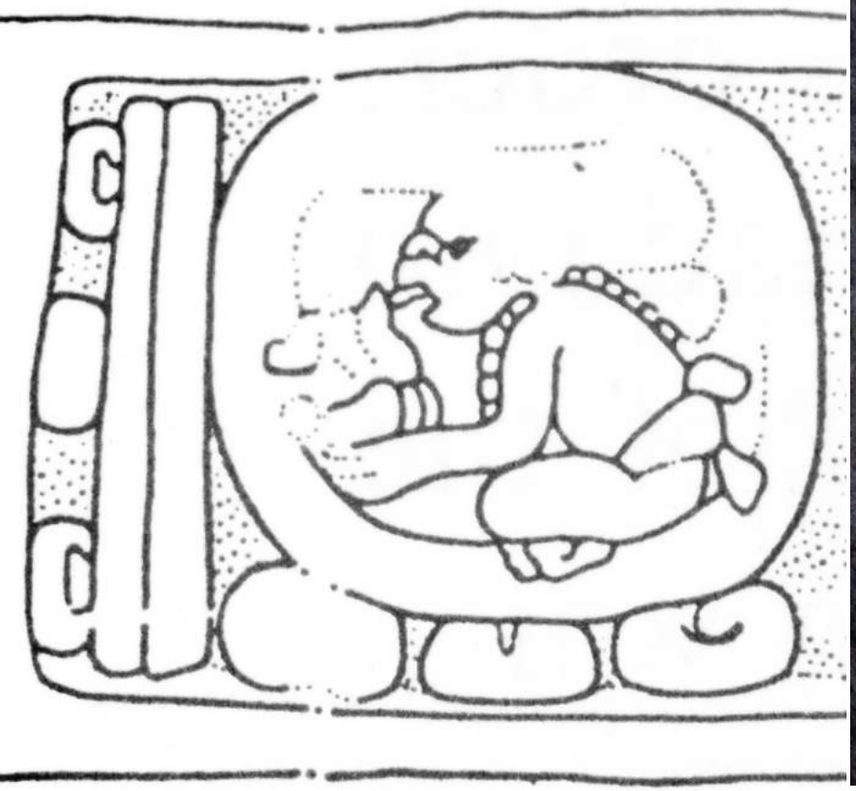
All photographs below by Nicholas Hellmuth, FLAAR Photo Archive, taken with a full portable photo studio of lighting, with permission of IHAH, park administrators and museum curators.

Hieroglyph Block A

Has only one full-figure personage but once I enlarge the photo I notice that the main creature is holding a small (baby) creature in its out-stretched hands. I am curious whether such tender interaction has been sculpted inside a Maya hieroglyphic cartouche elsewhere?

With the help of the FLAAR Photo Archive we can see that additional details can be added to the drawing, even if in broken-line. Every detail helps each individual epigrapher and iconographer.

The number 11 is in bar-and-dot form (so not personified, probably to save space).



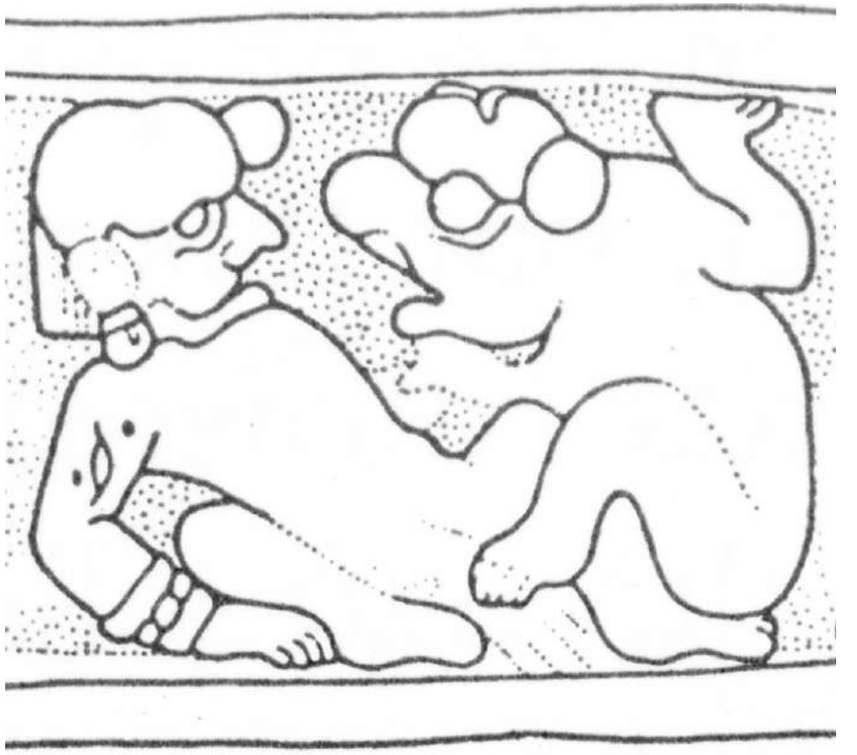




Software processing by Nicholas Hellmuth: Exposure +.70, Contrast -5, Highlights +44, shadows -26, whites +40, Blacks-25, dehaze +20

Hieroglyph Block B
A Bufo Toad makes an Old Man God very afraid.

I can suggest the creature is a Bufo Toad from size and shape of the head and round shape of the ear, with three spots on it (albeit eroded, I can "see" them). They need to be added to be drawing.

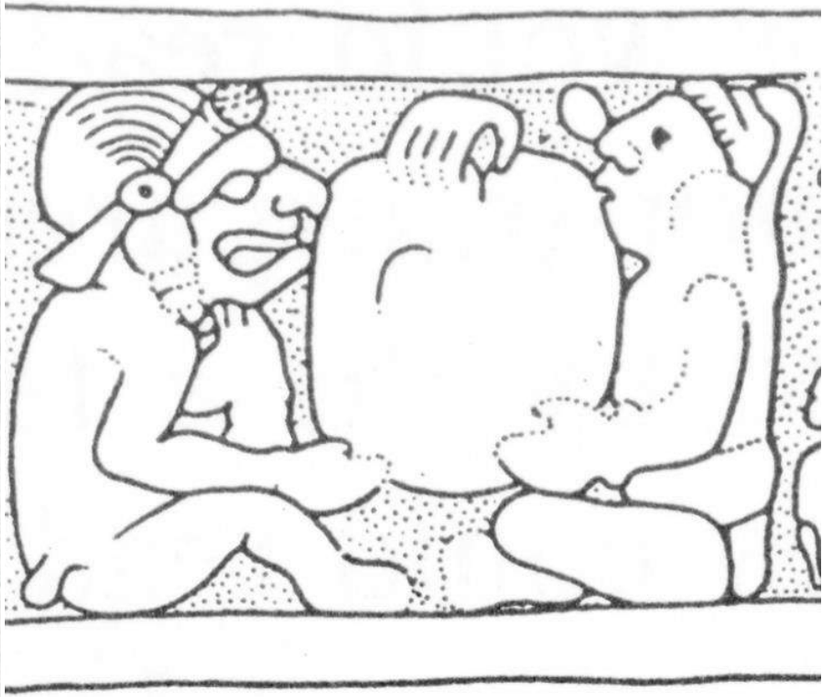


All line drawings by Barbara Fash are many decades ago. Drawings are essential. Today (2024) epigraphers and iconographers have more documentation available. I am commissioning illustrators to re-draw some of the drawings in my 1986 thesis (published in English and separately in German in 1987). So we all realize that drawings of a quarter century ago are a great start but once better photos are available, it would help epigraphers and iconographers if each glyph could be redrawn.



Exposure +1.60, Contrast -5, Highlights +44, shadows +60, whites +40, Blacks-25, dehaze +13

Hieroglyph Block C has an elderly “bird man” with long hair seated in front of a large bundle-like object.
The face of the person seated facing him looks like a woman but no chest profile of a female, so could be a man.

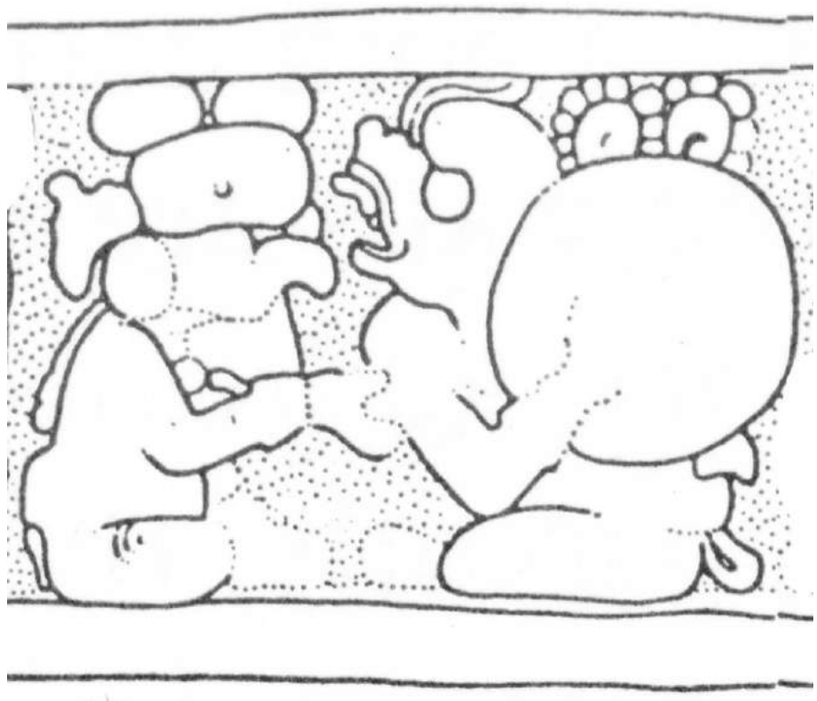


It will also help to re-photograph each hieroglyph with different lighting. 3D photos help but their goal is to show 3-dimensions. To see details a regular photo is often better if you use lighting at different angles (so take a photo at each lighting angle) then you can often see more detail.
Next step is to find all full-figure deities and creatures in other hieroglyphic texts since by comparing them you can begin to “see” more details in the eroded areas. We are doing this in a FLAAR Reports in progress on all full-figure Maya hieroglyphs found across Mesoamerica.

Hieroglyph Block D

The two personified hieroglyphs interact with each other, both facing each other, and left hand of the left personage towards the other personage.

The photo shows that more detail can be added to the face of the deity at the left. Plus, when you enlarge a drawing of an entire sculpture, the black lines blur and smudge and turn areas completely black. Thus my suggestion is to have each individual hieroglyph drawn on a Wacom tablet and then each individual hieroglyph can be available to epigraphers, linguists, iconographers and archaeologists with high resolution. In other words, not a free-hand drawing, but a tracing direct from the sculpture (on a Wacom or comparable tablet). Plus, have on your table or desk, printed copies of several different photos of the same glyph with different lighting angles.



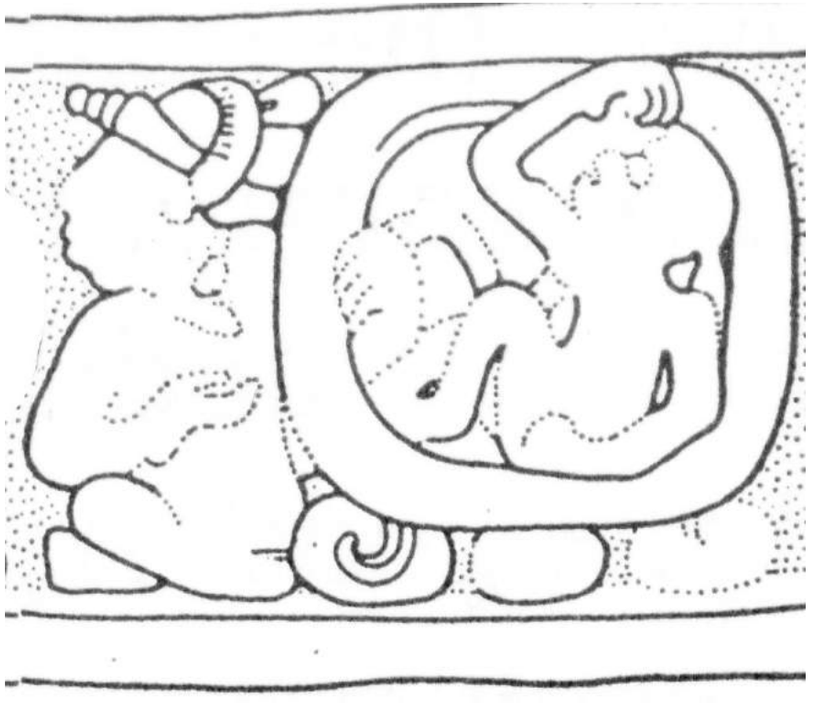
Exposure +2.45, Contrast -18, Highlights +44, shadows +60, whites +40, Blacks+42, dehaze +23

Hieroglyph Block E

Both the person and the monkey-like personage face left and don't interact directly with each other.

The cartouche around the monkey is literally a thick walled, open rounded-rectangle.

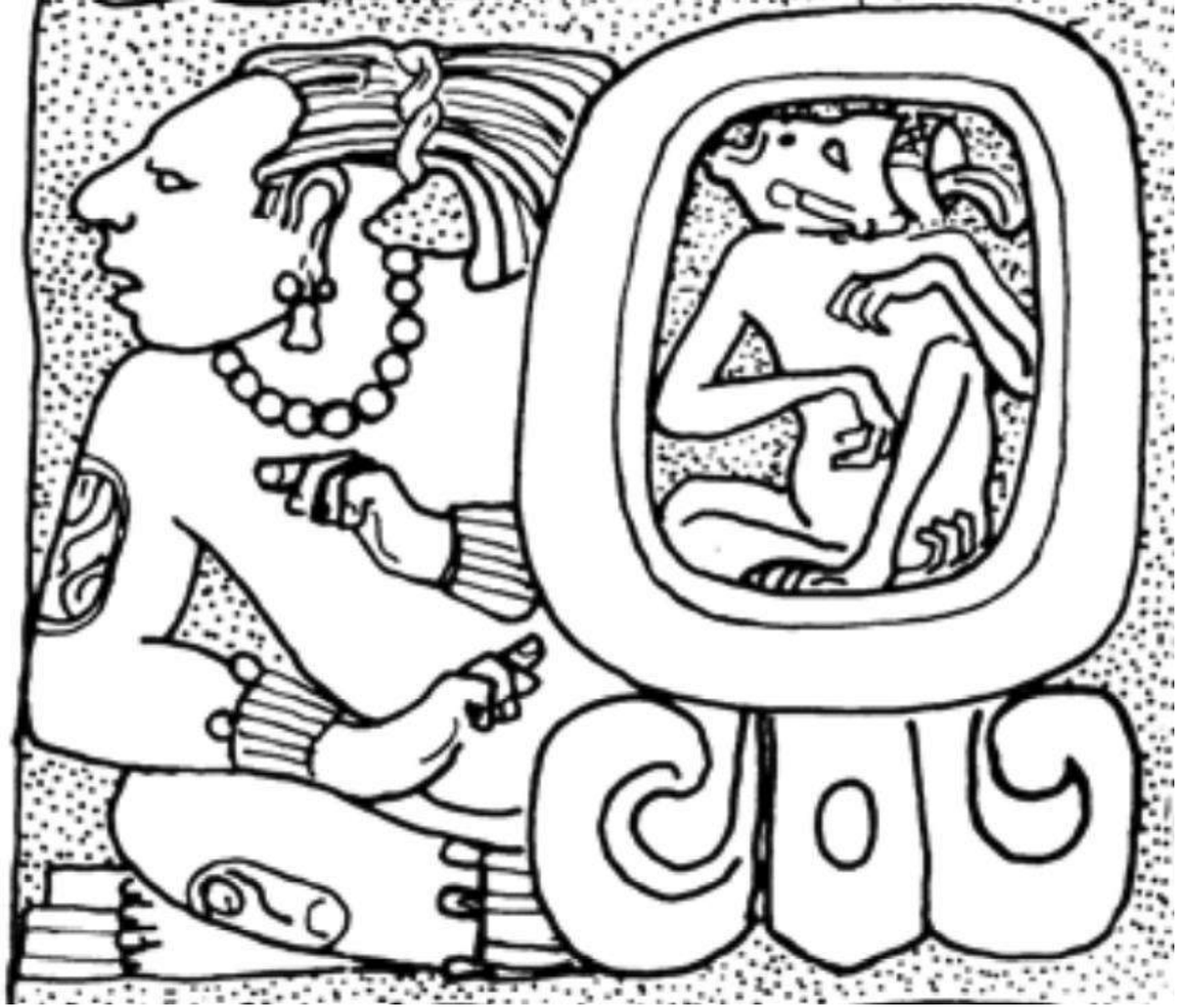
This photograph will enable the drawing to show the details at a larger size, since in the size that the helpful drawing is published (Baudez 1994: Fig. 112) the details are not clear. An inscription with this many full-body personified hieroglyphs deserves a publication at double-page width, to show the photo adjacent to the drawing, and then to show better preserved examples of the same glyphs elsewhere.
Read as 12 Ajaw (Jackson and Stuart 2001: Appendix).



Exposure +2.20, Contrast +11, Highlights +39, shadows +-35, whites +42, Blacks+17, clarity+42, dehaze +42; rotate 1.1 counterclockwise



It is obvious even without the help of the better-preserved Palenque palace tablet that the Copan cartouche has a spider monkey inside. But the drawing of the Palenque monkey at the right helps to document the monkey aspect. Photo by Nicholas Hellmuth. The Palenque monkey at the right is one of the dozen examples of full-figure hieroglyphs at Palenque. Copan and Quirigua have more full-figure personified glyphs than all other Maya sites put together. Excellent full-figure hieroglyphs are on a Yaxchilan lintel and Yaxchilan Altar 22 and Yaxchilan throne.



He monkey inside the standard glyph cartouche is recognizable as a monkey by its head, thin limbs, hands and feet: not anthropomorphic other than its seated position (not much space for any other position). Drawing by Merle Greene Robertson, Palenque, Palace Tablet.



Exposure +2.56, Contrast -36, Highlights +100, shadows +-41, whites -26, Blacks+32, clarity+34, dehaze +26; rotate .
7 counterclockwise.

Hieroglyph Block F

I estimate that the animal is another Bufo Toad, comparable to Uinal, but an epigrapher should be more precise. I studied Bufo Toad iconography for several months so have an ample digital image reference set. Plus we have studied the two different species of these toads in Peten and other areas of Guatemala. The larger of the two species was named *Bufo marinas* in the previous century; now zoologists have updated the name to *Rhinella marina*.

The mouth is not long enough to be an iguana (iguanas are often associated with and potentially create a composite creature). But with no raised areas down the spine, this is not an iguana.

There are three toad-men on the Vase of the Thirty-one Gods (Coe 1973: 81ff). Coe shows them in Figures 10, 12, and 14. They lack the scaly body type and have human feet.

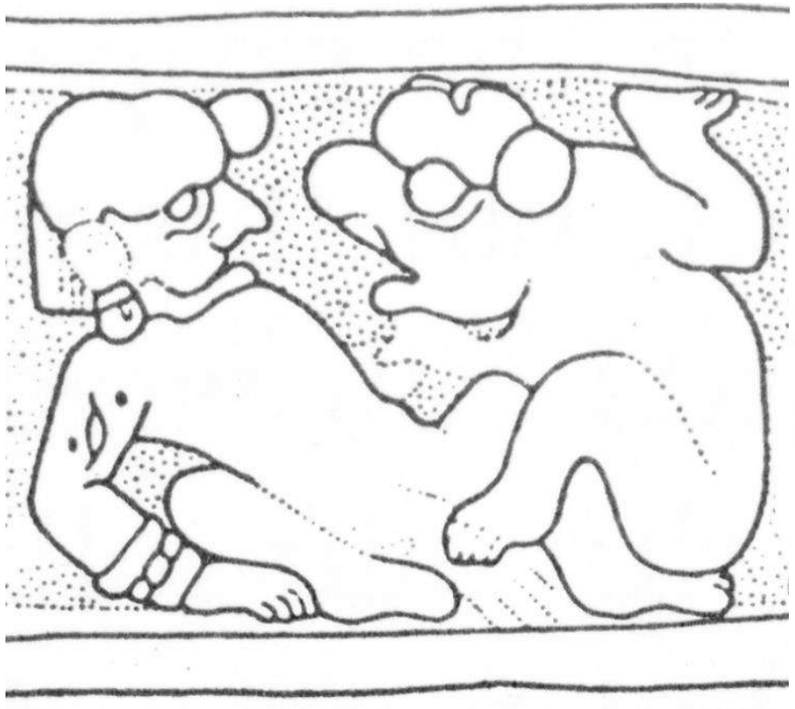
Crucial will be to compare the mythical personages that Michael Coe's Toad's 10, 12, and 14 are interacting with. Is Figure 11, 13 or 15 related with the seated personage on the Copan scene that interacts with the toad? I leave yea or nay as both possibilities.



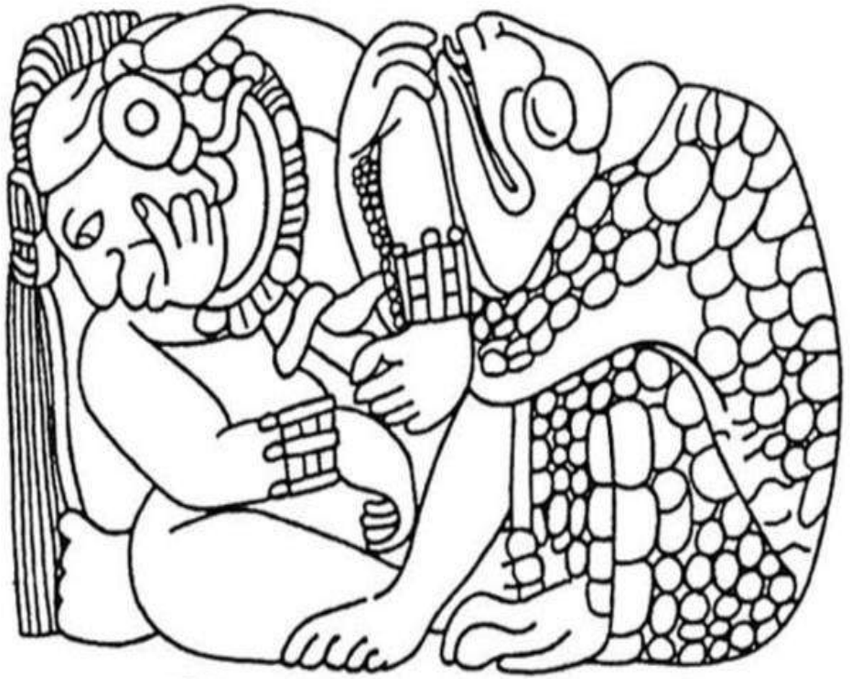
Published drawings can't be enlarged; it is essential to have the original drawings at full-resolution available on a database. CMHI, PMAE, Harvard has such a database for that project but I have not yet found one for drawings and photos of Copan sculptures.



Here the ear of the Bufo Toad has the conventional three tiny circles inside. Many, but not all, Bufo Toads have a water lily flower tied around their head with the knotted stem of the water lily.



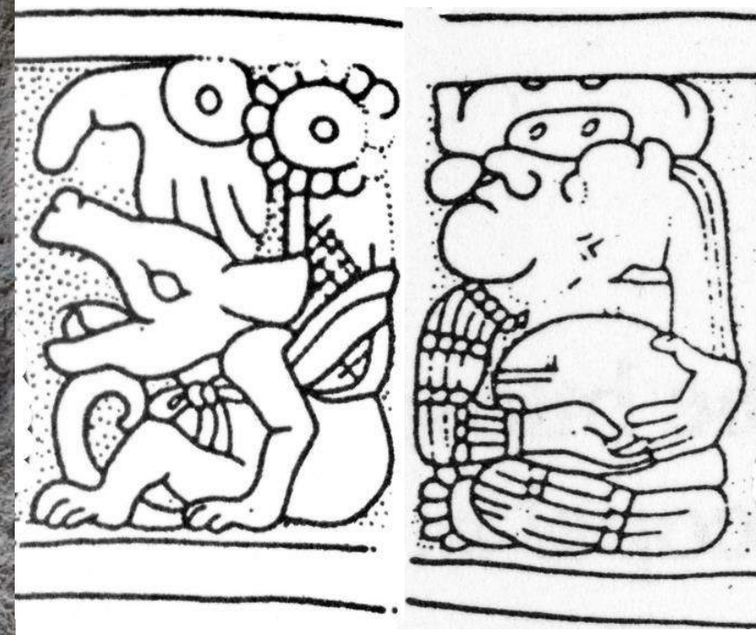
Has similar curled motif coming out of top middle of its head.



No motif coming out of top middle of head. And round ear with three circles inside is not featured. Copan Stela D, glyph A3, drawing by John Montgomery JM00602, FAMSI.

Glyph Block G

In 2001 read as Chok?-ch'a-ji (Jackson and Stuart 2001: Appendix).



The drawing is helpful and a good start, but having it at full digital resolution would assist students and scholars document the great achievements of centuries of Maya sculptors at Copan, Honduras, and document the decades of capable archaeology and epigraphy research at Copan past and present.



Exposure +1.70, Contrast -11, Highlights -100, shadows +-100, whites +31, Blacks+4, texture+91, clarity+100, dehaze +7; rotate .1 clockwise

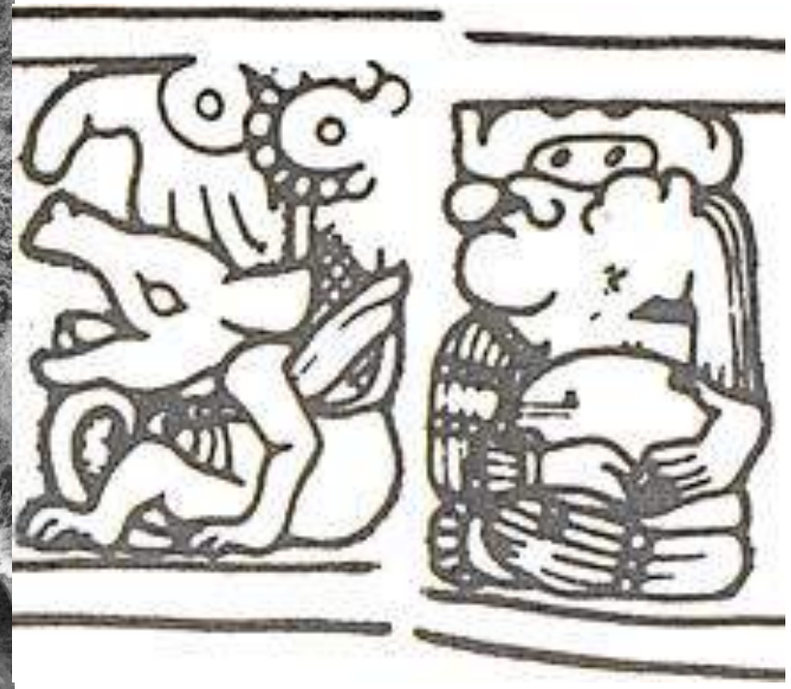
Exposure +2.10, Contrast -59, Highlights +100, shadows +-8, whites -17, Blacks+48, clarity+26, dehaze +34; rotate .2 clockwise

Glyph Block G

The previous photo is processed from a 35mm color slide. The photo here at the left is turned into black-and-white, which often allows showing a few details more than in a color.

It is essential to identify this animal. IF it has no ear, the tail and repeated size of teeth suggest an iguana. If he has an ear (if that is not a content of its backpack), then the snout suggests a potential peccary…but peccary do not have a tail like the one shown here.

Hopefully epigraphers and linguists can offer suggestions (after photography and 3D scanning can determine whether the ear is present).







Glyph Block G
left half.

When photographing bas-relief sculptures it helps to move the angle of lighting and take several different photographs.

And, with different photos it helps to show more details by processing RAW format images (DNG format) to show the details.

So these are two different photos after Hellmuth has moved the light.

Now you can notice that the “ear” is more likely an object sticking out of his backpack. But… need to check all mammals that have a tail, and all reptiles with this tail (that would not have an ear that sticks out).

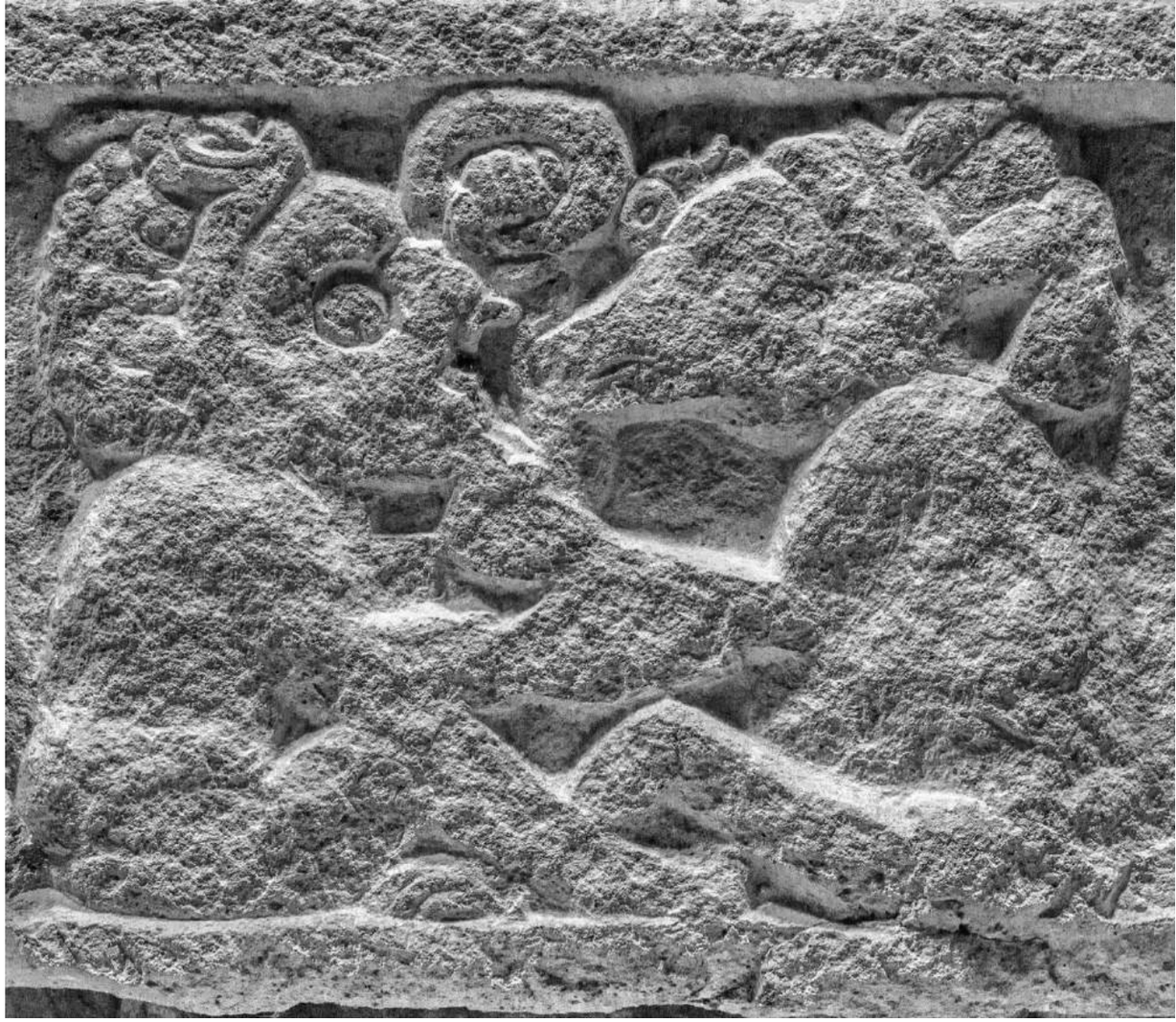
Glyph Block G, right side.

Same photo but processed differently to help epigraphers see details.



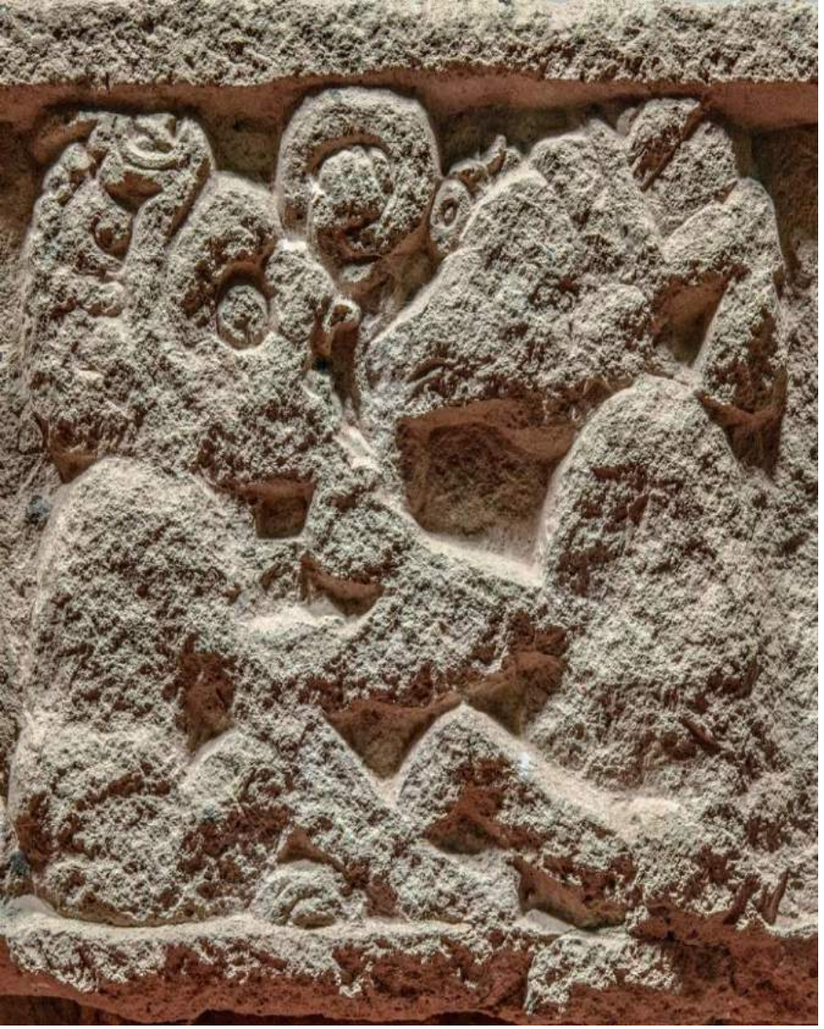


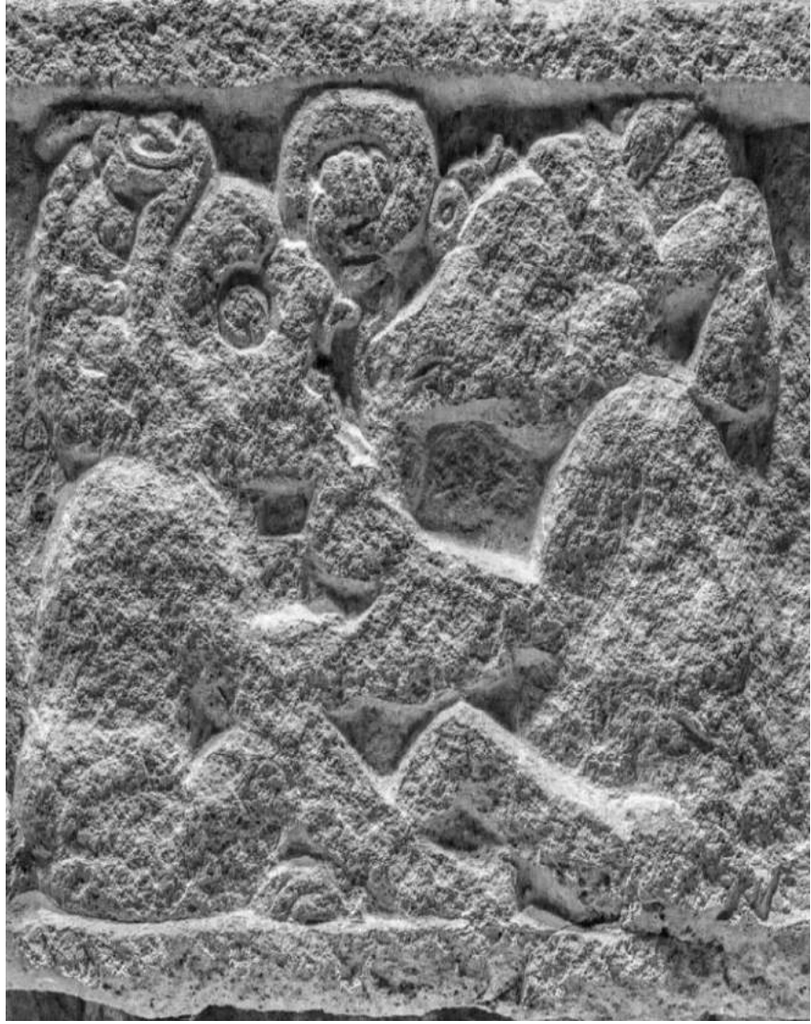




Exposure +2.00, Contrast -58, Highlights -83, shadows +-100, whites +31, Blacks-16, texture+99, clarity+94, dehaze +6; rotate .6 counterclockwise.

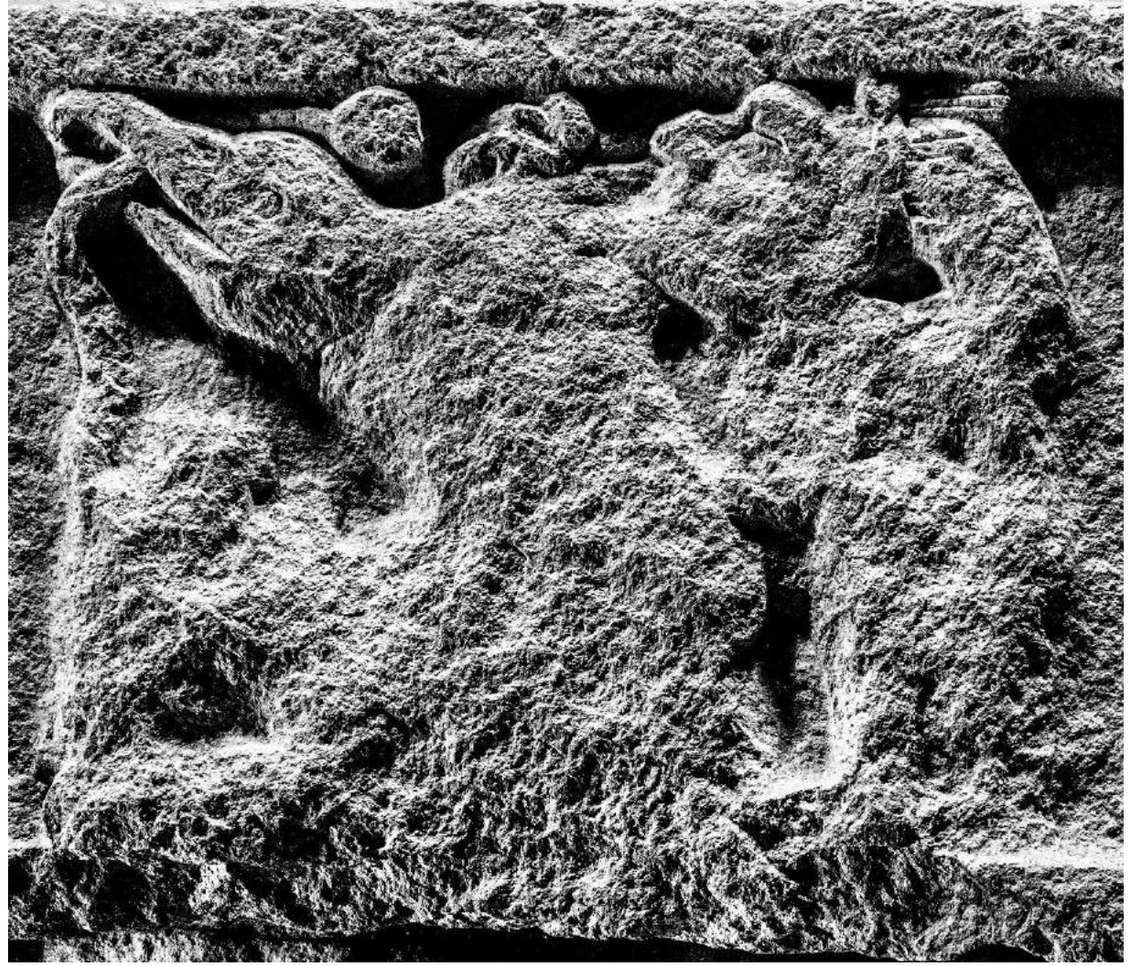
Glyph Block H. Same photo; color at the left and processed into black-and-white at the right. In 2001 read as Yax-pa-sa-Chan (Jackson and Stuart 2001: Appendix).





Glyph Block H, drawing by Barbara Fash really helps see how these two personages are interacting (squabbling?).



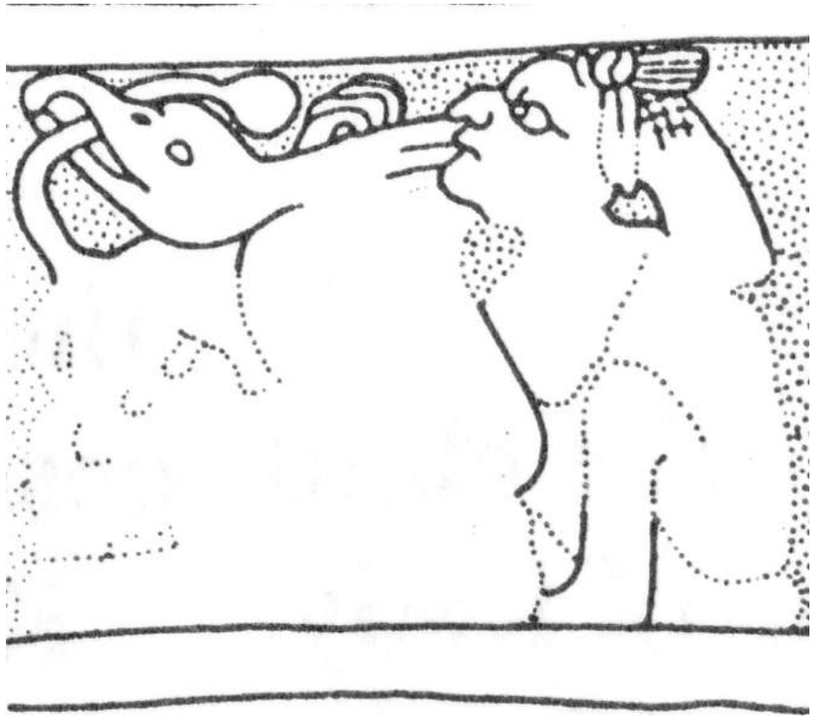


When photos are taken in RAW format (NEF for Nikon; other names for other cameras), then you can see more details since Adobe Photoshop opens a DNG file in different manner than a TIF or JPG. It is quicker to process and you have more options. Plus the software keeps track of every improvement you make (I jot them down below). So the original photo can be improved to help see details. I am not a pro in Photoshop; a professional, dedicated Photoshop or Lightroom expert should be able to rescue even more details. Image processing software from Capture One software (Phase One) is even better than Adobe but we don't have funding for Capture One software. But at least this photo from over a decade ago (Aug. 4, 2013, with good mid-range Nikon D800E camera, produced a RAW file of about 41MB which is better than the kilobyte files on database downloads.
DNG=Digital NeGative, developed in 2004. In 2001 read as Yopat?-ti (Jackson and Stuart 2001: Appendix). Exposure +1.65, Contrast -44, Highlights -32, shadows +-37, whites +37, Blacks -14, texture +58, clarity +95, dehaze -16.

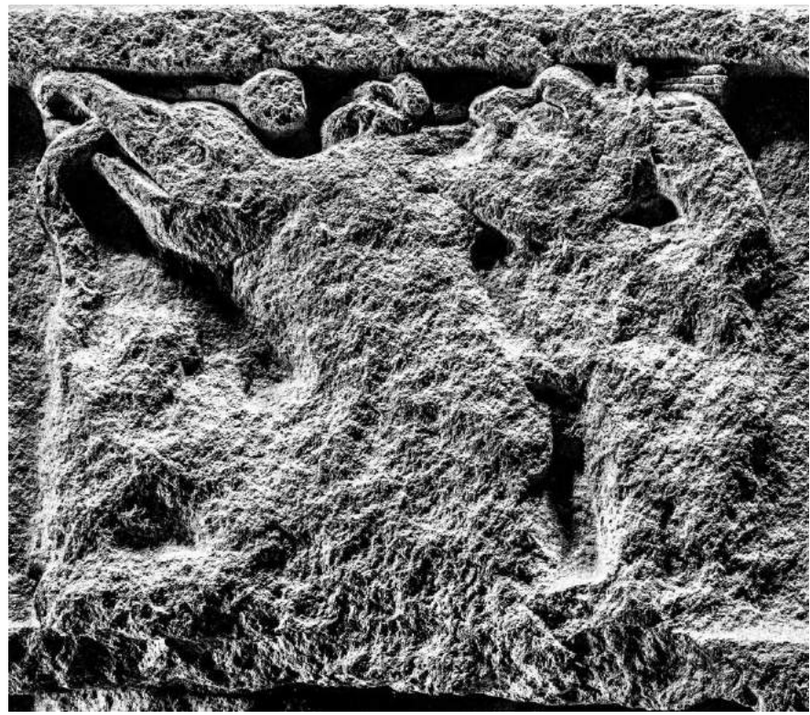
Glyph Block I. Black-and-white digital rendition by Nicholas Hellmuth. The "stem" is nicely shown but the photo suggests it curves down a tad to the left. Adjacent to the end of the stem, so in front of the chest of the bird, is another creature. This can now be added to the drawing. Also with the details from high-resolution photo, the back of the hair/headdress of the old man deity face can have its lower portion added. And the front of the upper chest of the bird can be added to the helpful original drawing from over a quarter-century ago (Drawing by Barbara Fash in Baudez 1994: Fig. 112).
I also sense that the old man god is standing, not sitting (so his legs can now be added). I am viewing the photograph on a 32" 4K monitor (we don't have funds for a 5K quality but 4K is pretty good). The drawing is on a parallel 32" 4K monitor. To do epigraphy or iconography having two monitors on your desk is essential; and 32" width (of each) helps noticeably.



I am very curious whether this is a disembodied eye? And if so, whose eye is it? Is there a person or animal in front of the bird that is totally missing from the drawing.



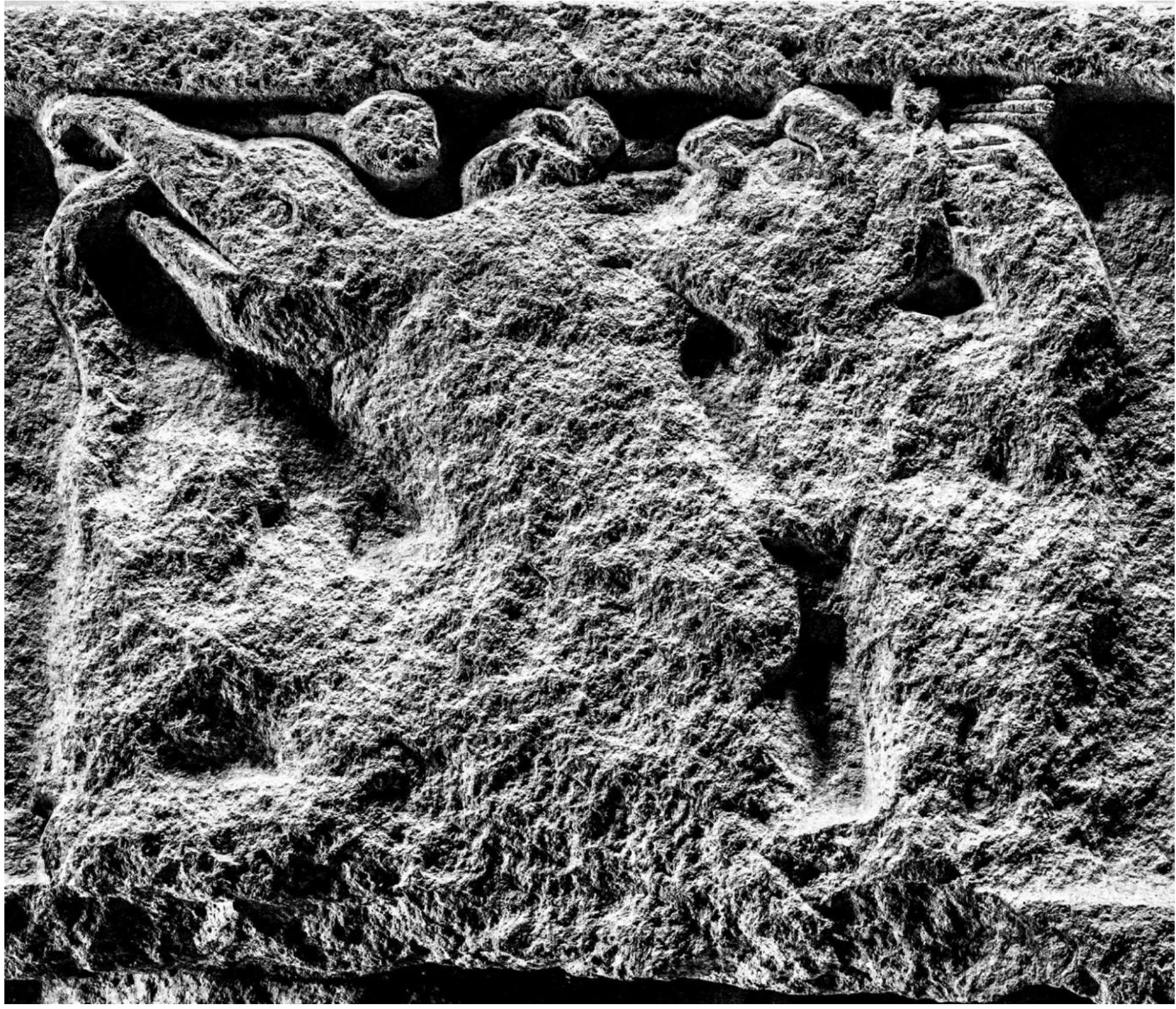
Glyph Block I, drawing by Barbara Fash.



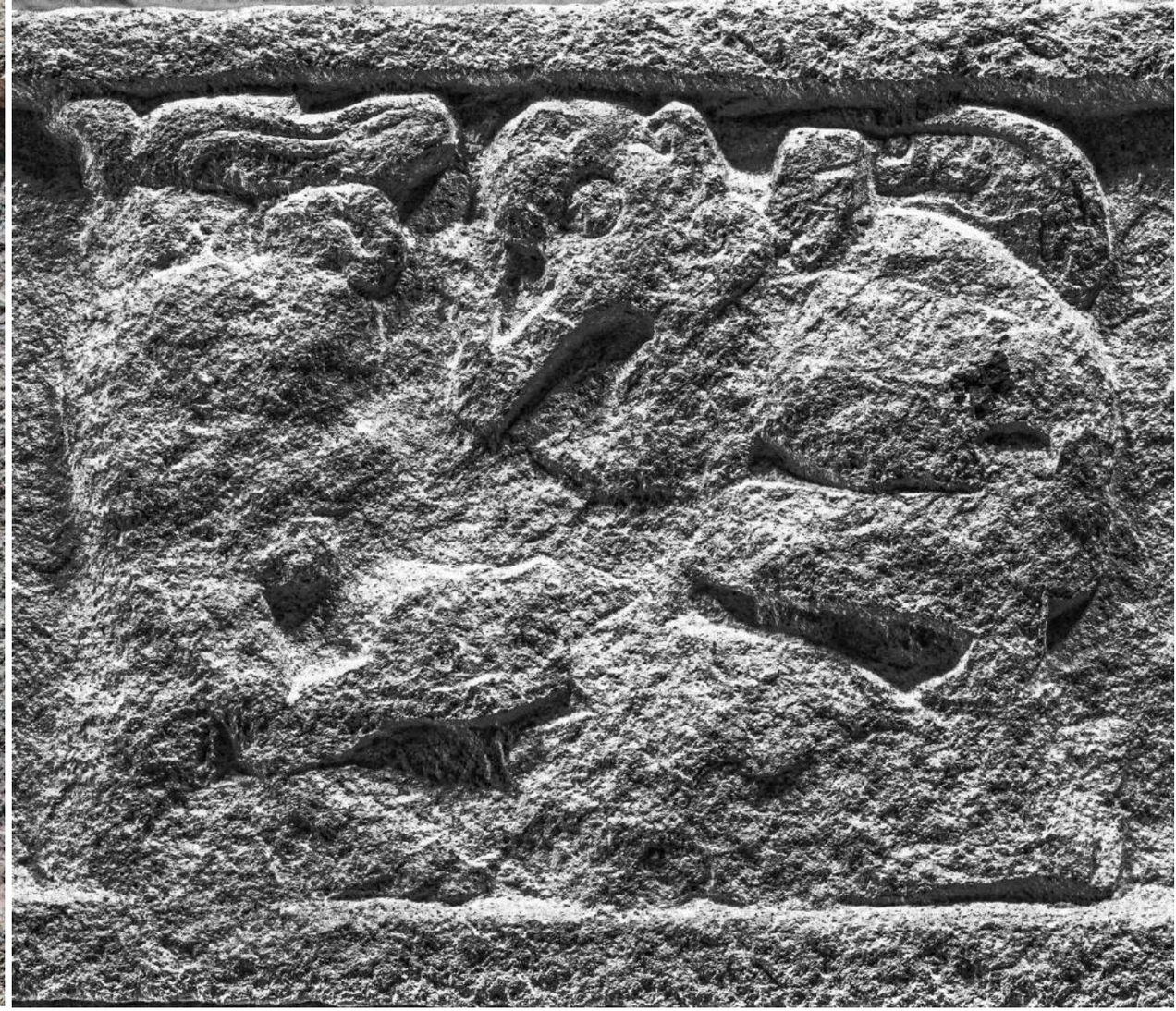
With these photos (and with different lighting in more photos) the drawing can add a lot, and iconographers can try to sort out which of the Old Man Gods is at the right.

Glyph Block I

The bird at the left is carrying a long stem; at the top right end is either a disembodied eye symbol or the seed pod of a *Nymphaea ampla* water lily. Disembodied eyes on stems are common in Classic Maya art but the “stem” here is much longer and thicker than usual? I put a question mark as that will take a research project to show, compare, and contrast stems of water lilies with stems of eyes pulled out of victims. I have lots of experience with water lily stems from over half a century of field work in wetlands of Mesoamerica with water lilies.





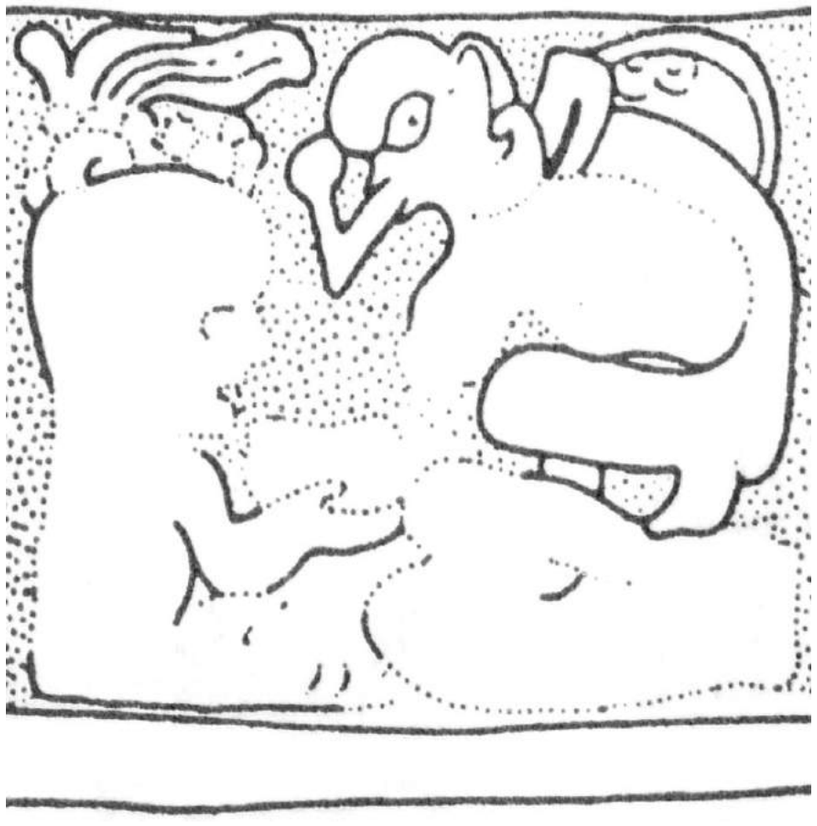


Exposure +1.10, Contrast +7, Highlights +8, shadows +-81, whites +37, Blacks +3, texture +100, clarity +100, dehaze +2

Each individual creature/person in this scene deserves a total research project. With each student assigned one creature-personality and they find 100% of all representations of that creature in the entire corpus. Need other renderings of same “glyph” and their context in other scenes.

Glyph Block J. Drawing by Barbara Fash (below) correctly shows that the left personage is seated, holding his arms up. I estimate there is a low offering container in his hands. The creature on the right is perched atop something on the ground. The perched creature’s legs are human size and shape. What sticks out from the head area is what needs more study; it is a diagonal V-shape. The drawing suggests it’s a bird beak. The open V-shaped area is unexpected. I am not a linguist or epigrapher, but I-T’ab’-Vy reminds me of several meanings.
Processing aspects: B&W: Reds 300%, yellows 43%, blues 20%







Glyph Block J. Drawing by Barbara Fash. The 3D scanning project by Harvard is a great start. Definitely also need to compare 3D scans with the outstanding photos of Jorge Perez de Lara, since often his may show more details than photos by Hellmuth (we each use different style of lighting).

This photo by Nicholas Hellmuth with his cross-angle lighting style and processed from color to black-and-white helps rescue the face of the seated person at the left. The achievements of the sculptors of Copan Honduras over a thousand years ago definitely deserve having their images rescued.



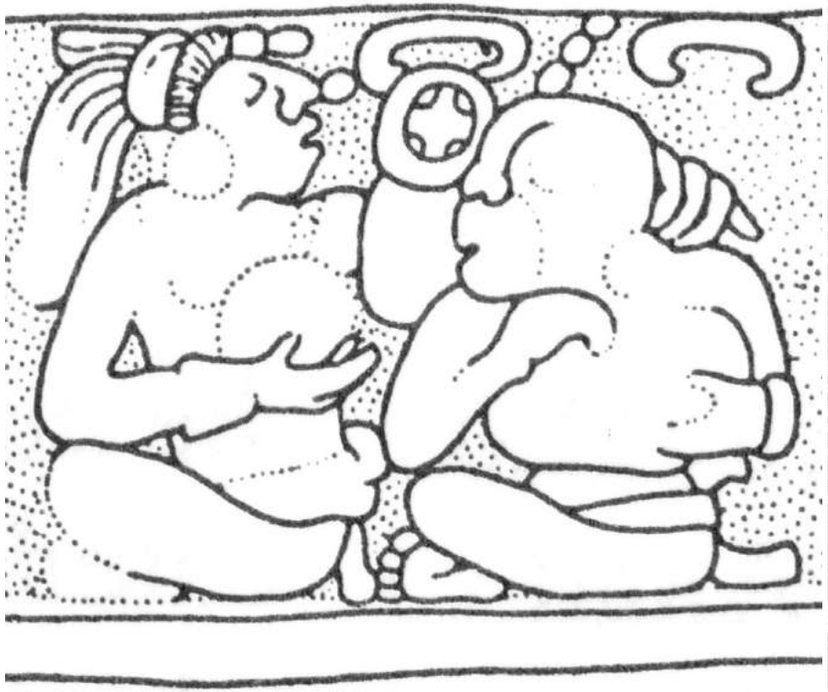
Glyph Block K. The seated personage at the left is a humanized-monkey. The face is a spider monkey.



Glyph Block K. In 2001 read as yo-to-ti? / ? (Jackson and Stuart 2001: Appendix).



With the help of these photographs you can now add an eye to the monkey and more details to the hair and headdress of the man at the left.



Glyph Block K drawing by Barbara Fash helps you see the interaction between the royal or mythical person at the left and the obvious royal monkey at the right.



Need to use different lighting in future photography to ascertain whether a monkey tail is pictured. I am neutral until more photography with different lighting angles is accomplished.




Two different photos by Nicholas Hellmuth, with slightly different lighting. The differences are subtle but can help improve the drawings. Photo at the left is processed as AutoColor; photo at the right is black-and-white (from a 35mm color slide; both Nikon D800E camera with 60mm Nikon lens and portable studio lighting). We brought an entire pickup truck full of tripods, special tripod heads, light stands, lights, cameras, and helpful assistants. Plus local Copan people helped carry all the equipment into the museum where the camera team could then unpack everything from the containers (you don't want to carry camera equipment loose). These photos can assist in adding more details to the face of the person at the left and the monkey-like personage at the right. **Glyph Block K.**





In 2001 read as ? / Ya-k'uh-Vn (Jackson and Stuart 2001: Appendix).

Glyph Block L. A drawing of the person with Moon Curve is in Chinchilla 2018: Fig. 2.4a. Neither the face nor the body of this "lunar personage" is female. Chinchilla calls it a lunar maize god.

The FLAAR Photo Archive has over 25,000 color slides, black-and-white negatives, thousands of Hasselblad quality medium format black-and-white negatives and color transparencies, a hundred or so 4x5" and a few 8x10" color transparencies. As soon as we can find a university or museum that has realistic space, essential funding to bring in the FLAAR team, local student interns to help catalog everything, and a database team with funding for a special web server that can handle more than just TERAbytes to put all these photos on-line in good resolution, we would like to move the FLAAR Photo Archive to this location and be a Guest Visiting Research Professor.





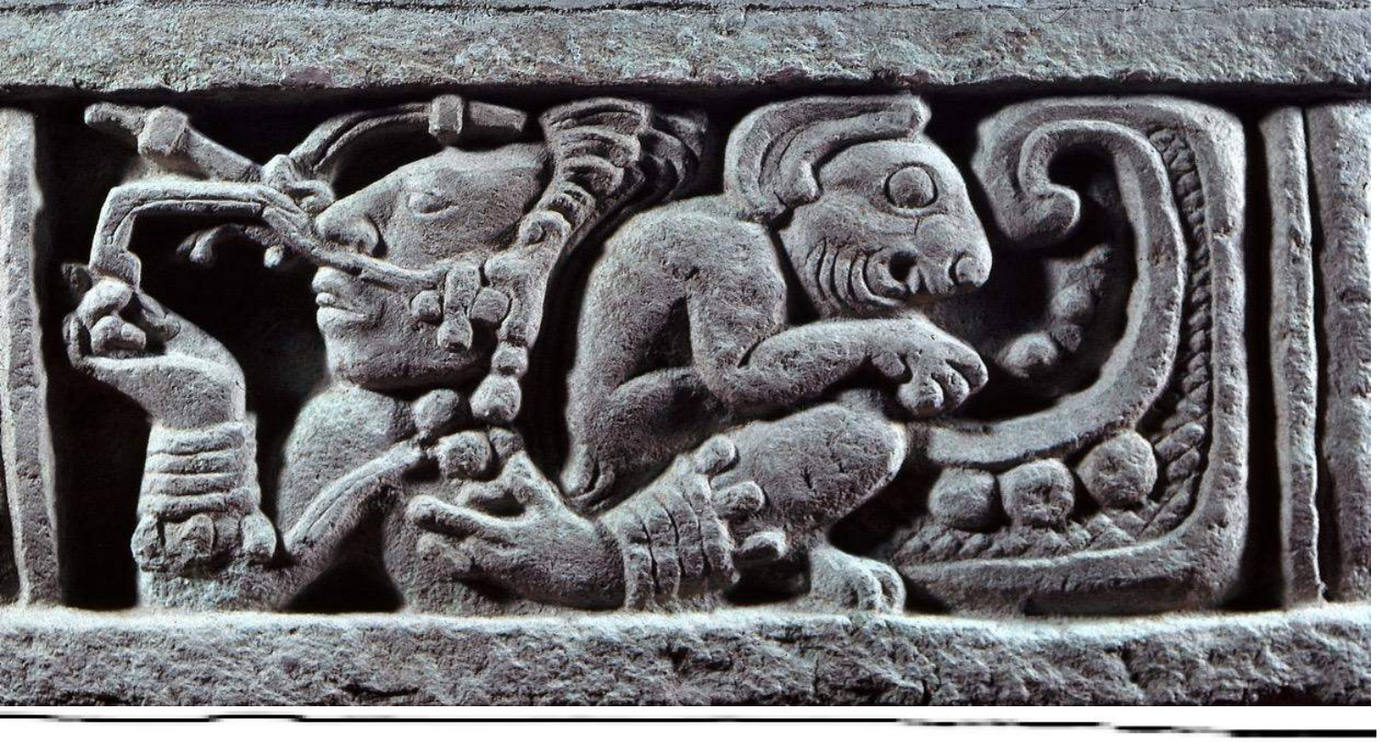
Glyph Block L drawing by Barbara Fash is good start. Will look even better when we can obtain 1:1 digital files in high resolution. Because this glyph block is epigraphically and iconographically important it will really be helpful to have digital files rather than the low-resolution copies with smudges from printing ink on a paper page of a book.
The Sky Band bench also has a Lunar Deity with no view of the front of the chest, so no way to tell whether it's a female or male. The Sky Band bench Lunar Deity has a Rabbit Companion. 99% of the other sculptures that have a Rabbit Companion in same scene as a Lunar Deity, the deity is clearly female.

Scrolls from under the arms can be seen in: Kerr rollout K4550 and dozens of other scenes on vases (especially Codex Style) and stone sculptures (lintels, stelae, wall panels).

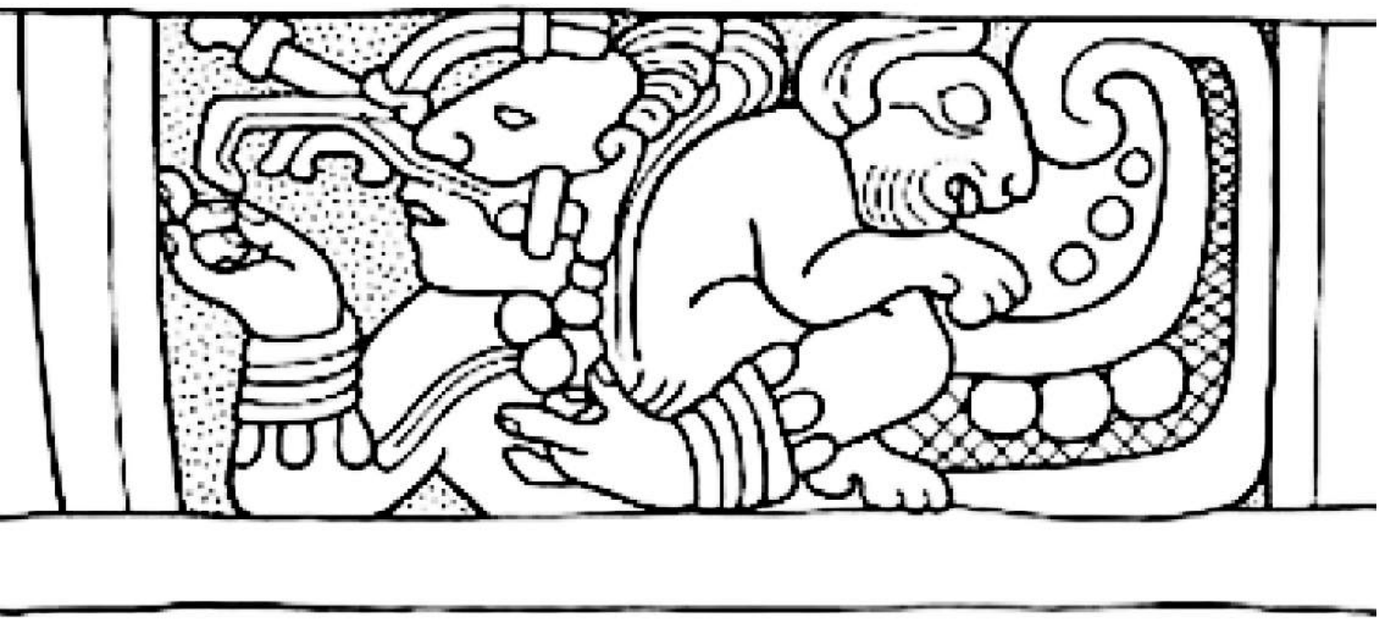
There is also a very different context when the scroll from under the arm has a series of bar-and-dot Maya numbers. This can be seen on two or three polychrome vases and one full-figure hieroglyph of Copan Stela 63, behind a rabbit or pocket gopher. However this "scroll with bar-and-dot-numbers" does not issue from under the arm of the rabbit. But the shape of the scroll and position of the bar-and-dot-numbers is the same as on several polychrome vase scenes visible in Kerr rollouts. The scroll here on the bench front is a lunar scroll, not a bar-and-dot number scroll.



Glyph Block L at the right half has a Moon God (here potentially not female).



Photograph by Nicholas Hellmuth, FLAAR Photo Archive.



Line drawing by Barbara Fash, published at better-than-average quality, at larger-than-typical size, by Webster 2023a: Figure 4-15.







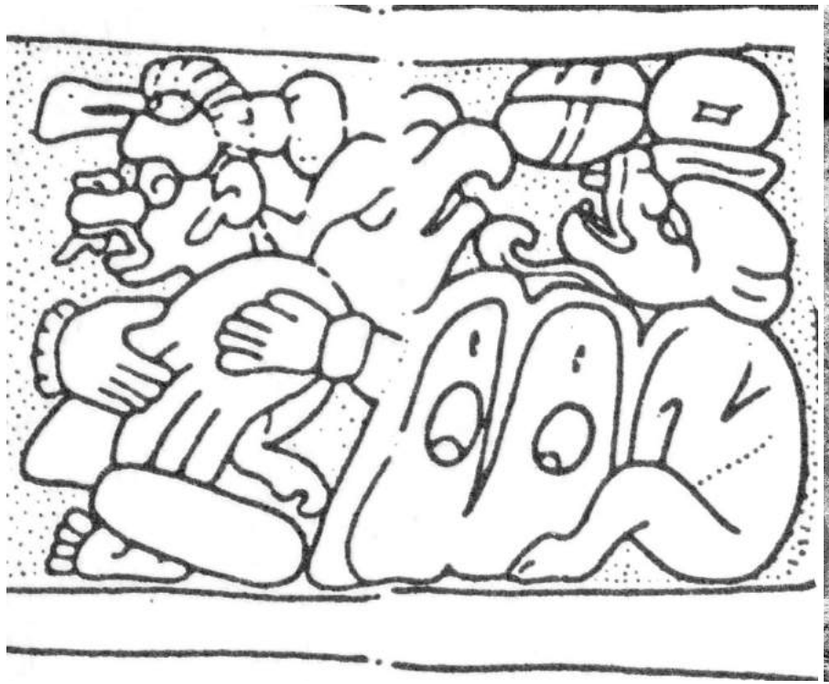


Exposure 1.15, Contrast +8, Highlights +16, shadows +-19, whites +20, Blacks -49, texture +62, clarity +56, dehaze +11.

God K, K'awil, is holding a bird. A Copan Bat Emblem Glyph occupies half the same glyph block. It is notable that there are three full-figure hieroglyphs in this glyph block.

To show what is being presented on bench Str. 9M-146 it helps to look first at the full-figure personified hieroglyphs of Copan Stela D. And, as expected, Glyph area B7 has the same two personages as Glyph Block M of the bench front.

Glyph Block M. Same photo but processed into black-and-white.


Glyph Block M. Since this is the logo bat glyph of the ancient Maya name of Copan, Honduras, it deserves to be shown in high-resolution. Best to redraw each glyph block individually, digitally, at page size (on a Wacom tablet or comparable). This way the resolution of each individual glyph can be preserved. At 1:10 size for the entire length of the bench front, that loses the details of each individual hieroglyph. Yes, the whole bench front needs to be shown together in a continuous row, but imagine having a drawing, 1:1 size, printed and exhibited in front of this bench so that students, teachers and the public can learn from the advances in digital technology of Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology capability. To show each hieroglyph block individually I rotate each block so they are parallel. The drawing correctly shows the sag of the thousand-year old bench as found and carefully conserved in-situ.



Glyph N10



Glyph M4. Same text is available from drawing style of Linda Schele, SD-0172.

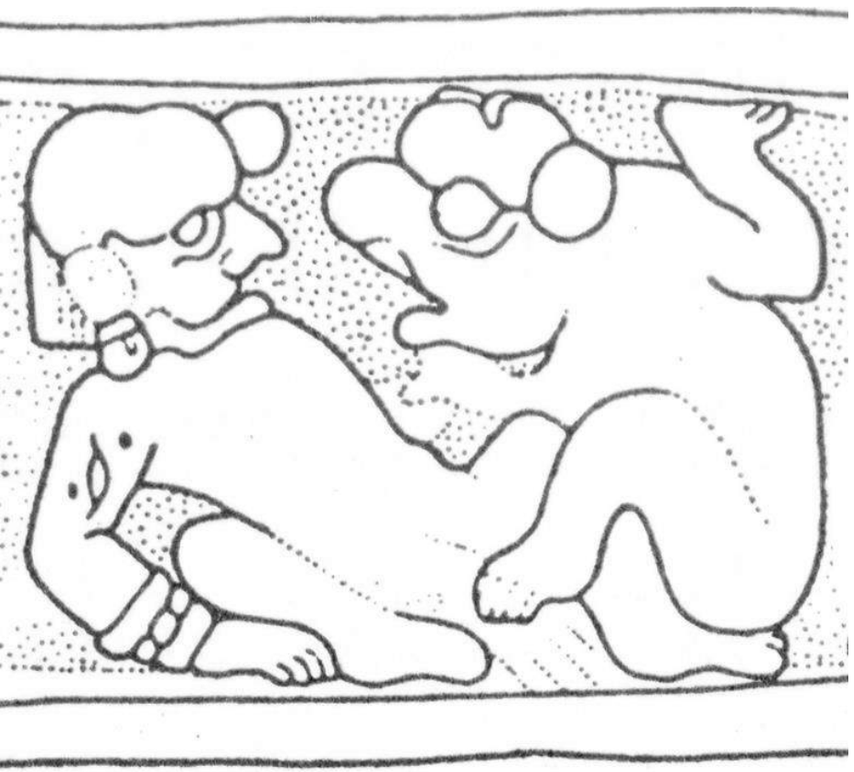


Glyph D2

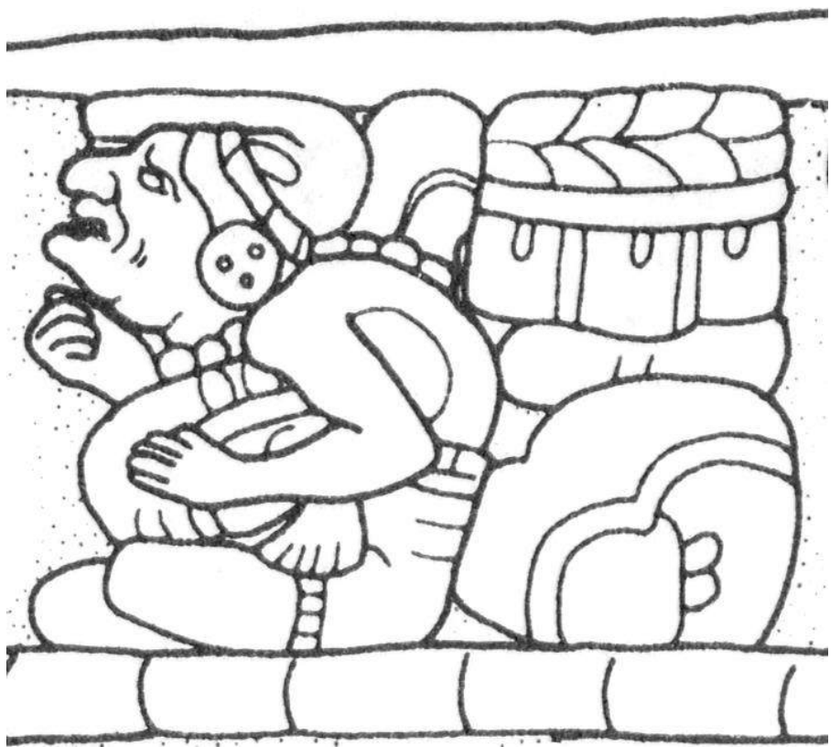
Next step is to find 100% of other full-figure hieroglyphs that show the same Bats, Birds, Fish, Reptiles, Deities or other Monsters
To compare and contrast with the scenes in the full-figure hieroglyphic text of the "Harvard Bench", Copan Str. 9M-146

To find all the other full-figure personified hieroglyphs is a work-in-progress at FLAAR.

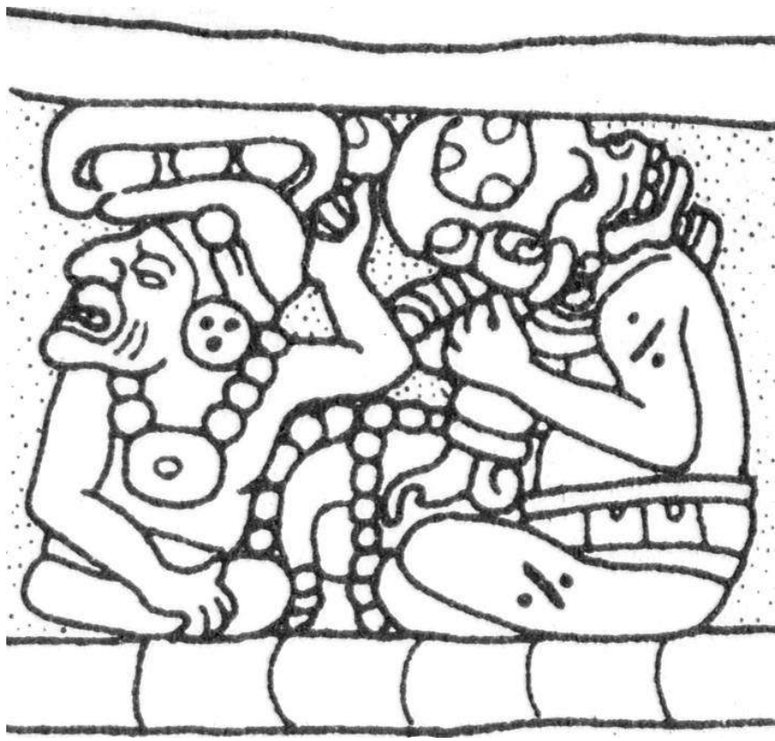
We show an example below for bench Glyph Block D.



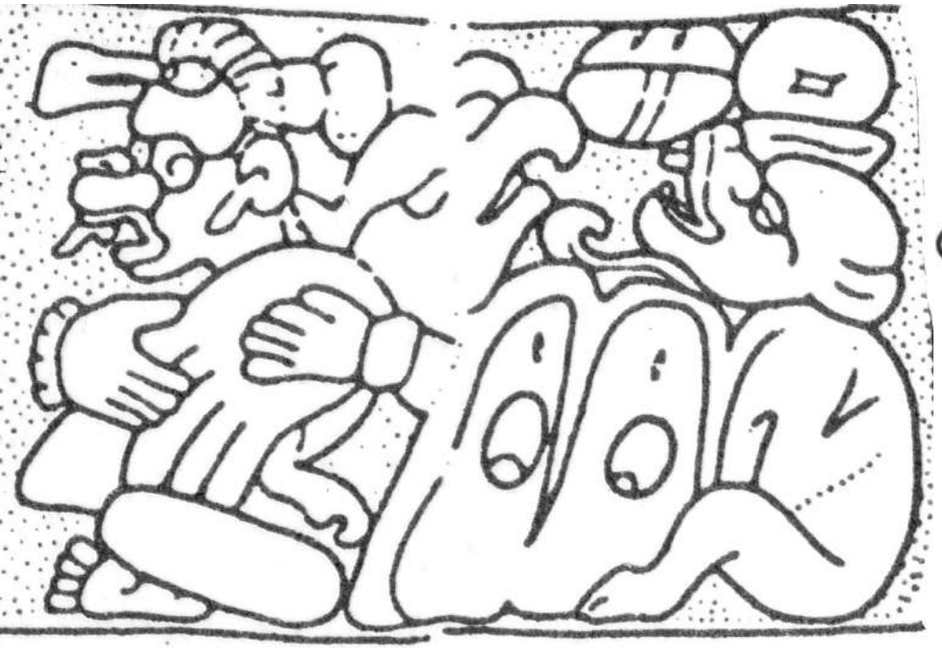
There are three Old Male Gods: God D, L and N. But God L is not in this context; nor God D. So I estimate this is God N but without water lily headdress it's tough to document. So I would accept suggestions by epigraphers. Copan Harvard Bench, Str. 9M-146, Block B, drawing by Barbara Fash.



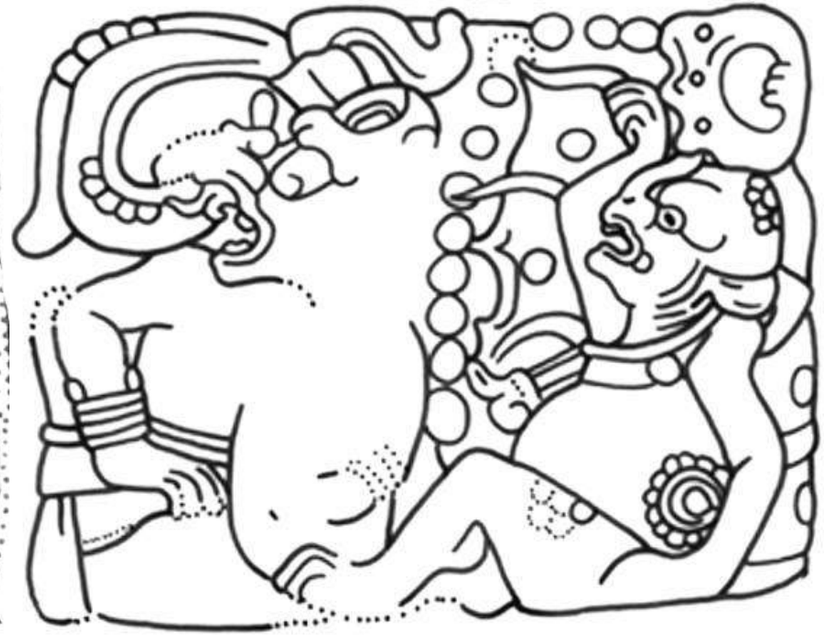
Copan Str. 9N-82, Glyph C. Similar earring (round with three circles inside) as Bufo Toad. Some felines have similar earrings or eye designs. Drawing by Linda Schele, SD7657.



Copan Str. 9N-82, Glyph G, drawing by Linda Schele, SD7657.



K’awil, in front of bat emblem glyph of Copan.
Hieroglyph area O, bench of Str. 9M-146, drawing by Barbara Fash in Baudez 1994: Fig. 112. Now you can see why it would help to have a digital copy of the original drawing so that it’s not pixelated.



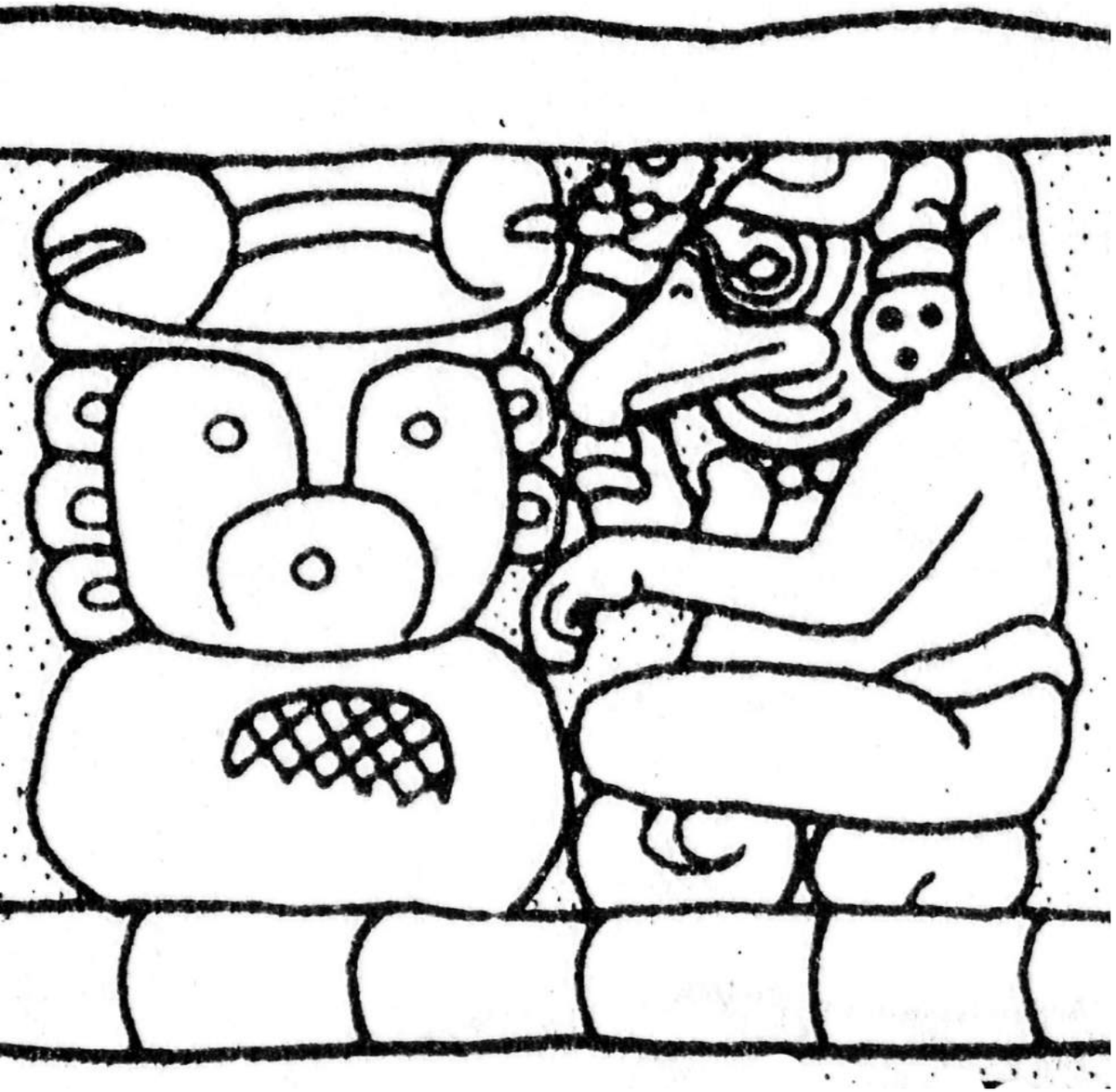
God K, K’awil, in front of bat emblem glyph of Copan.

Since the drawings by Linda Schele were first on the FAMSI database and now on better resolution, you can find and download her drawings and those of Robert Montgomery. I have not yet found a database for Merle Greene Robertson’s drawings of Palenque. Her rubbings are helpful but it’s line drawings that are essential.

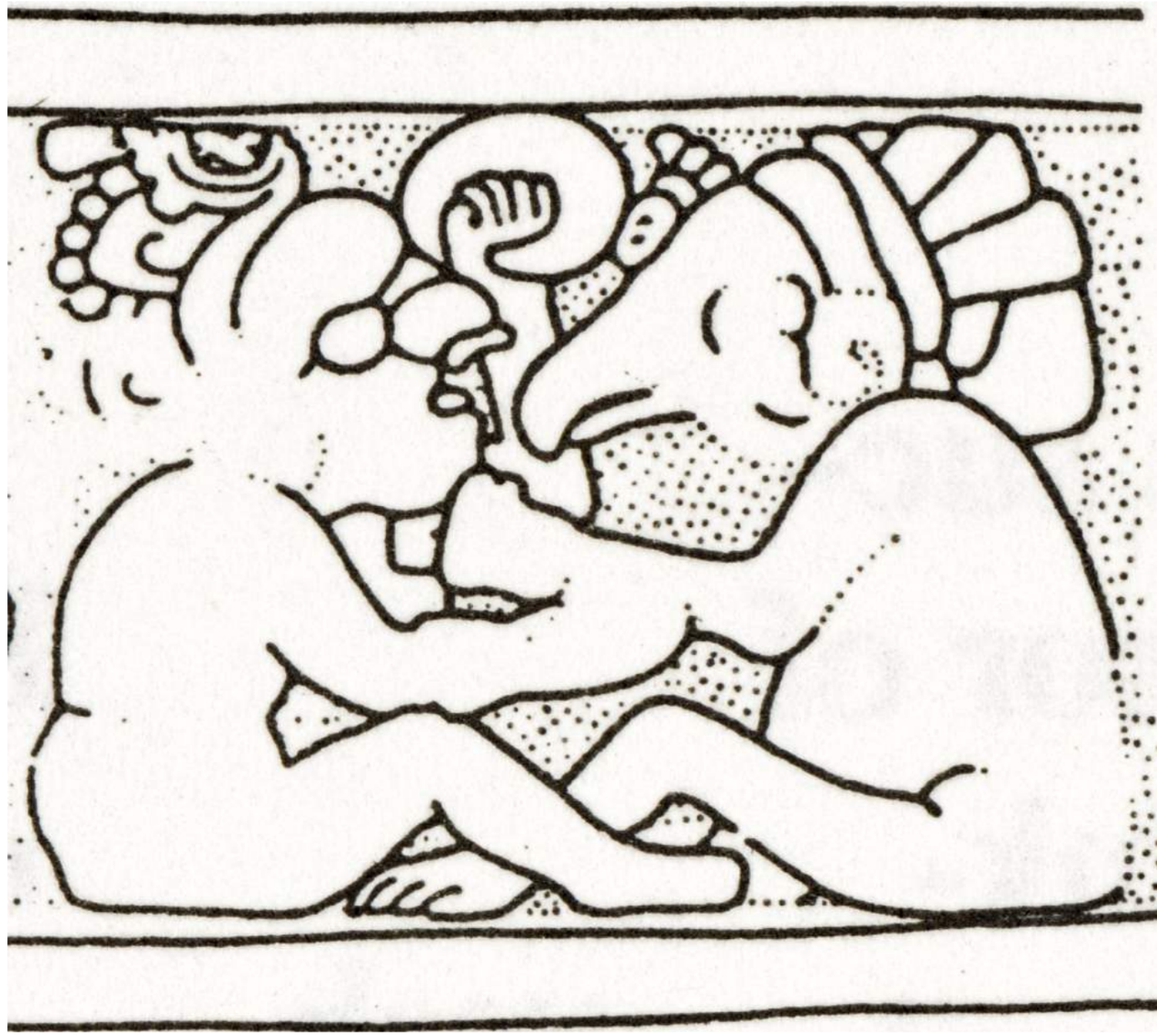


Same God K, K’awil, but on the right side; and with a gopher-like animal rather than a bat. Helpful drawing by David Stuart in Houston and Stauder: 2020: Fig. 9+10. Copan Temple 26 position B.

But as soon as a student intern can find all two-dozen sets of personified full-figure hieroglyphs, we can help identify the deities, animals, and birds on the Copan bench of Str. 9M-146.



Probably a vulture. Copan Str-9N-82 bench, Glyph J, drawing Schele SD-7657.



Probably a vulture. Copan Str-9M-146, Harvard Bench, Block H, drawing Barbara Fash.

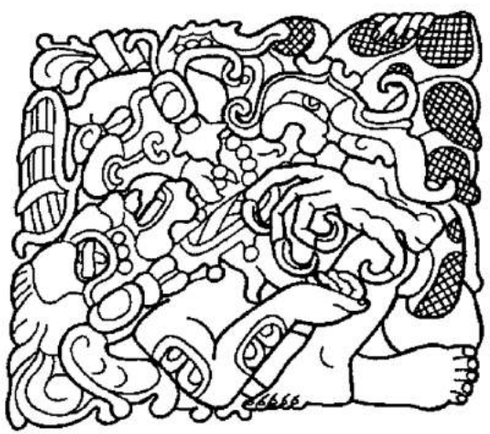
it will help to show each individual, Bird, Bat, Mammal, Deity, Supernatural shown individually

This can be accomplished once the Drawings are Improved with the help of Current Photos

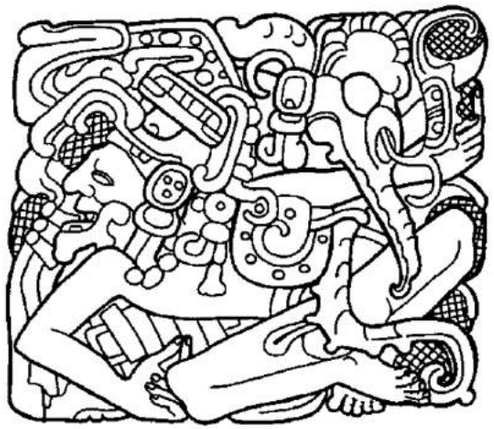
Next step is to find 100% of other full-figure hieroglyphs:
those at Copan and Quirigua are easy to locate with excellent drawings of Quirigua glyphs by Matthew Looper



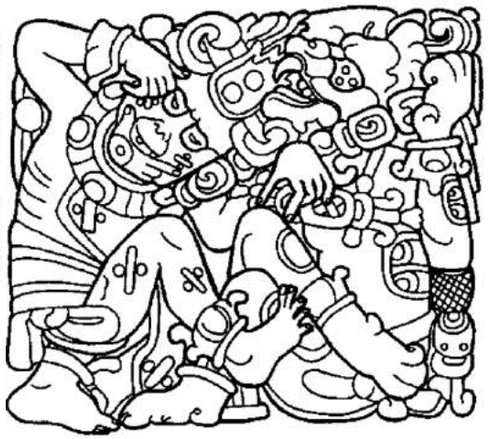
Quirigua Stela D, drawing by Looper.



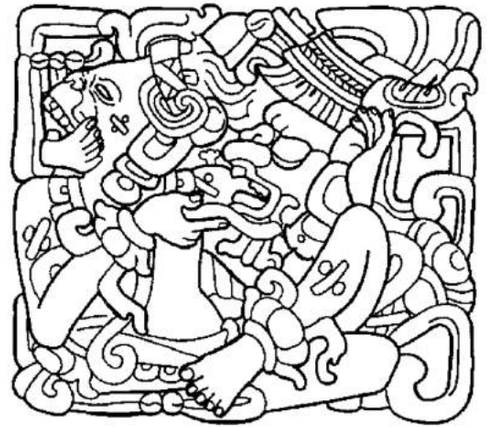
Quirigua Stela D, drawing by Looper.



Quirigua Stela D, drawing by Looper.



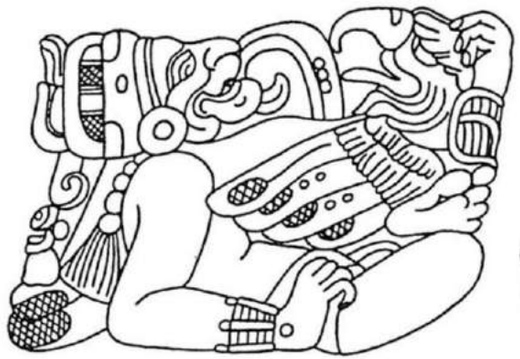
Quirigua Stela D, drawing by Looper.



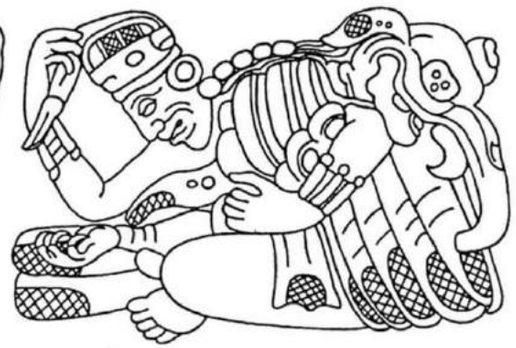
Quirigua Stela D, drawing by Looper.



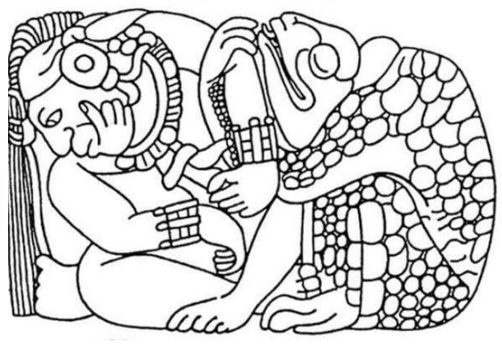
Copan Stela D, B1, JM00602.



Copan Stela D, A2, JM00602.



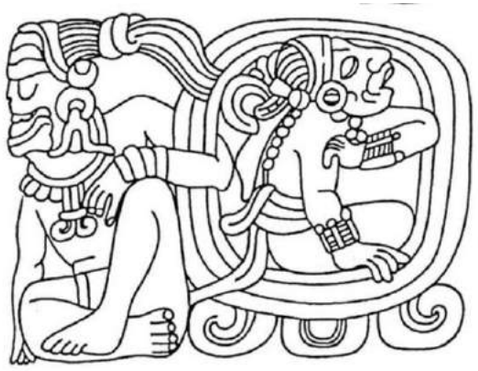
Copan Stela D, B2, JM00602.



Copan Stela D, A3, JM00602.



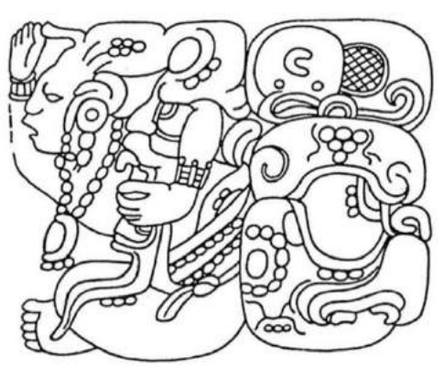
Copan Stela D, B3, JM00602.



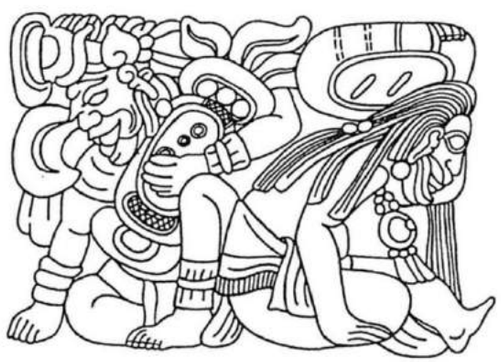
Copan Stela D, A4, JM00602.



Copan Stela D, B4, JM00602.



Copan Stela D, A5, JM00602.



Copan Stela D, B5, JM00602.

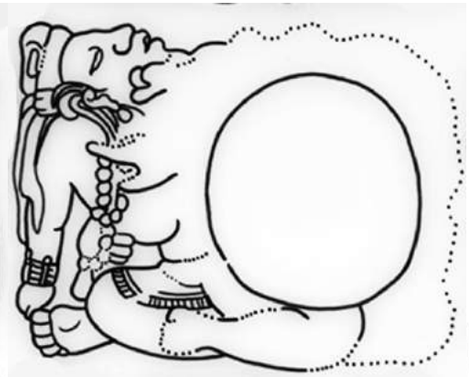


Not all database files are “clean”

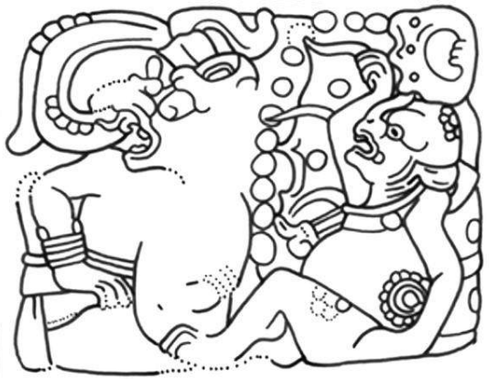
For some reason the drawing by Montgomery of Copan Stela D is missing all the lower hieroglyphs. Fortunately they are available in the Linda Schele database that is not at higher resolution in Ancient Americas at LACMA. But, the images of Schele are “cloudy”, they are not all digitally clean. So I had to digitally clean them.



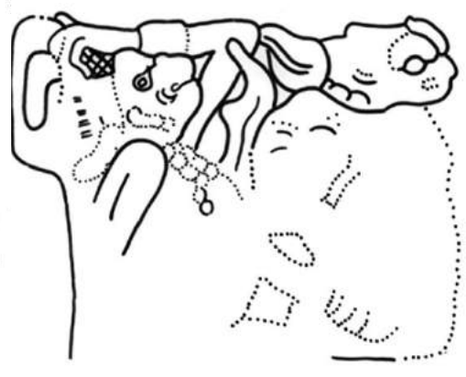
Copan Stela D, B6, Schele-SD-1006.



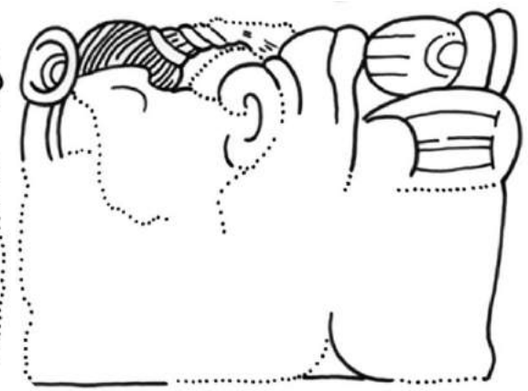
Copan Stela D, A7, Schele-SD-1006.



Copan Stela D, B7, Schele-SD-1006.



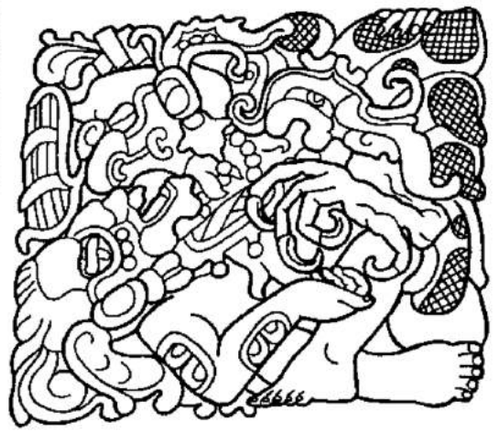
Copan Stela D, A8, Schele-SD-1006.



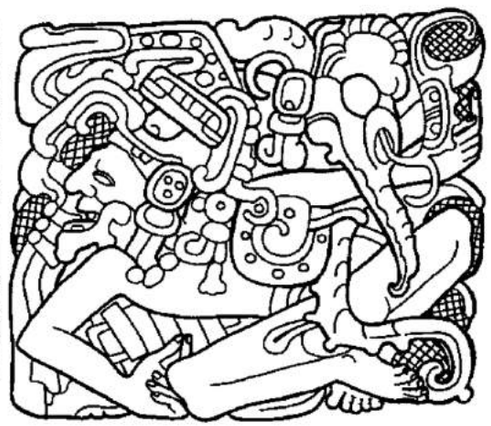
Copan Stela D, B8, Schele-SD-1006.



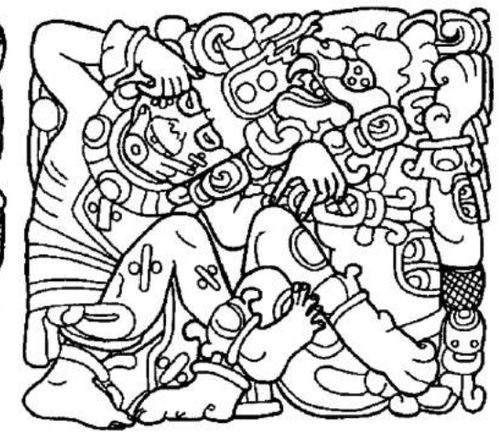
Quirigua Stela D, drawing by Looper.



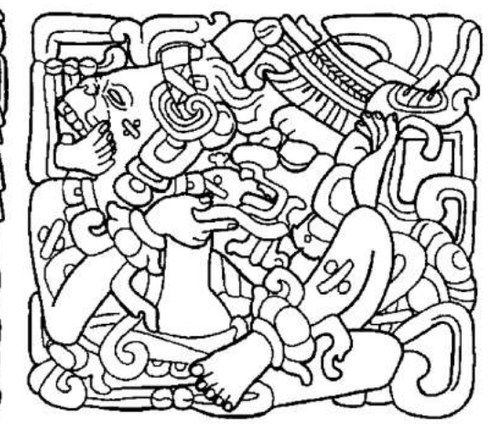
Quirigua Stela D, drawing by Looper.



Quirigua Stela D, drawing by Looper.



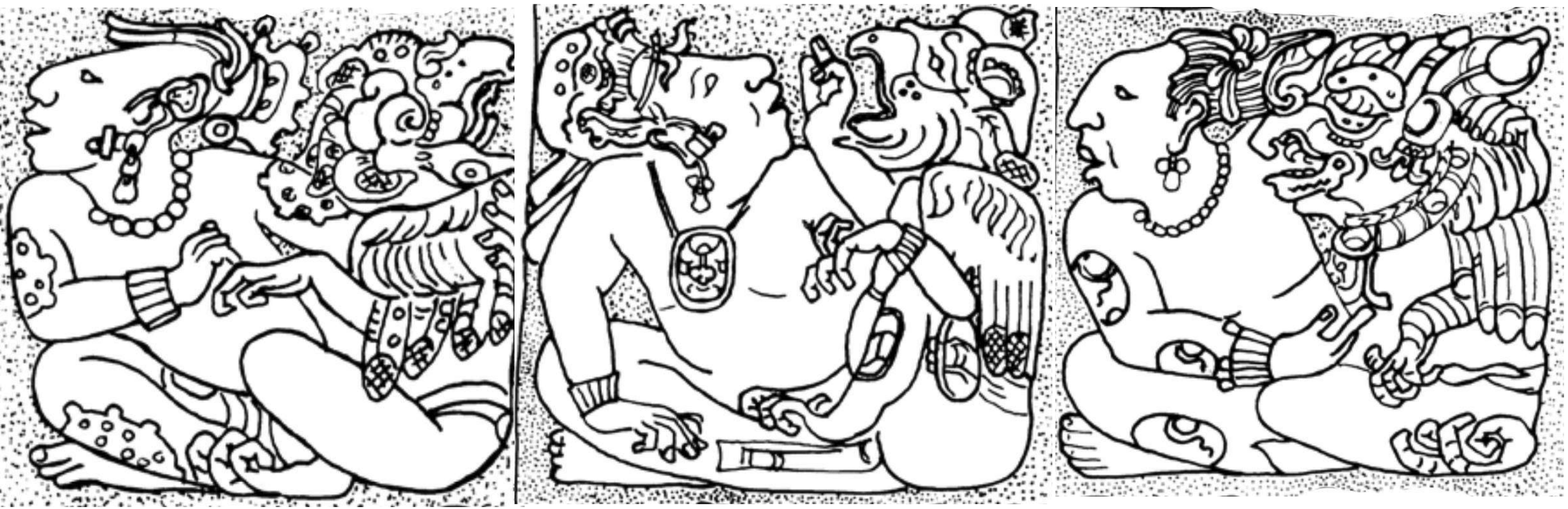
Quirigua Stela D, drawing by Looper.



Quirigua Stela D, drawing by Looper.

In addition to full-figure personified hieroglyphs at Copan and Quirigua, these deified glyph images are also known from Palenque

Most of the leading epigraphers have done their own drawings of hieroglyphs and sculptures of Palenque. These particular full-figure personified Maya hieroglyphs are drawings by Merle Greene Robertson, Palace Tablet, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico.



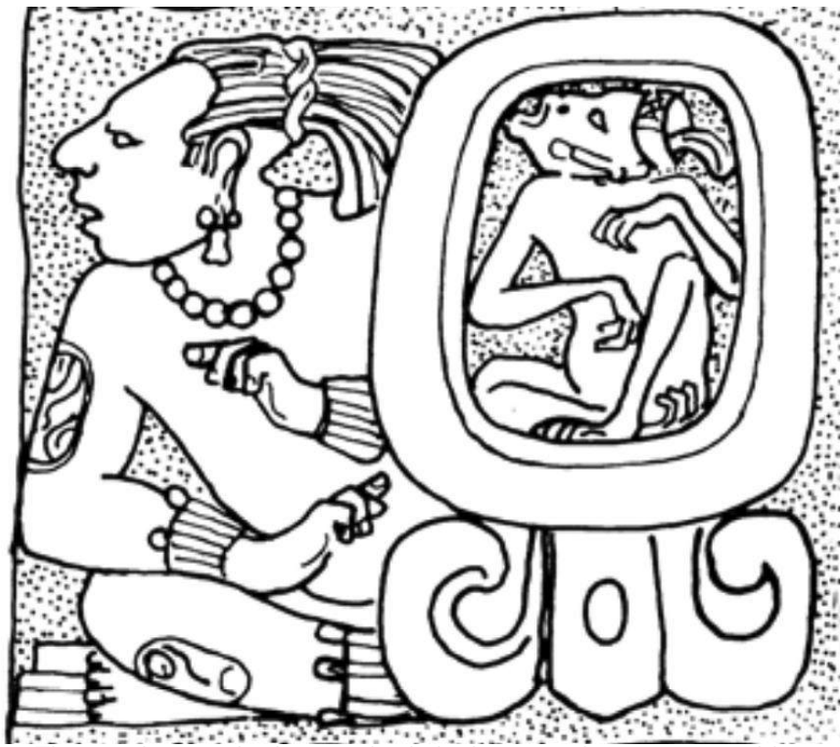
Full-figure personified hieroglyphs of the Palace Tablet, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico. Drawings by Merle Green Robertson. As with all other drawings of hieroglyphs, it would help to have these at better resolution but these we can enlarge better than the inscriptions of Copan (the drawings by Matthew Looper for Quirigua are the best resolution of all). So far I have not found a digital database of Merle's drawings at high resolution.



Nicely rendered Bufo Toad, very common in the Long Count as a face variant. The Bufo Toad poison sacs are not shown in this image (they would be under the hand of the lord on the back of the neck of this toad). NEVER put your hands there unless the toad knows you and does not exude the ingredients in the gland (but you probably have to ingest them; merely on your hands would not be fatal).



Personified full-figure Maya hieroglyph, Palenque, Palace Tablet, AB11-12, drawing by Merle Greene Robertson.



The monkey inside the standard glyph cartouche is recognizable as a monkey by its head, thin limbs, hands and feet: not anthropomorphic other than its seated position (not much space for any other position).

Photos of full-figure personified Maya hieroglyphs are available from dozens of photographers. The best that I know so far are by Jorge Perez de Lara. The photo here is by Nicholas Hellmuth, FLAAR Photo Archive.

The original Hellmuth photo is 82.9 MB, a nice size for good resolution so you can enlarge any detail. We have reduced it to a JPG at 13.7 MB but when the entire report is processed it will be further reduced.





I am viewing this enlargement on a 32” 4K monitor. It is crisp in every detail. Not many databases provide this quality.

This crop has not been enhanced in any manner (so we have not done any Unsharp Masking). This is the actual photo from the camera scanned on an Epson Perfection V850 flatbed scanner with Silver Fast 9.1.5 scanner software.

The photo is over a quarter of a century old.



APPENDIX A

List of Copan Sculptures with Full-Figure Hieroglyphs

FULL-Figure PERSONIFIED Hieroglyphs at Copan, Honduras
FLAAR Reports List by Nicholas Hellmuth, 2023-2024

1. **Copan Stela 2, CPN 40**, Uinal (Bufo Toad) as full figure (Morley 1920: 140 and Plate 18 on page 155). Baudez shows no illustrations of either side or back, only front (1994: Fig. 49,b). The *Manual of Monuments of Copan* stela shows photos.
2. **Copan Stela 12, CPN 61**, Uinal (Bufo Toad) as full figure (Morley 1920: 140). Baudez shows no illustrations; only mention, page 249.
3. **Copan Stela 15**, the Uinal (Bufo Toad) is full-figure (Morley 1920: Plate 12), but others are face variants. I have not yet found this stela anywhere in Baudez 1994.
4. **Copan Stela 24, CPN 76**, the Uinal (Bufo Toad) is full-figure, but others are face variants (all shown by Morley 1920: Fig. 13 but no mention of it being full-figure in the caption, only later in his text). Baudez has no drawing; only mention: 1994: 251.
5. **Copan Stela D, CPN 7** has the full-figure hieroglyphs most often published (Baudez 1994: F9g 11,B, drawing by Anne Dowd). Maudslay 1889, Volume I, Plate 48 shows the glyphs in Maudslay's style.
6. **Copan Stela E, CPN 9**, only one glyph is full-figure (so not just head-variant; glyphs not illustrated by Baudez). Complete text with the one full-figure glyph is pictured in Schele and Looper 1994: 113).
7. **Copan Stela 63**, drawing by Barbara Fash. Most are face-variants but at least four are full-figure. The Uinal glyph is the most amazing. Early Classic date.
8. **Copan Altar D'**, renamed **Altar 41**, renamed **CPN 82**, lots of full-figure personages. One is Block D1 (Houston 2021: Fig. 3.10,a) Baudez 1994: 141-142. Drawings of two hieroglyphs in Morley (1920: Fig. 45); drawings of all in Maudslay 1889, Volume I, Plate 114,b and d. One side of this "oblong altar" is a Cosmic Monster; top is Bufo Toad.
9. **Copan Altar W** (Morley says W', Wprime), two rows of full-figure glyph blocks (Morley 1920: Fig. 46); half preserved; rest missing. Morley says (1920: 333): "The style of Altar W', as already noted, is of the best period. All the glyphs on the back are the very unusual full-figure variants, and in point of execution have but few peers in the city. The relief is fairly high and rounded."
10. **Copan Temple 11 (Str. 10L-11)**. One glyph has a kneeling person but no other glyphs (that I have seen so far on Temple 11) are full-figure. But Morley says "The glyphs are all of the full-figure variety, and judging from the fragments recovered this inscription must have been one of the longest of its kind ever attempted (1920: 276). I have not seen "Temple 11" hieroglyphs significantly mentioned elsewhere, so need to check what structure Morley was cogitating on. Schele SD-11-5 shows one glyph block with two full-figure hieroglyphs, so surely there are more. Maudslay shows one well-preserved glyph block with two full-figure personified hieroglyphs (1889, Volume I: Plate 7,b).
11. **Copan Temple 26**, between 47 and 48 full-figure-hieroglyphs. Examples B1 and B2 are in drawing by David Stuart in Houston and Stayder 2020). https://journals.openedition.org/lhomme/36526?lang=en Complete drawing by David Stuart in Barbara Fash 2011: Fig. 129).
12. **Copan bench front, Str. 9N-82**, House of the Bacabs, Sepulturas Group, drawing by Anne Dowd.
13. **Copan bench front, Str. 9M-146**, "Harvard Bench", drawing by Barbara Fash.
14. **Copan, Xukpi stone**, drawing by Linda Schele (Schele et al. 1994:1 and Prager and Wagner 2017: Figure 14). A full-figured Principal Bird Deity (with basic headdress suggesting Itzamna, God D) is near the left. Also pictured by Looper 1996: 102.
15. **Copan, Papagayo hieroglyphic stairway**, Schele drawing inked by Mark Van Stone, SD-1045. The "full figure" is more a personified stack-of-three hieroglyphic motifs but is at front and far end of a beautiful 3-row face-variant text.
16. **Copan Str. 8N-66C, Sky Band bench** front (not as much a text, more a cluster of celestial personalities but definitely FULL-figure). Drawing by Barbara Fash.

17. **Copan Hieroglyphic Stairway**, has many full-figured glyphs (Morley 1920: Plates 26 and 27 show about 13 full-figure glyph blocks, some with more than one full-figure glyph) but I have not yet found line drawings at visible size of the entire stairway and the side balustrades. Barbara Fash has a complete corpus of all these hieroglyphs of the Copan Hieroglyphic Stairway, as photos, 3D scans, new digital drawings, etc. Her incredible future publication will be in CMHI, PMAE, Harvard.
18. **Copan Altar Q'** (Qprime, Morley 1920: Plate 24,f) has a possible full-figure hieroglyph in its upper left segment. Needs to be rephotographed to see whether it's a scene or a full-figure personified hieroglyph. So we need to check this at Copan or in archives.

Our photography and research is focused on sculptures #1 through #16.

Drawings at better resolution will be appreciated for sculptures:

Copan Stela D, CPN 7, drawing by Anne Dowd
Copan Stela 63, drawing by Barbara Fash
Copan Temple 26, drawing by David Stuart
Copan bench front, Str. 9N-82, House of the Bacabs, Sepulturas Group, drawing by Anne Dowd
Copan bench front, Str. 9M-146, "Harvard Bench", drawing by Barbara Fash
Copan Str. 8N-66C, Sky Band bench front, drawing by Barbara Fash

References Cited and Suggested Additional Reading

For epigraphy, surely there must be other studies, but so far all I have found is by Jackson and Stuart 2001. Baudez shows the drawing and mentions a tad of the iconography of the supports, but provides no epigraphic or iconographic mention of discussion of any of the 13 glyph blocks. Altogether there are at least 26 individuals; some mythical sacred birds and over a dozen deities. So far I have not found any iconographic discussion of the full-figure personified hieroglyphs on this remarkable bench. The sole exception that I have found so far, is for one personage by Oswaldo Chinchilla Mazariegos (2018). Because there are several other bench fronts at Copan with much better preserved sculptures, the focus has understandably been on the other bench hieroglyphs.

A future PhD dissertation on the epigraphy and iconography of these 26 mythical concepts plus their accessories would be a PhD dissertation of significant importance.

CHINCHILLA Mazariegos, Oswaldo
2018 Fire and Sacrifice in Mesoamerican Myths and Rituals Pages 29-53 in *Smoke, Flames, and the Human Body in Mesoamerican Ritual Practice*, edited by Andrew Scherer and Vera Tiesler. Dumbarton Oaks.

HOUSTON, Stephen and **Takeshi INOMATA**
2009 The Classic Maya. Cambridge University Press

HOUSTON, Stephen and **Andréas STAUDER**
2020 What is a Hieroglyph? L'HOMME, 233 | 2020, pages 9-44.

Has two full-figure personified hieroglyphs by David Stuart in Fig. 9+10

https://doi.org/10.4000/lhomme.36526

JACKSON, Sarah and **David STUART**
2001 The Aj K'uhun Title, Deciphering a Classic Maya term of rank. *Ancient Mesoamerica*, 12 (2001), 217–228.

Easy download from Academia.edu.

JACKSON, Sarah
2013 Politics of the Maya Court. University of Oklahoma Press.

LOOPER, Matthew
2003 Lightning Warrior, Maya Art and Kingship at Quirigua. University of Texas Press. 265 pages.

It really helps when entire books are available to be downloaded. After all, our research is intended to help colleagues, students, and the interested general public.

Looper's excellent drawing of full-figure personified hieroglyphs of Quirigua Stela D are in his Fig. 4.26, page 142.

3D rendering,
https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/escultura-maya-3-copan-ff38c8bf0a8c4ccab2a3f195f77613db

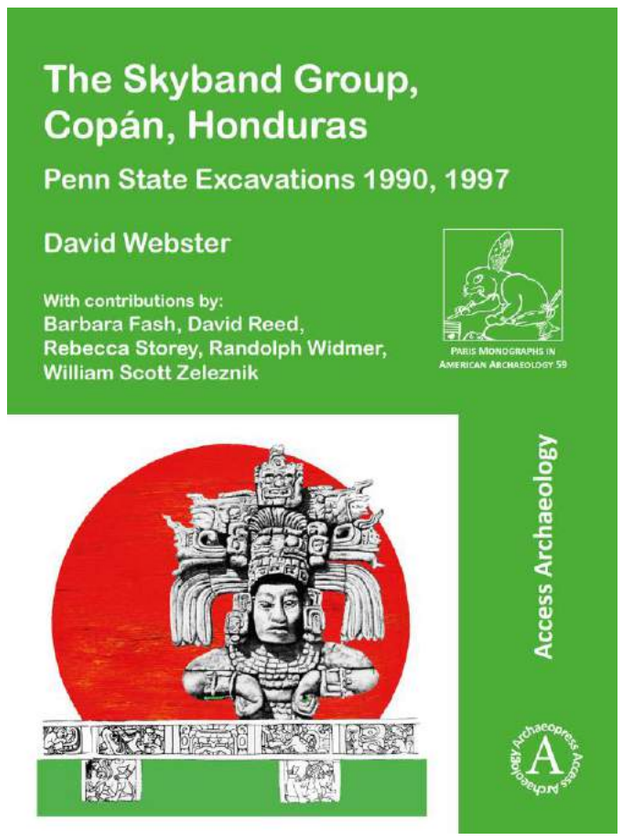
WEBSTER, David
2023a The Skyband Group, Copán Honduras, Penn State Excavations 1990, 1997. *Paris Monographs in American Archaeology* 59. 360 pages.

Impressive archaeological results from decades of research by the Copan teams past and present. Archaeopress provides their entire monographs as download at no cost via their scholarly concept of Access Archaeology. You do not even have to register your personal information; just click and it downloads.

WEBSTER, David
2023b The Skyband Bench and its Neighbors. Chapter 4, pages 78-99 in *The Skyband Group, Copán Honduras, Penn State Excavations 1990, 1997*. *Paris Monographs in American Archaeology* 59.

This chapter inside Webster 2023a provides helpful information and documentation on the Skyband Bench, and also on other discoveries nearby such as the "Harvard bench" (pages 83-84).

Archaeopress Publishing Ltd. is the most helpful publisher in the world, to make complete books as easy downloads at no cost.



List of Suggested Reading on Sculptures of Copan

AGURCIA-Fasquelle, Ricardo and **Vito VELIZ** (editors)

2010 Volumen I: Los Monumentos de la Plaza Principal – Peter Biro y Dorie Reents-Budet. Vol. I of Manual de los Monumentos de Copán, Honduras. Asociación Copán, Copan Ruinas, Honduras. 387 pages.

So far I have found on-line only this helpful Volumen I. I have not yet found:

- Volumen II: Monumentos de la Acropolis
- Volumen III: Monumentos del Valle

BAUDEZ, Claude-François

1994 Maya Sculpture of Copán: The Iconography. University of Oklahoma Press. 300 pages.

FASH, Barbara W.

2011 The Copan Sculpture Museum, Ancient Maya Artistry in Stucco and Stone. Peabody Museum Press. 216 pages.

FASH, Barbara W.

2004 Early Classic Sculptural Development at Copan. Pages 248-264 in Understanding Early Copan, edited by Ellen E. Bell, Marcello A. Canuto & Robert J. Sharer. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

FASH, William L.

1991 Scribes, Warriors, and Kings: The City of Copán and the Ancient Maya. Thames and Hudson. 192 pages.

There is now a year 2001 revised 2nd edition.

ROBICSEK, Francis

1972 Copan: Home of the Mayan Gods. Heye Foundation. xvi + 168 pages.

Has helpful photographs of lots of sculptures and the enthusiasm of Francis Robicsek. But the books by Baudez and Fash are more recent and focus more on archaeology, epigraphy and iconography. Plus not all the benches were excavated when Robicsek visited and wrote about Copan.

The present photo album on the full-figure personified hieroglyphs of the bench front of Copan Str. 9M-146 is one of a dozen works-in-progress on Copan. Here are the other sculptures and architecture and artifact photos that we are working on to make available as high-resolution photos.

Cauac Monster, Cosmic Monster with Quadripartite Badge Headdress, Crocodile, Deer and God N, Copan CPN 25, Altar of Stela M
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 1,
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 1

Scorpion, Venus, Moon Goddess with Rabbit Companion, Celestial Deities on Sky Band Motifs on Copan Structure 8N-66C Bench Front
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 2,
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 2

Copan Ceramic Incensario Lids, Local adaptation of Teotihuacan Style
Volume I, Photos in full-page Height, Vertical Format
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 3,
Maya Ceramics of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 1A

Copan Ceramic Incensario Lids, Local adaptation of Teotihuacan Style
Volume II, Vertical Format
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 4,
Maya Ceramics of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 1B

Full-Figure Personified Maya Hieroglyphs on front of Bench in Copan Str. 9N-82, House of the Bacabs, Sepulturas Group
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 5,
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 3

Beards on Kings and Deities at Copan
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 6,
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 4

Paddler God Faces and Hieroglyphs at Copan
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 7,
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 5

Cauac Monsters at Copan, especially in Stacks on Corners of Palaces and Mythical Structures
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 8,
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 6

Copan Maya Ballgame Players,
Maya Outfits: Chest Protector & Deflector and Thigh Protector
Mexican Ballgame Outfits: Yoke, Hacha and Ballgame Handstone
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 9,
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 7

Copan Maya Ballcourt Architecture & Scarlet Macaw Logo Goal Stones
Stepped Areas were as important as Playing Field down the Center
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 10,
Maya Architecture of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 1

Maya Ballcourt Architecture
3-Dimensional Architectural Reconstruction Drawings by David Morgan
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 11,
FLAAR Drawings Archive Segment, Publication Number 1.

Toads, Iconography as Bufo Toad, Epigraphy as Uinal Hieroglyph of Copan, Honduras
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 12,
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 8

Bats in Sculpture and Hieroglyphic Inscriptions of Copan, Honduras
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 13,
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 9

Samples of Classic Maya Ceramics of Copan, Honduras
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 14,
Maya Ceramics of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 2

Jade and Greenstone Craftsmanship of Copan, Honduras
Finished Jade Ornaments plus Documentation of Jade Working on Raw Stone
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 15
Artifacts of Jade, Obsidian, Flint (Chert) and other Materials of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 1.

Full-Figure Personified Maya Hieroglyphs: Bench Front of the "Harvard Bench" inside Copan Structure 9M-146 of Group 9M-18
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 16
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 10

Iconography of Incense Scattering and Maya Hieroglyphs,

Face-Variant Long-Count Glyphs on Nim Li Punit Stela 15, Belize
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 17
Maya Sculptures of Belize, Publication Number 1

The Story of the Blom Plate: a Masterpiece of Mayan Iconography
and Primary Standard Sequence, PSS, Hieroglyphs, Chetumal, Quintana Roo, Mexico
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 18
Iconography of Maya Ceramics of Mexico, Publication Number 1
Primary Standard Sequence, PSS, Maya Hieroglyphs in the FLAAR Photo Archive, Publication Number 1

Tlaloc, Yearsign and other Teotihuacan Motifs in Classic Maya Art at Copan, Honduras
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 19
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 11

Full-Figure Personified Hieroglyphs, Tlaloc, Yearsign, Calendrical Deities, Birds, Mammals, Copan Structure 26, (Temple 26, façade overlooking the Hieroglyphic Stairway below)
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 20
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 12

Full-Figure Personified Hieroglyphs on Copan Stela 63,
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 21
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 13

Copan Stela D, CPN 7, Full-Figure Personified Hieroglyphs
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number 22
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number 14

Loincloth Apron Face on Stelae, Bench Fronts and other Sculptures at Copan, Honduras and Profile/Half Frontal Deity Face on Altars at Copan, Honduras; Hieroglyph T1017
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number

Quadripartite Badge Headdress and Cosmic Monster at Copan, Honduras
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication Number
Maya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number

Skulls and SKULL RACK, Copan, Honduras
FLAAR Photo Archive Publication NumberMaya Sculptures of Copan, Honduras, Publication Number