

MURAL PAINTING AT TULUM AND TANCAH, QUINTANA ROO, MEXICO

by

Marla Korlin Hires

Thesis

1974 H668

MURAL PAINTING AT TULUM AND TANCAH, QUINTANA ROO, MEXICO

by

Marla Korlin Hires

A thesis submitted to the faculty of  
the University of North Carolina at  
Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in the Department of  
Anthropology

Chapel Hill

1974

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Adviser

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reader

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reader

MARLA KORLIN HIRES. Mural Painting at Tulum and Tancah, Quintana Roo, Mexico (Under the direction of DONALD L. BROCKINGTON.)

During the winters of 1972 and 1973 Dr. Arthur Miller of Yale University directed the study and recording of Postclassic mural paintings at the sites of Tulum and Tancah, Quintana Roo, Mexico, where I was an assistant. Differing styles of painting were found in various structures at the two sites and by analyzing the differences it has been possible for one to construct a relative chronology between the structures at Tulum and Tancah and to draw comparisons with outside painted materials.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have contributed time, knowledge and patience and encouraging words to this study. My advisor, Dr. Donald Brockington, has been most kind. I am particularly appreciative of his encouragement during my year in the Department of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. It was he who helped arrange my studies in such a way that I was able to participate in the second field season of the Quintana Roo Mural Project. Dr. Arthur Miller, director of the project, opened up to me the world of Pre-Columbian mural art. I am grateful for his invitations to join the project during both field seasons. To Felipe Davalos and Dolores De Silver I owe much of my appreciation and understanding of the ancient artists. Librarian Marjorie Le Doux was of untold aid during the preparation of this paper while I was attending the Latin American Studies Program at Tulane University. Elizabeth Benson and Anne Schaeffer of the Dumbarton Oaks Center for Pre-Columbian studies opened their library and facilities for my study during the spring of 1972. A very special thank you goes to George Stuart. Not only did he allow me to use his extensive personal library and offer me the resources of the National Geographic Society, but he took time and care to answer my numerous questions from the depth

of his empathy for Maya and Mexican culture. And my parents, who first introduced me to ancient worlds, gave me continued interest and support during a number of strange schemes. Maybe a child never really knows how to thank his parents; I know that I have been blessed with two very special "natural eccentrics."

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  | Page |
|--|------|
| Chapter I    General Situation . . . . .                   | 1    |
| Part 1    The Aims of This Study . . . . .                 | 1    |
| Part 2    Geographical Setting . . . . .                   | 6    |
| Part 3    Previous Archaeological Investigations . . . . . | 11   |
| Part 4    The Quintana Roo Mural Project . . . . .         | 13   |
| Chapter II    Tulum . . . . .                              | 16   |
| Part 1    The Castillo . . . . .                           | 16   |
| Part 2    The Temple of the Diving God . . . . .           | 70   |
| Part 3    The Temple of the Frescoes . . . . .             | 108  |
| Chapter III    Tancah . . . . .                            | 129  |
| Part 1    Structure 12 . . . . .                           | 129  |
| Part 2    Structure 44 . . . . .                           | 142  |
| Chapter IV    Summary and Conclusions . . . . .            | 151  |
| Part 1    Comparisons--Tulum and Tancah . . . . .          | 151  |
| Part 2    Relative Chronology . . . . .                    | 170  |
| Part 3    Comparisons with Outside Materials . . . . .     | 176  |
| Part 4    Summary . . . . .                                | 179  |
| Bibliography . . . . .                                     | 181  |

## ILLUSTRATIONS

| Figure   | Page |
|--|------|
| 1 Map of the East Coast of the Yucatan Peninsula                             | 5    |
| 2 Map of Tulum . . . . .   | 7    |
| 3 Map of Tancah . . . . .  | 10   |
| 4 Tulum Castillo Upper Sanctuary, Plan . . . . .                             | 17   |
| 5 Tulum Castillo Upper Sanctuary, West Façade . . . . .                      | 18   |
| 6 Tulum Castillo Upper Sanctuary, Room I<br>East and West Walls . . . . .    | 21   |
| 7 Tulum Castillo Column 1 . . . . .  | 26   |
| 8 Tulum Castillo Column 2 . . . . .  | 29   |
| 9 Tulum Castillo Substructure, Room I, Plan . . . . .                        | 32   |
| 10 Tulum Castillo Substructure, Room I, North Wall                           | 34   |
| 11 Tulum Castillo Substructure, Room I,<br>Murals 1 and 2 . . . . .          | 36   |
| 12 Tulum Castillo Corridor . . . . .   | 38   |
| 13 Tulum Castillo Corridor, East Wall . . . . .                              | 40   |
| 14 Tulum Castillo Corridor, First Layer Painting . . . . .                   | 43   |
| 15 Tulum Castillo Corridor, Second Layer Painting<br>Upper Portion . . . . . | 48   |
| 16 Tulum Castillo Corridor, Second Layer Painting<br>South End . . . . .     | 50   |
| 17 Tulum Castillo Corridor, Second Layer Painting<br>North End . . . . .     | 55   |
| 18 Tulum Castillo Corridor, Second Layer Painting<br>North End . . . . .     | 58   |
| 19 Tulum Castillo Corridor, Second Layer Painting<br>North Section . . . . . | 59   |

| Figure | Page  |
|--------|---|
| 20     | Tulum Castillo Corridor, Second Layer Painting<br>North Section . . . . . 61                      |
| 21     | Tulum Castillo Corridor, Third Layer Painting . . 68  |
| 22     | Tulum Temple V, Plan . . . . . 71   |
| 23     | Tulum Temple V, West Façade . . . . . 72  |
| 24     | Tulum Temple V, Interior East Wall . . . . . 75   |
| 25     | Tulum Temple V, Measurements of Figures on<br>Interior East Wall . . . . . 91                     |
| 26     | Tulum Temple V, West Façade, Location<br>of Paintings . . . . . 95                                |
| 27     | Tulum Temple V, Exterior North Wall . . . . . 104   |
| 28     | Tulum Temple V, Exterior North Wall: Painting 105   |
| 29     | Tulum Temple XVI, Plan . . . . . 109  |
| 30     | Tulum Temple XVI, West Façade . . . . . 110   |
| 31     | Tulum Temple XVI, West Corridor, East Wall . . . 115  |
| 32     | Tulum Temple XVI, North Corridor, South Wall<br>and South Corridor, South Wall: Paintings . . 118 |
| 33     | Tulum Temple XVI, South Corridor, North Wall . . 122  |
| 34     | Tulum Temple XVI, South Corridor, North<br>Wall: Painting . . . . . 123                           |
| 35     | Tancah Structure 12, Plan . . . . . 130   |
| 36     | Tancah Structure 12, East Façade . . . . . 132  |
| 37     | Tancah Structure 12, Interior West Wall . . . . . 134   |
| 38     | Tancah Structure 12, Interior West Wall,<br>North End: Painting . . . . . 135                     |
| 39     | Tancah Structure 12, Interior West Wall,<br>Middle Section: Painting . . . . . 138                |
| 40     | Tancah Structure 12, Interior West Wall,<br>South End: Painting . . . . . 140                     |



| Figure |   | Page |
|--------|---|------|
| 41     | Tancah Structure 44, Plan . . . . .                                   | 143  |
| 42     | Tancah Structure 44, Room I, East Wall . . . . .                      | 144  |
| 43     | Tancah Structure 44, Room I, East Wall:<br>Mural Fragment 1 . . . . . | 146  |
| 44     | Tancah Structure 44, Room I, East Wall:<br>Mural Fragment 2 . . . . . | 148  |

. . . Ascending the cliff, and passing beyond the two buildings we had seen the day before, we descended from the rear of the last to the head of the chasm which had seemed to cut us off from the principal object of our visit; ascending again at the other end of the ravine, we entered a gloomy forest, and, passing a building on the left, with "old walls" visible in different places indistinctly through the trees, reached the grand staircase of the Castillo. The steps, the platform of the building, and the whole area in front were overgrown with trees, large and principally ramon, which, with their deep green foliage and the mysterious buildings around, presented an image of a grove sacred to Druidical worship.

John L. Stephens (1843:2,389)

## CHAPTER I: GENERAL SITUATION

### PART 1: THE AIMS OF THIS STUDY

On the basis of Spanish accounts one of the most important areas of lowland Mesoamerica at the time of the Conquest was the east coast of Yucatan. Cozumel Island had replaced Chichen Itza as a pilgrimage center, and the regions around modern Chetumal and along the Laguna de Yalahau were evidently demographic and cultural centers of Yucatecan Maya civilization at that period.

Obviously, then, the area is of extreme importance for an understanding of the origin and character of post-Classic Maya culture . . . (Sanders 1960:161).

Mesoamerican archaeology has utilized many ways to study a culture in order to gain greater understanding of its beginnings and its character. One technique which is growing as the corpus of known raw material increases, is the analysis of Mesoamerican mural painting. Aside from their not inconsiderable aesthetic merits, mural paintings are valuable for the wealth of information they contain about the lives of past people. As Michael Coe notes,

The idea of 'decoration' was, and still is, completely alien to American Indian cultures, including the Maya. As a corollary I will assume, unless it is proven otherwise, that all elements no matter how insignificant they may appear to our culture bound eyes, had meaning to the Maya artist and beholder (1973:18).

It should be remembered, too, that most pre-Columbian painting was directed towards the gods and the hierarchy rather than the layman (Thompson 1967:207).

From the almost inexhaustible symbolic and mythological material contained in the Teotihuacan painting to the scenes at Chichen Itza, a range of empirical data has been gathered concerning such diverse topics as building construction, historical events, ritual practices, clothing styles, trading expeditions, and warfare. From the Bonampak murals alone there was "added new knowledge on such general problems as the extent of lay activities, social and political organization, schools of art, subareas of cultural and perhaps political domination, and the effects of new influences on conservative tradition" (Ruppert, Thompson and Proskouriakoff 1955:60). Archaeology with its concern for time depth is uniquely equipped to study problems of artistic development and to follow the results of the meeting of styles. A study of art styles can aid in tracing movements of cultural ideas and influences of one culture upon another. This is particularly important in Yucatan. From a slightly different perspective the art of a people will offer reflections of the spirit and thoughts of that people.

Arthur Miller has pointed out "the fact that most of the Teotihuacan structures were virtually covered with painted surfaces, a great number of them showing complicated designs, is evidence enough that painting was important to ancient Teotihuacanos" (1973:11). I think that the numerous murals at Tulum reflect the same feeling. Unfortunately not enough remains at Tancah to make such a generalization for that site.

In an analysis of pre-Columbian murals several aspects can be appreciated and separated to help broaden knowledge of culture history. George Kubler describes three dimensions: style, content and the individual artist. While this paper touches briefly and eclectically on aspects of these three dimensions in relation to Tulum and Tancah painting, it is most concerned with a descriptive presentation. Before cultural problems can be considered, material must be available concerning the actual appearance of the paintings, their relative positions and their placement in the structures which contain them. In this necessarily broad and brief consideration I have chosen to present the murals themselves and their stylistic interrelationships together with short discussions of motifs and themes rather than engage in an intensive interpretation of iconography. This is left for later studies.

I will offer a few tentative conclusions based upon mural evidence from Tulum and Tancah as related to material outside of the sites and to internal relative dating.

Because this is the only available description of the majority of these murals, I have decided to include information which would ordinarily be omitted from such a project. Interspersed within the text are rough field drawings which originally were only for the purpose of recording measurements and relative positions of the figures. They were not intended to be accurate renderings. Felipe Davalos, Eugenie Robinson and Dolores Skaer were responsible for these in

selected areas. The sketches do, however, provide information not otherwise available and for this reason are included here.

The artists' renderings are also reconstructions, but extremely accurate ones. This paper presents only what was visible to the careful observer in the winters of 1972 and 1973.

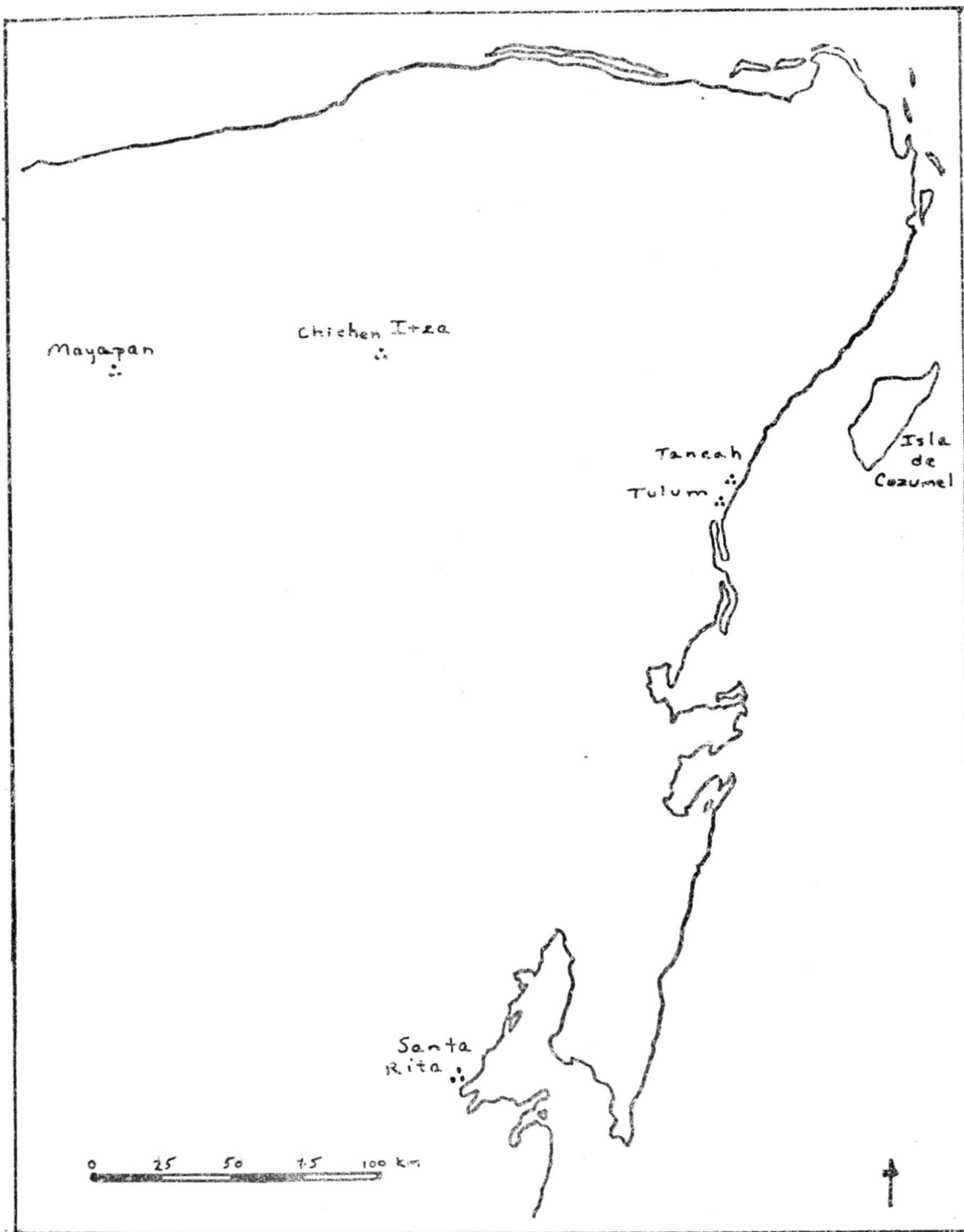


Figure 1: Map of the East Coast of the Yucatan Peninsula

## PART 2: GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

In the territory of Quintana Roo, Mexico, the ruins of Tulum still command the highest land along the east coast of the Yucatan Peninsula (Figure 1). The sheer physical beauty of the setting is startling. Perched on a limestone cliff 40 km. southeast of Cozumel Island the site affords a splendid view of the Caribbean Sea and the coral reef lying several hundred yards offshore. A stone wall around the other three sides of the site fences out the deep green of the surrounding jungle (Figure 2). Within the limits of this 18 acre enclosure is a small natural beach. A cenote, or sinkhole, is located along the northern wall.

Of Tulum Miguel A. Fernández has written, "The impression of unity is notable, resembling a true acropolis; the different structures sit upon terraces which were formed following the distinct elevations of the topography of the land" (1945:109).\* A long avenue running approximately north-south along the natural depression through the center of the site connects two entrances through the surrounding wall. Most of the Tulum structures, including the Temple of the Frescoes (Temple XVI), are found along this street or to the east grouped together in what Samuel K. Lothrop has labeled the Inner Enclosure (1924:67). This Inner Enclosure, or Main Plaza following William Sanders' designation (1960:175), sits on a ridge over the sea and is

---

\*This and all subsequent translations are by the author.



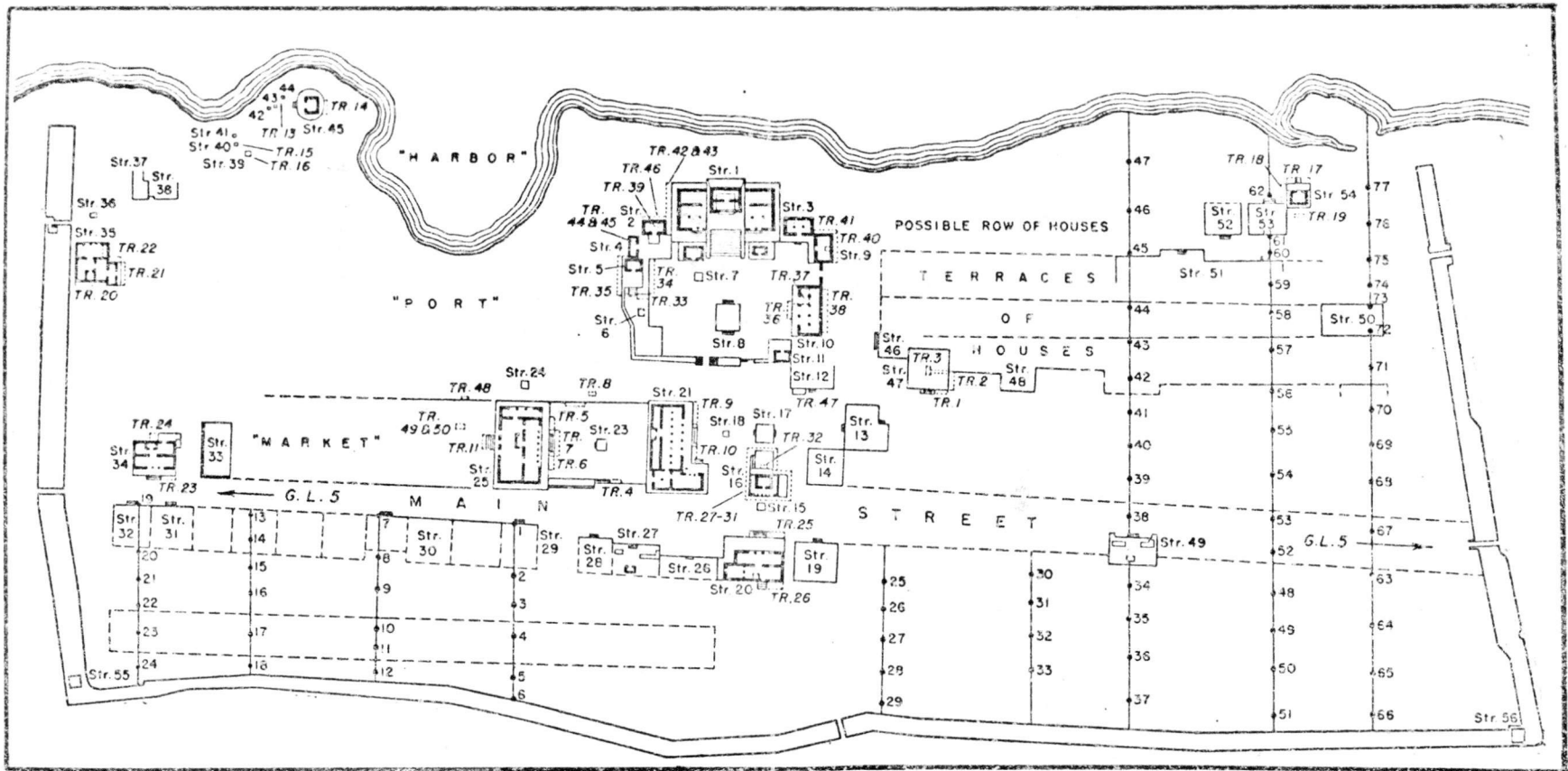
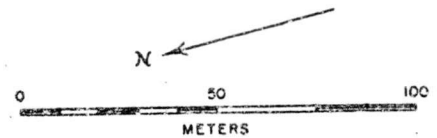


Figure 2: Map of Tulum  
 (after William T. Sanders, 1960, Fig. 2)



dominated by Tulum's largest building, the Castillo (Temple 1). The Temple of the Diving God (Temple V) is included in this complex just north of the Castillo. Other lesser groups of buildings are found above the cenote and along the sea cliff. Small structures are perched at the northwest and southwest corners of the Great Wall. The guide published by the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia of Mexico ascertains that the north-south axis of each building is oriented approximately  $17^{\circ}$  to the east of magnetic north (1961:175).

Several kilometers to the north of Tulum and inland a short walk lie the crumbled structures of Tancah (Figure 1). This appears to be a site distinct from Tulum. Sanders, on the basis of intensive testing, writes "I found no justification for Lothrop's statement that Tulum and Tancah form almost a continuous settlement with scattered house platforms running from one site to the other. . . the two sites are separated by 2 km. of bush and rocky terrain with only an occasional structure between" (1960:176).

Tancah consists of two plaza groups and a series of large low platforms, some of which support other structures (Figure 3). Group A, on the eastern side of the site, is composed of eleven buildings laid out irregularly. Group B, also of irregular arrangement, contains twelve structures including Temple 12 on the western side. All of these buildings in both groups are, according to Sanders, religious in function and small compared to other buildings

in the Maya area (1960:162). North and west of these plaza groups are forty-six structures sketched on Sanders' map. Among this series is Structure 44, a single story building atop a large flat platform, Structure 42. Sanders states that at least a dozen small platforms which are not mapped extend to the west (1960:163).

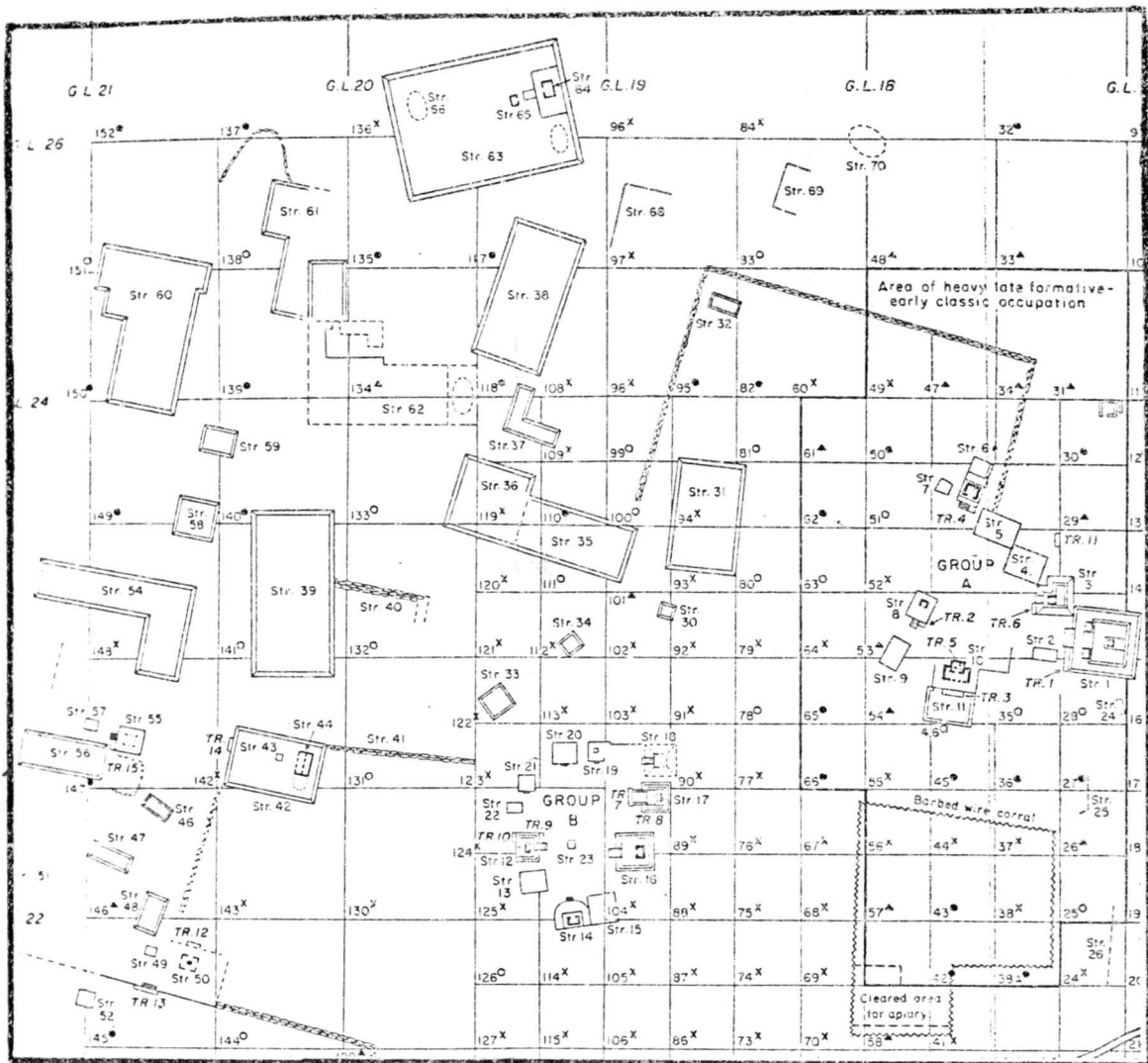


Figure 3: Map of Tancah (after Sanders 1960, Fig.1)

## PART 3: PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Although it had been visited previously, the first published description of Tulum was in 1843 when John Lloyd Stephens' Incidents of Travel in Yucatan appeared in print. Accompanying this description were the accurate and hauntingly beautiful drawings by Frederick Catherwood. The next year, Catherwood published a portfolio of his work containing two color lithographs of Tulum. A few brief descriptions of the site appeared subsequent to Stephens' work (Howe, Holmes and Prince William of Sweden cited in Lothrop 1924:5), but no major work was undertaken until the Carnegie Institution of Washington made three expeditions to Quintana Roo under the direction of Sylvanus G. Morley. These projects, between 1916 and 1922, were summarized and the results analyzed by S. K. Lothrop (1924). Although the main focus was on Tulum and the emphasis was on architecture, other sites, including Tancah, were mapped and discussed. Parts of some of the murals at Tulum were hurriedly sketched and described. Mural painting at Tancah was not mentioned.

The Expedición Científica Mexicana del Sureste de México y Centro Americana explored Tulum and other east coast sites in 1937 (Fernández, 1938). A member of this expedition, Miguel Angel Fernández, returned in 1938 and worked at Tulum under the auspices of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia. He spent the next several years reconstructing and consolidating the structures and

recording some of the murals (Fernández, 1945). Unfortunately, he did not have a chance to record all of the murals then extant and re-examination has revealed that some of his reconstructions of the paintings are inaccurate.

In 1954 William T. Sanders conducted a survey of ceramics and settlement patterns along the east coast of the Yucatan peninsula. In 1955 he returned to carry out intensive research at Tulum and Tancah. From this work he devised a ceramic sequence for Quintana Roo and summarized five different types of site patterns found in the area (Sanders 1960).

## PART 4: THE QUINTANA ROO MURAL PROJECT

This study is based upon fieldwork of the author at Tulum during the winter of 1972 and at Tancah during January 1973, both seasons under the supervision of Dr. Arthur G. Miller of Yale University. These projects were financed by grants from the Dumbarton Oaks Center for Pre-Columbian Studies with the National Geographic Society helping fund the 1973 investigation.

The remains of ancient paintings still adorn walls and relief figures in several of the Tulum structures. The best preserved of these are to be found in the Castillo, the Temple of the Diving God, and the Temple of the Frescoes. Paintings in these structures occur on internal and external walls as well as on stone and plaster relief figures. These paintings, however, are disappearing rapidly due both to weathering and to vandalism. The objectives of the 1972 Tulum project were: a) to record all extant portions of these fading murals as accurately as possible through photography, artists' renderings and by written descriptions and complete recording of measurements; b) to make accurate architectural plans and elevations of the structures containing paintings; and c) to pinpoint the location of the murals on these structure drawings to facilitate analysis of architecture in relation to the style and content of the paintings.

During this project Miller kept a photographic record of the Tulum murals. The exceptionally able artist, Felipe Dávalos G., studied and reconstructed on paper the mural in the interior of the Temple of the Diving God along with part of the painting on the interior north wall of the south corridor of the Temple of the Frescoes. We were joined in the course of the field season by Eugenie Robinson who worked on renderings of selected areas of the Castillo paintings. I concentrated on recording descriptions, measurements and the rendering of the murals, and architectural plans and elevations of the three buildings.

During the 1972 season Susan Dávalos and Susana Ekholm-Miller discovered a sizable portion of a mural still extant in Temple 12 at Tancah. Felipe Dávalos and Eugenie Robinson prepared a rendering of this painting and the director decided to spend a portion of the following field season at Tancah.

In the course of the 1973 project additional painting fragments at Tancah were pointed out by the guardian of Rancho Tancah, our base camp. These fragments were contained in Structure 44, one of the buildings mapped by Sanders (1960:Fig.1). I worked during this season making architectural plans and elevations of the two Tancah structures containing murals and completed descriptions and measurements of the murals. Miller continued his photographic recording, while Dávalos refined his rendering of the Temple of the Diving God mural at Tulum and worked on the



painting in Tancah Structure 44. A new member, Dolores Skaer studied the mural and prepared a rendering of the interior east wall of the west corridor of the Temple of the Frescoes at Tulum.

## CHAPTER II: TULUM

### PART 1: THE CASTILLO

The massive Castillo, perched atop a limestone cliff with its back to the sea (Figure 2), was constructed in at least three major stages. The original building formed a long, low rectangle divided into two rooms. Later, its middle section was filled in with rubble to form the foundation for the second stage, which consisted of the wide front stairway and present summit temple. The north and south ends of the original building remain exposed, flanking this higher central portion of the structure. The two wings are connected by a vaulted passage through the rubble fill. Other small rooms were later added in front at ground level.

#### Superstructure (Figures 4, 5)

The uppermost level of the Castillo platform is reached by a spacious stairway leading directly from the ground level. The west margin of the top level makes a wide terrace extending the length of the upper building. A rectangular stone, approximately centered on the stairway protrudes from the terrace surface. There is a double step around the north, east and south sides of the structure (the portion on the north side is crumbling). The building

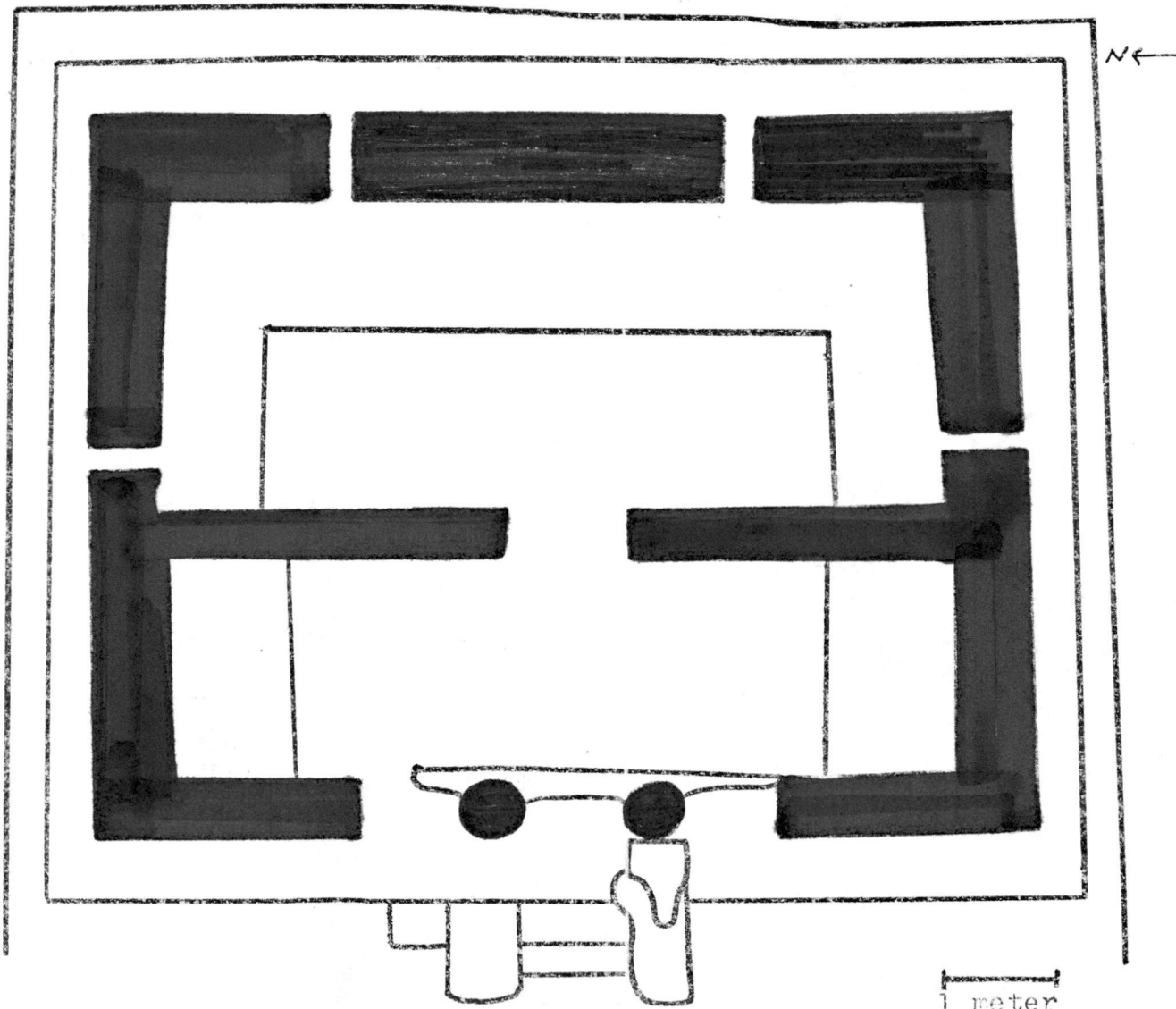


Figure 4: Tulum Castillo Upper Sanctuary, Plan

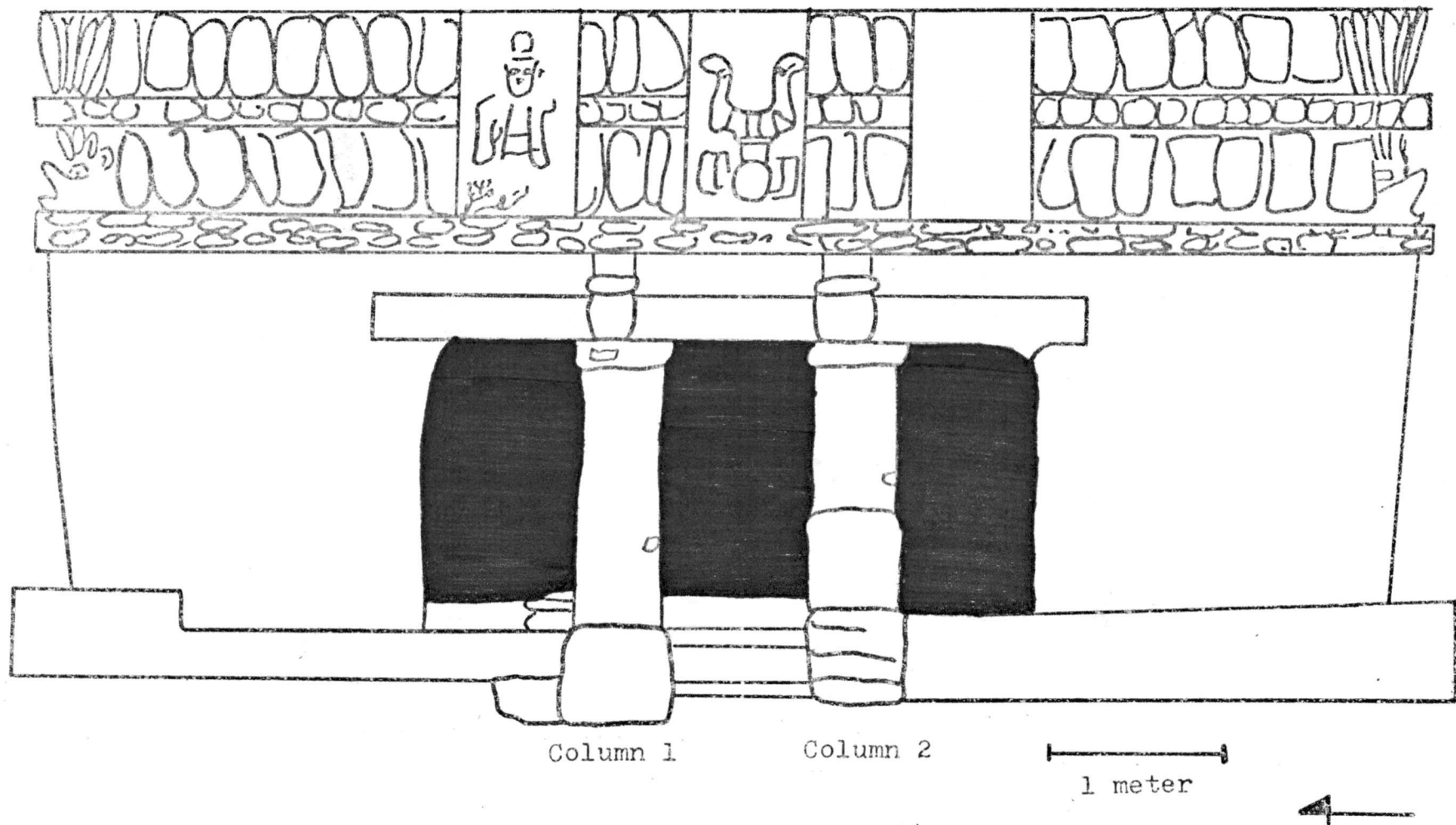
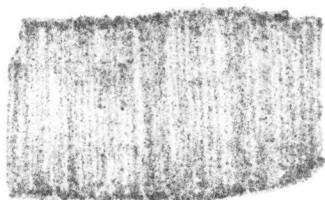
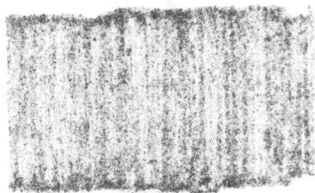
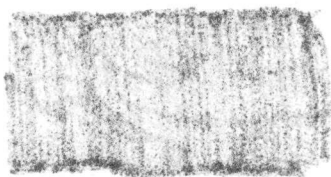


Figure 5: Tulum Castillo Upper Sanctuary, West Façade



thus commands a 360° view of the sea and the coral reef to the east, the flat, seemingly endless jungle to the west and of the north and south coast lines.

Three small steps and an elevated threshold lead from the terrace through the sample front entryway into the sanctuary. The two columns here were serpent effigies with heads jutting from their bases and rattles attached to their tops. Very little of their original configuration remains. The north column is severed even from the support of its serpent head and on the south column only part of the structure which held its serpent head can still be seen, yet both supports still protrude into the terrace. The jambs of the north and south ends of the entryway incline toward each other slightly. Above the entire entrance and extending over the jambs at each end is a recessed lintel which was painted blue. It is into this space above the entry and column capital that the serpent tails were placed. The paint which once worked the rattles is gone and the plaster is peeling, revealing the armature. The serpent attributes were apparently added after the original construction of the columns and each column was replastered, the one painted red and the other blue.

Above the lintel and rattles there is a molding running the length of the building. Above the molding at the northwest and southwest corners are two modeled bird faces, possibly owls. The northwest bird head is better preserved: his beak, eye and headdress can be seen clearly. The

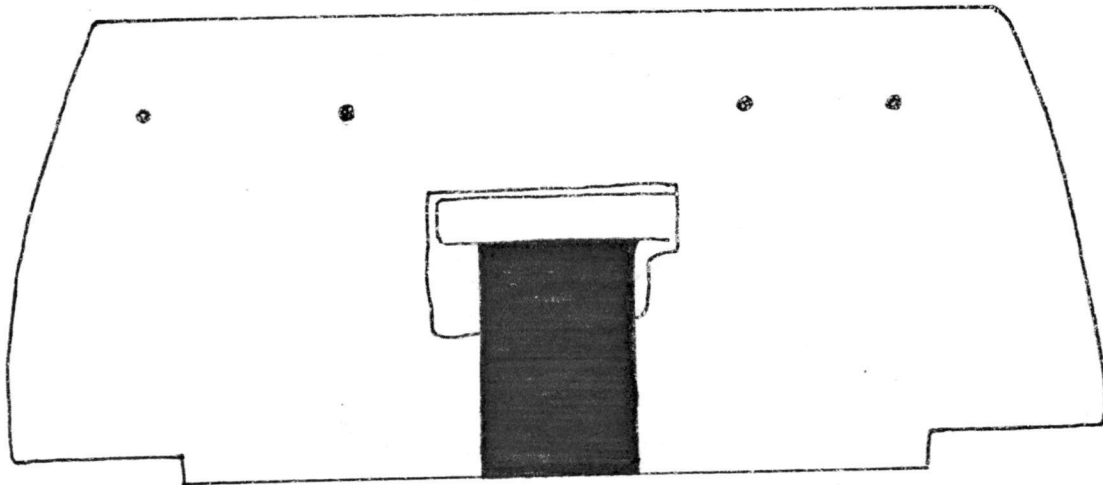
southern one, however, has begun to crumble and is losing his mouth and eyes. At the top of these figures there is a second molding. Extending at the corners from the top of this band to the top of the building is the continuation of the feathers of the headdress of the bird heads.

The upper molding is broken in three places by recessed niches corresponding to the entrances below. The three recessed niches start at the top of the lower molding and continue to the top of the building. In them were set relief figures. The south figure is missing. The central figure represents a diving god whose arms are missing. That on the north is a standing personage with headdress, clothes and a large head.

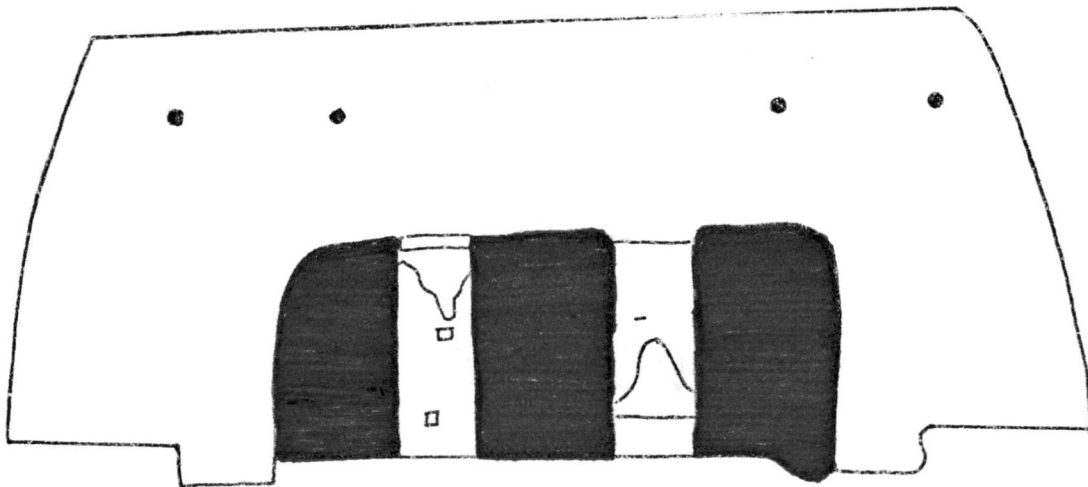
In the inside bottom half of the north side of the entrance blue paint and black lines are visible.

The upper sanctuary is composed of two rooms (Figure 4). Room I has concrete benches on the north and south ends. The door opening with the two columns is on the west side, and on the east side there is a doorway leading into Room II. The latter room has benches running along the north, east and south sides, a vaulted ceiling and four windows which splay down and outwards: two of these look eastward over the sea and one each faces north and south. These windows were once painted blue.

Lothrop, in describing the doorway in the east wall of Room I (Figure 6), states that "the sunken panel is painted a turquoise blue outlined in black, with a simple geometri-



East Wall



West Wall

1 meter

Figure 6: Tulum Castillo  
Upper Sanctuary, Room I



cal pattern in white in the center. The north half of the room to the height of the spring of the vault is painted red and the south half is blue" (1924:50). However, while there is blue still visible in the lintel over the doorway, the design in the center is composed with black lines containing natural plaster color. Blue continues along the top sides and bottom of the recess; outlining the doorway is evidence of a thick black line. To the north of the opening below the lintel red paint is visible; to the south of the opening blue patches of paint are evident.

Columns. It is through the protection of Room I that most of the remaining painting on the columns can be seen, and this only on the inside of the columns and in just a few places. On the outside (west side) traces of blue paint are visible below both moldings. Directly above the north column, just below the upper molding, can be seen a few black lines which remain from a painting. They are badly weathered and visible only in certain light. Both columns are slightly tapered at the base.

The recessed lintel above the door opening was also painted blue. Perhaps there was once a design in black in harmony with the other painting, but if so, the paint is gone.

There is evidence that the columns and the capitals--actually molding--when first constructed were plain columns painted blue with black figures. At some later date the serpent features were added, the large heads lining the

front stairs and the rattle tails placed above the capitals. The columns themselves were also replastered and painted at least once. The north serpent column was painted blue with rattles in black; the south column was painted red.

The serpent head and its foundation have been completely separated from the shaft of the north column (Column I) leaving the west side of the column base exposed to the level of the walkway. The rattles remain attached in the lintel above the capital molding. A bit more of the plaster remains on the rattles above Column I than above Column II. One can see traces of black lines on blue paint on the north rattle base. In a few places it is possible to see plaster with blue paint on the top of the original black line drawings on the column. On the west curve of the column base, underneath the area which would have been covered by the serpent head, are still traces of blue paint and black lines. A black line encircles the entire shaft below the height of the serpent-head foundation attached to the South Column. The South Column also has an encircling line which disappears under the foundation. This too, indicates that the serpent heads were added at a later time.

On the upper molding (false capital) there is only one area, on the northwest, where paint is visible. Here are traces of a double line at the top of the design and a 6 cm high, 8 cm wide design fragment beneath the double line.

The design fragment consists of broken, incomplete black lines and curves.

Description from bottom to top:

28 cm above the base on the protected east side is a design band which is 7 cm high and 59 cm in length. This band is bordered by thin black lines and between these is a series of alternating circles and hooks which hang from the top line. The column appears to have been painted in a series of successive bands of different heights encircling the column shaft. Above the lowest band one can see pieces of several upper design bands. The second band from the bottom is 14 cm high and 59 cm long. In the center of this band at the east line is a ceramic vessel containing two visible circular offerings. This very much resembles the reproduction from the Madrid Codex shown by Lothrop (1924: 57)--except the Castillo example does not rest on a coiled serpent. Other incomplete designs continue on either side. To the north is part of a figure which could represent a serpent head with a section of headdress hanging southward and a flower growing north over the serpent's nose. Separating this from the next band is a 3-cm wide cord with a knot motif on the south side very much like that found in the Temple of the Frescoes and the Temple of the Diving God. The cord is 44 cm long and the knot is incomplete on the south end. In the center of the band two cords actually meet from different directions and twine around each other heading upwards. The cord itself is composed of a

thin lower section and a thick upper one. The twining cord protrudes into the next band and divides it into two parts. The north section is gone, but parts of the south section remain. These lines are only fragments of designs, consisting of several small enclosed forms with interior designs. There is also a design emerging upwards from the line of the cord. Above this circle of design one can see a portion of another separating band (three black lines 2 cm high) and scattered design fragments. It appears that the design of the separating band is broken by parts of this layer (a circle and three slanted lines; also an inverted hook). Other curves of this 11-cm high layer lie near the center line. There are only faint lines in two other places suggesting other layers. At the base of the shaft one can see a dark section. There seems to have been two wide black bands, 5-6 cm, and some painting. Here are visible traces of an over layer of blue painted plaster (Figure 7).

The foundation for the South Column (Column II) serpent head remains attached to the column base and the foundation for the rattles remains set in the lintel above the capital. No serpent features remain but, although most of the outer plaster is gone, there are still red patches visible on the rattle base, at the junction of the column base and serpent head and at various points on the column itself. Most of the red plaster on the column shaft is gone and the underlayer of painting is still revealed in

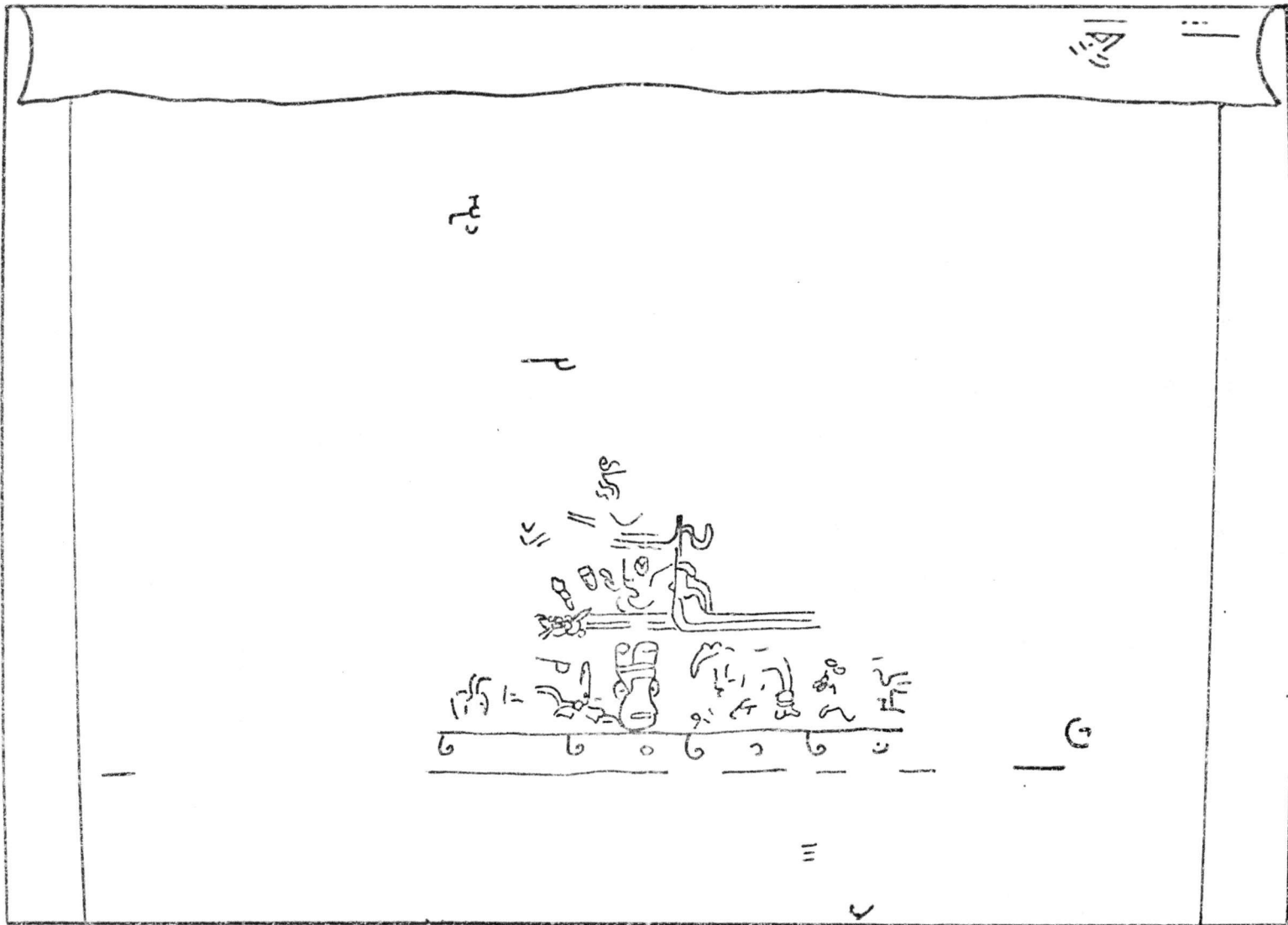


Figure 7: Tulum Castillo Column 1  
Roll Out with East as Center

several places, even though most of this, too, has peeled or worn away. There are two sets of double lines circling the capital. Between these two sets of lines there are two different designs which alternate intermittently with each other and with vertical black lines. There is no observable regularity in the pattern. The double lines circling the top and bottom of the capital design are each 2 cm high. The inside design is 7 cm high and the length of the section is 71 cm. Directly to the north of the center of this band is the first of two design motifs. This is composed of four small circles set in the corners of an area bordered by four vertical lines on the north and by three lines on the south. A larger circle centers the four small circles and is tangent to them. In the middle of this larger circle is another circle with a horizontal line through the center. To the north of the four vertical lines this pattern is repeated twice, with the difference that each of the smaller circles contains an inner loop attached at the point of contact with the larger joining circle making the design look like an eye. South of these shapes is another motif. This one resembles an elaborately sandaled foot, actually two feet since the design is doubled. This design is bound by three vertical lines in the north and another, broken set of three to the south. At the top are two rectangles with a circle in the center of each, then a design with three scallops beneath. A curve

extends toward the south and the rest of the form is beneath the curve.

Below the capital are visible sections of the painting. Not enough is left to see more than the design fragments of black lines on blue. These lines average 3 cm in width. All of the clearly decipherable painting is in the upper third of the interior side of the column. Note that a black line continues its circle underneath the serpent head at the lower northwest corner of the column.

Description from top to bottom:

Directly beneath the capital begins the visible section of painting. This column, like Column I, seems to have been painted with consecutive bands, but on this column it is the uppermost bands which are visible, again on the protected east side. 12 cm below the molding is a solid black line which seems to have continued around the column. Along the center line this black line is broken by a painted curve which is narrow at the tip and widens as it continues up to the molding. To the north is a design very similar to but simpler than the design in the dark band of the Temple of the Diving God. On the column the design has two concentric half circles at the top with slanted poles (half of the north pole is gone) protruding from the circle down and out to the black band. In the interior of the lower end of the pole is a double line and a loop at the bottom. In the middle hangs a pendulum design consisting of a pole and two half circles. At the top of

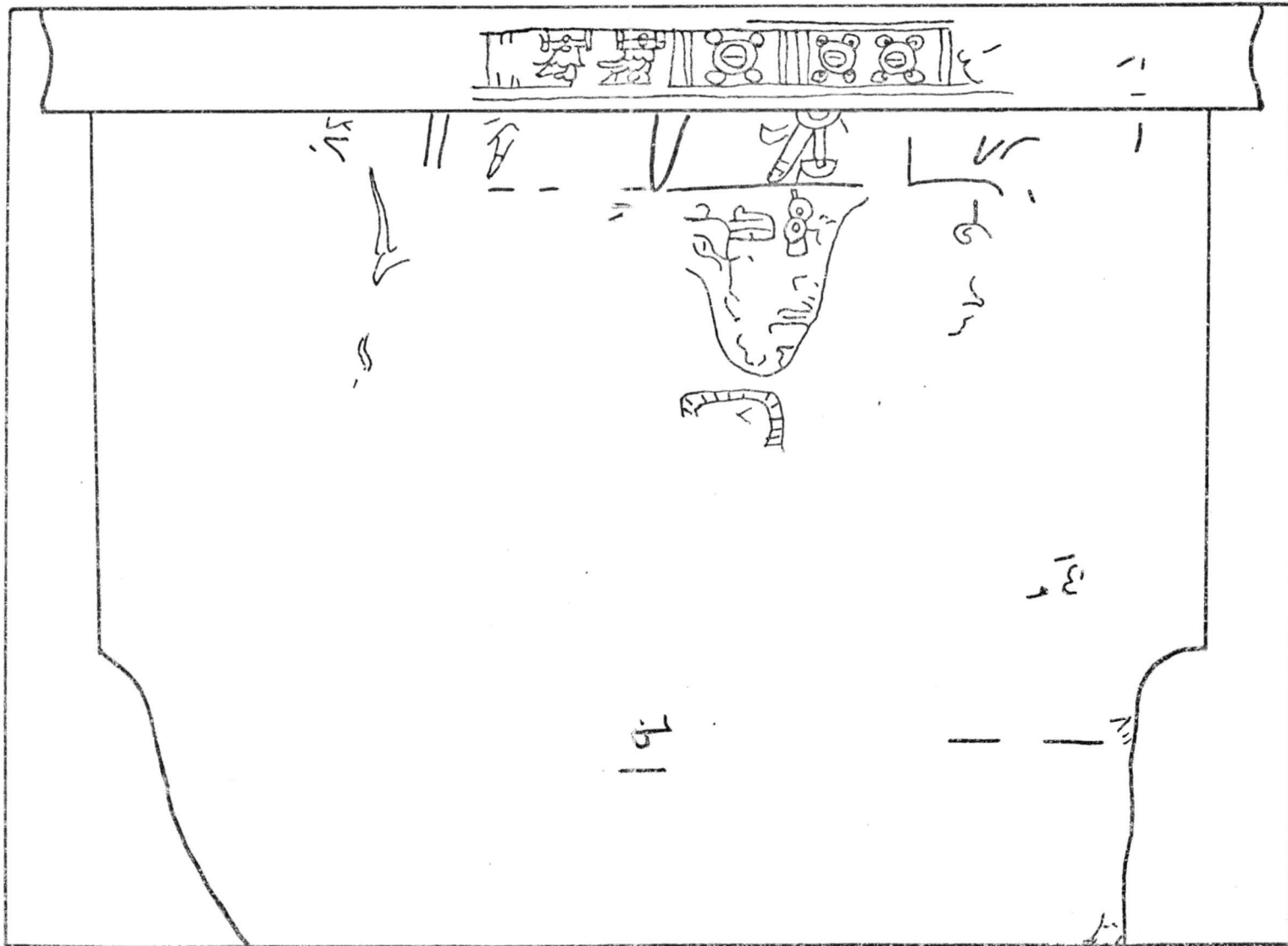


Figure 8: Tulum Castillo Column 2  
Roll Out with East as Center



the slanted south pole is a leaf-like protrusion. Also in the upper band there are indistinct lines farther north and to the south of the center line is another slanted pole with a line across the middle. Two vertical lines are south of this pole. The length from the far end of the pendulum figure south to the second vertical line is 60 cm. Other broken lines appear further south.

Below the black line is another band of painting. The plaster is chipped away and the remaining plaster forms a U-shaped section 34 cm high from its lowest point up to the black line. Beneath the pendulum design is a form composed of concentric circles and loops. South of this is a design fragment of a rectangle with a horizontal line through the center and a hook lying on the top. A curve design is attached to the south side. The plaster at this height is 20 cm wide. Below these the plaster narrows and the lines become even more fragmented. There are more broken lines and curves at the east line near the base and to the north in the middle and upper column shaft. To the south of the U-shaped plaster formation is an area where bits of the red overcoating of plaster are visible (also visible around the junction of the column and the serpent head).

Just below the U-shaped plaster section is a curious design. A faint double black line with stripes connecting the lines curves northwards and finally down to form an incomplete figure 10 cm high and 12 cm wide. This looks as if it were painted on another layer of plaster (Figure 8).

## Castillo Substructure

The lower level is reached by the separate shorter staircases flanking the main one. There are two rooms on each side. The westernmost rooms are joined by a north-south corridor with a half-arch. The flat ceiling which once roofed this level has collapsed and the rooms are now exposed to sun and rain. Paintings are seen in fragments on the north wall of Room I and along the east wall of the passageway.

## Room I (Figure 9)

This room, on the north side of the Castillo, has benches along the north and east walls. There are four columns, two from each of the two rows of columns which supported the original flat roof of the palace. Fernández wrote that he found five layers of stucco on these columns corresponding to the layers which he found on the walls (1945:98-99).

The west wall of this room extends 264 cm from the north wall where it stops in favor of an entranceway with two columns. The south wall is broken at the extreme end by the corridor opening; the west side has a doorway at the south end leading into Room II.

Lothrop wrote that when he studied the Castillo in 1924 there were ". . . poorly preserved frescoes on the east, west and north walls . . ." (1924:79). Today paintings are seen only on the north wall (Figure 10).

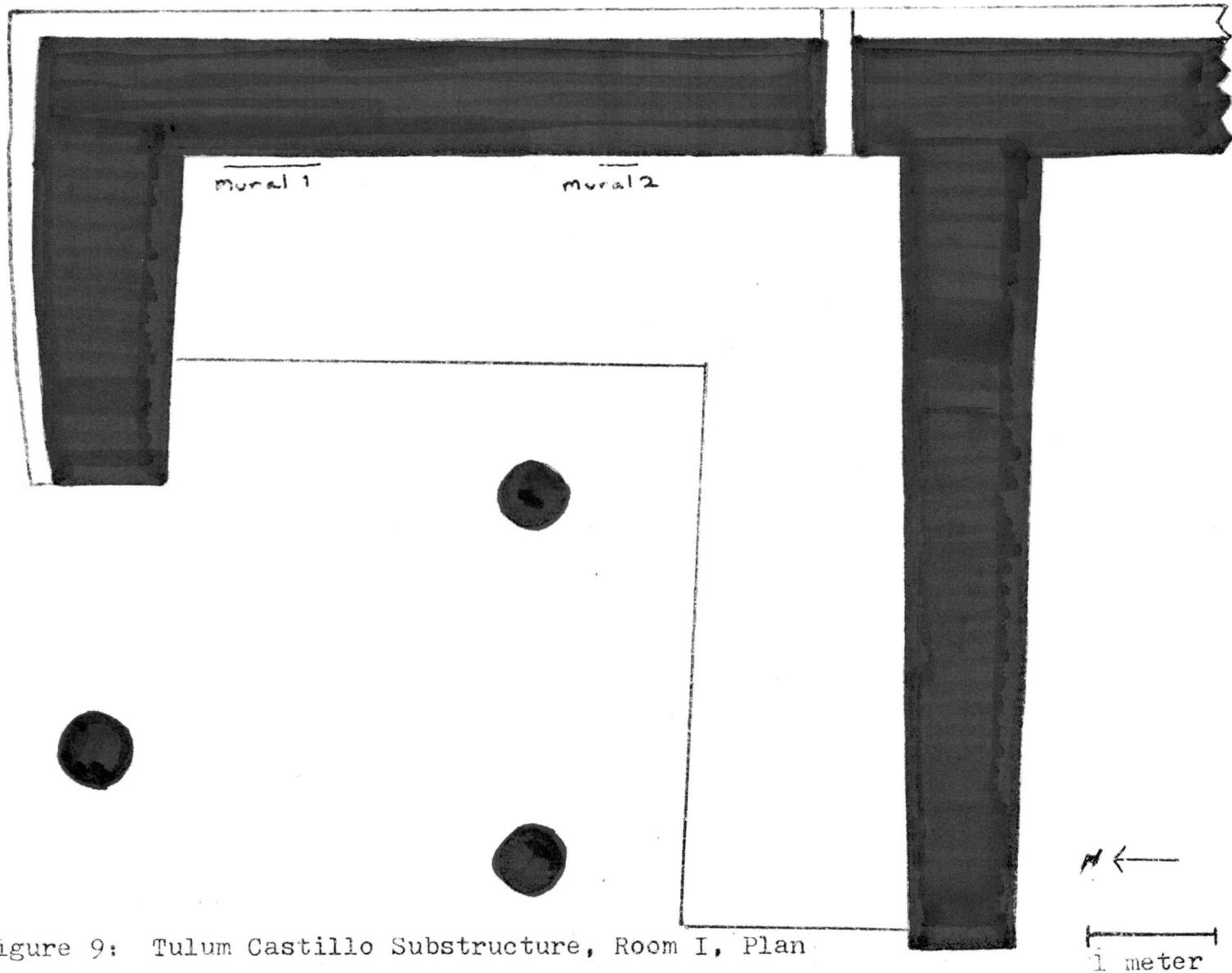


Figure 9: Tulum Castillo Substructure, Room I, Plan

There are parts of two figures (Mural I and Mural II) visible and blue paint along the lower edge of the wall, as well as blue traces in bits and pieces over the entire wall (Figure 10). The suggestions of painting are too faint to decipher in other areas of the wall.

The window or vent on the east side of the wall looks north towards the cenote.

On the west end of the wall remains two-thirds of a stucco face. This face, above Mural I, measures 19 cm in height and is located 77 cm from the west end of the wall and 48 cm from the top of the wall. Only the lower two-thirds of the face remains.

Around the window are traces of black lines on blue with occasional hints of orange. Most of the plaster has fallen and the remaining paint is very faded.

There is also a plaster relief figure of an animal 41 cm to the west of the window and 107 cm above the floor. This bas-relief figure was formed on top of the paint. The head and lower legs have been worn away. The remaining parts of the animal measure 37 cm high and 64 cm wide. Fernández called it a tiger or jaguar and he said that it was covered with a third and fourth layer of plaster which he personally removed (1945:103).

Mural I (Figure 11). The total visible sections of this figure measure 75 cm side and 40 cm tall. The rest of the painting has faded or has chipped away as the plaster has fallen from the wall. What remains are fragments of the

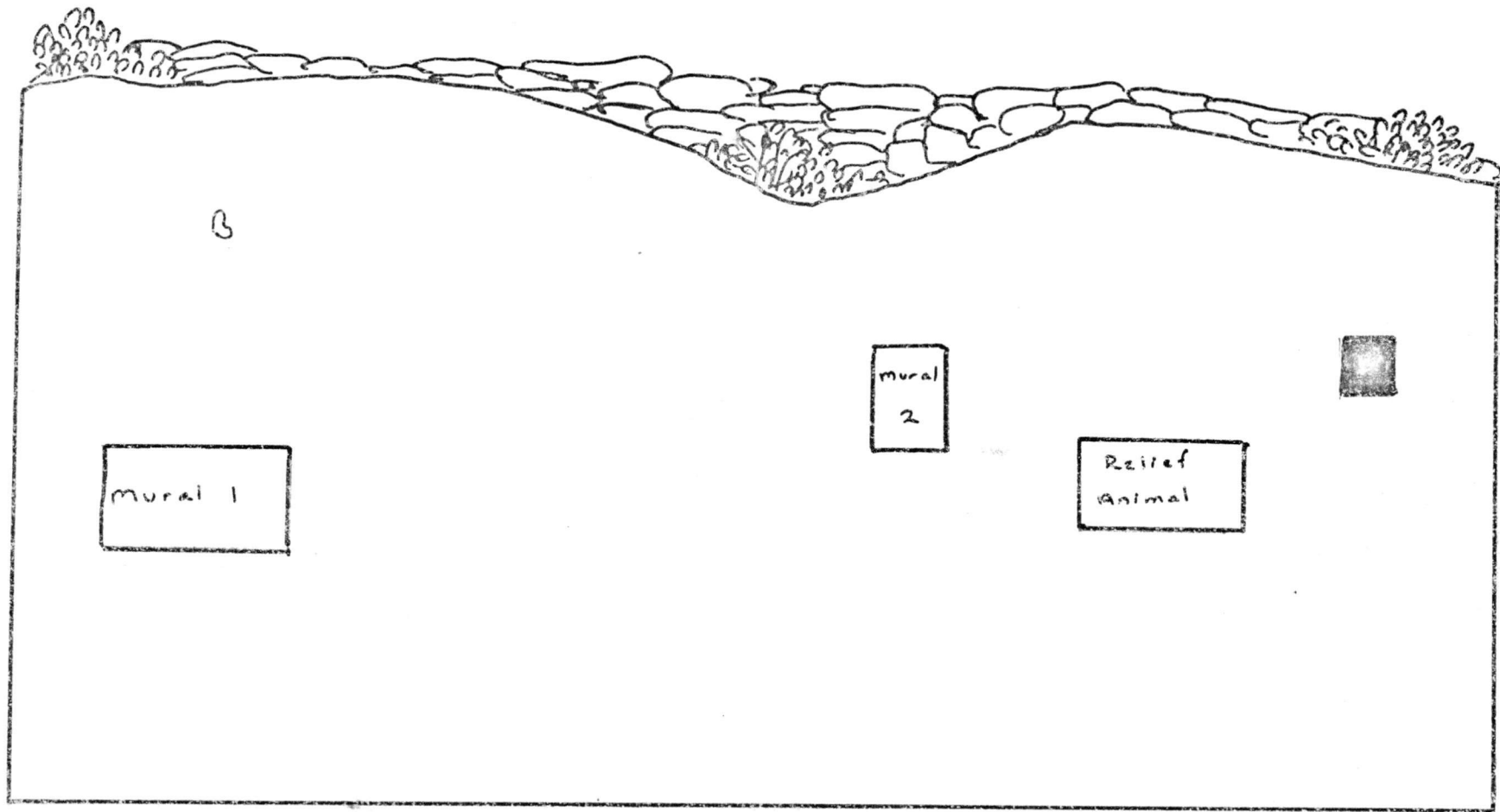


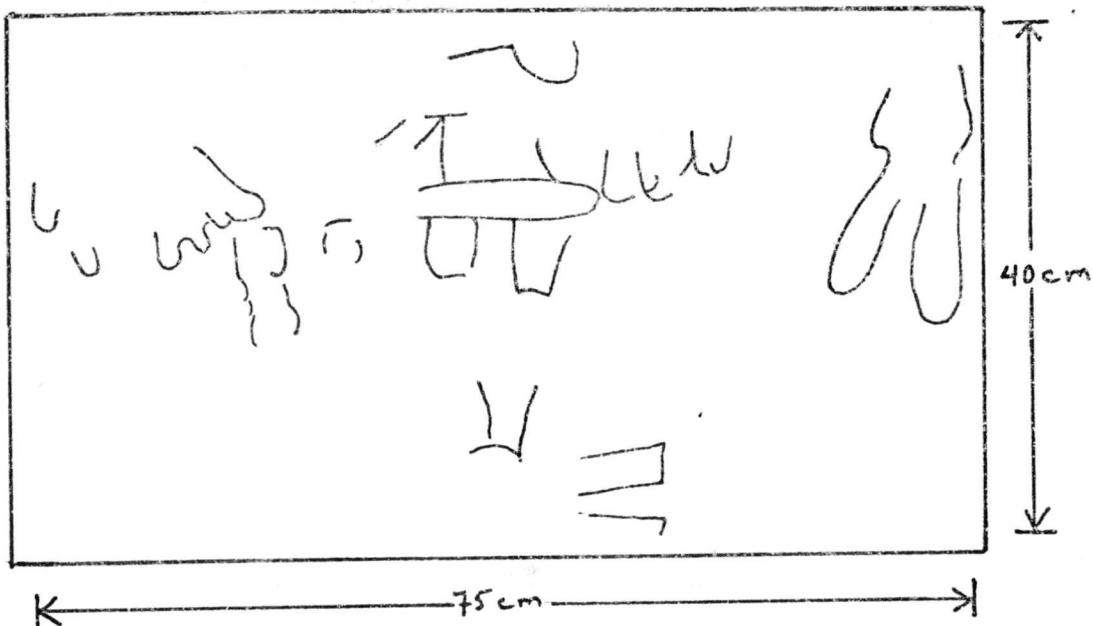
Figure 10: Tulum Castillo Substructure Room I  
North Wall

1 meter

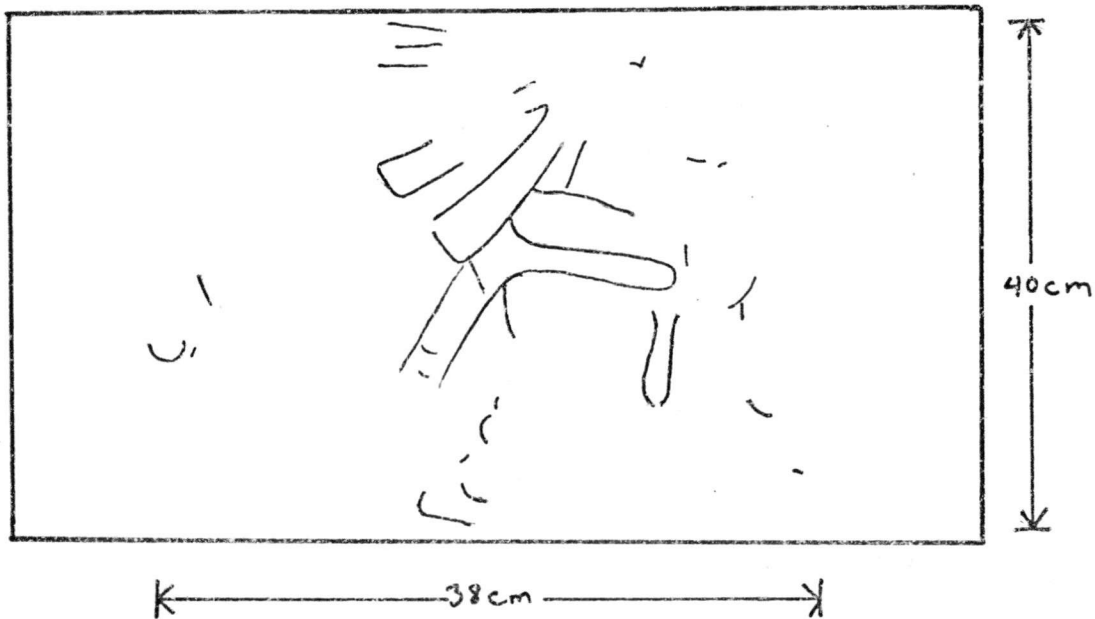
legs of the apparently male figure facing eastward, a sandal tie and a bit of the lower hem of his garment. Before him hang two loops, possibly from something he is carrying. The figure is painted with black lines (4-9 mm wide) on a blue surface. There is orange paint on the upper portions of the legs. This orange looks as if it were applied on top of the blue paint. Throughout the painting it is possible to see lines in the plaster made by the strokes with which the plaster was applied. Above, there are dim traces of blue with orange and black also visible. The figure is located 99 cm above the floor (bench) and begins 33 cm from the west end of the wall.

Mural II (Figure 11). The visible sections of this painting measure 38 cm across and are 40 cm high. The figure faces east and the discernible parts include the back of his heel, parts of the lower back of his garment, ties from his clothing and what are probably feathers from his head-dress. The figure was painted with thick black lines (2-7 mm averaging 5-6 mm) on the blue surface of the painted plaster. The painting was then colored a deeper blue with orange in one band around the figure and in one small area behind the figure. This mural fragment is located 139 cm above the floor (bench) and is 134 cm from the east end of the wall.

With which layer of painting in the corridor did this north room correspond? The figures are placed differently



Mural 1



Mural 2

Figure 11: Tulum Castillo Substructure, Room I, Murals 1 and 2

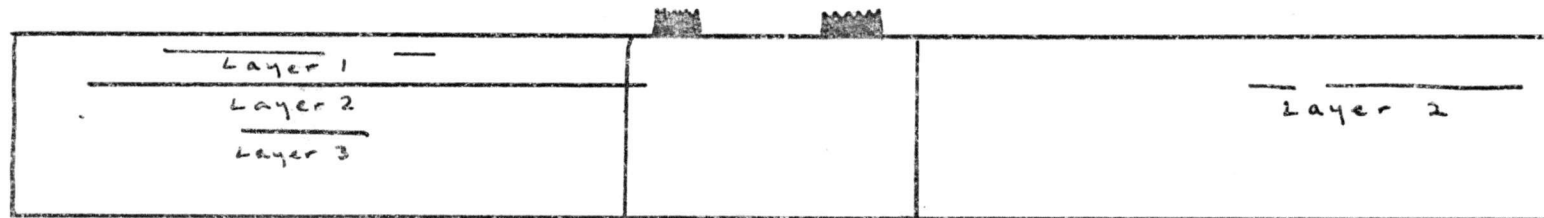
on the wall from any remaining sections of the corridor painting. The wall was painted a background blue, however, as were the benches of the passage (the outside benches are too worn for judgment). Although the lines are thicker than those of the corridor, this was probably because of architectural factors: the lighting permitted clearer viewing of the passage (once the east wall of a large room) than of the sides of the room. These side walls were perhaps painted with thicker lines to even out the impact. Also, what is the significance of the eastward direction of the figures? Are they marching in a direction toward the central doorway of the passage?

#### Corridor (Figures 12 and 13)

North-south passageway: this corridor connects rooms of the substructure which flank the central stairway of the Castillo. The passageway itself is located directly below the west end of the entrance to the uppermost rooms.

There are paintings along the east wall of the corridor. This wall was once the east wall of a room in the original Castillo. There are two long benches which now form part of the floor of the corridor. In the middle of the passageway on the east side are two small openings which once formed the end parts of the lintel (this doorway is now filled in). Just outside the ends of the corridor and continuing 26 cm into the east wall of the corridor below the roof are two more recessed lintels. The north

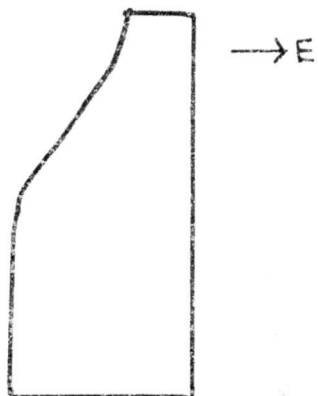




Plan

N ←

1 meter



Cross Section (between benches)

Figure 12: Tulum Castillo Corridor

doorway is still complete and connects the two rooms of the northern second level. The doorway on the south side, however, has collapsed, leaving much rubble in the inner, or east, room of that side.

The west wall of the corridor does not have a layer of plaster and paint, and there are no openings. This wall begins to curve toward the roof at about 135 cm above the center of the floor. The ceiling consists of stone slabs at varying heights spanning the distance between the upright east wall and the half vault.

At the north and south ends of the corridor are the clearest paintings. The middle of the corridor has been damaged by dirt and mold. Even on the ends, the plaster is chipped and broken, revealing several different layers of painting (Figure 13). During the project muriatic acid was applied to most of the wall to eat away the mold. Water was washed over the acid almost immediately. At once colors appeared brighter and it was much easier to see the different layers. The innermost (first) layer was brought out at the north end. This layer shows very crude drawings in black on plaster.

The clearest paintings are part of a second layer of plaster. There are places, however, where outer layer lines cover and confuse these drawings. Scalloped loops (repeated U-shaped motif) are found in the second (middle) layer of plaster. Since these loops seem to continue the length of the corridor most of the paintings visible today

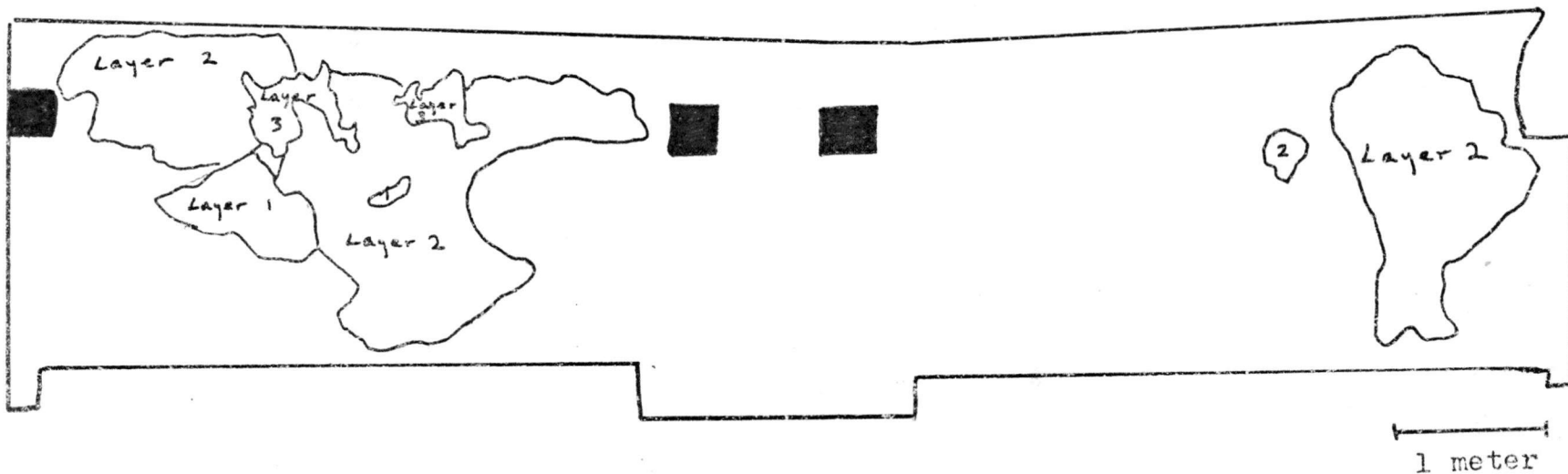


Figure 13: Tulum Castillo Corridor, East Wall

are those upon this underlayer. The second layer paintings seem to be painted on top of a blue which was covering that layer of plaster.

The third layer of painting is the outermost layer with visible painting. This layer can be seen only in the north end. In some places over the third layer traces of another plaster can be seen. There is not enough plaster to tell whether or not this fourth layer was painted. One section south of the walled-in door there is a patch of blue on the third layer. At the south end bits of red/orange can be seen over the second layer painting.

Lothrop reports having found at least nine distinct layers of plaster, and he claims to have identified four or five different levels of painting (1924:79). In his book, however, he has described only a section of one layer in any detail. This layer he has identified as the second layer. The outer layer he dismisses by saying that the "frescoes on the outer layer of plaster were covered with mold and dirt. At the top appears to have been a glyphic inscription and below was a row of elaborately dressed figures stylistically resembling those on the next layer of plaster" (1924:80). Unless there was a complete area of painting which has disappeared since his exploration, the outer layer he describes is actually part of the second layer but in a different section further north in the corridor. (A completely separate layer of stucco actually

covers this in some parts.) There is no mention of the other two or three layers of painting.

Fernández describes four painted layers a bit differently: ". . . then in all there are four layers of stucco worth painting and one final layer of plaster" (1945:101). The first two layers he has identified are: the Layer I in this paper which he also calls Layer I and a second similar layer not identified in this paper. His third layer corresponds to the second level mentioned here. He does not mention the third layer at the north end, but he identifies a section at the south end which he describes as showing Aztec influence, yet which was so destroyed that he was unable to photograph it.

In the south gallery, exploring the layers of painting, I found a case which puzzles me. After lifting three layers of stucco I came to the first layer on which there are remains of painting. In spite of their deterioration it is possible to perceive Aztec influence. Unluckily I couldn't photograph them because they are very eroded. I took the precaution of varnishing them (1945:103).

This last layer is not visible now.

The whole wall is very irregular which may be the result of the wall buckling. In any case no attempt seems to have been made to form a very smooth, flat surface of plaster over which to paint.

Layer I. The crudely drawn figures are visible in two places on the innermost layer. The first appears in the lower section at the extreme north end of the corridor. This area shows an animal (dog) which is 9 cm high and 13 cm

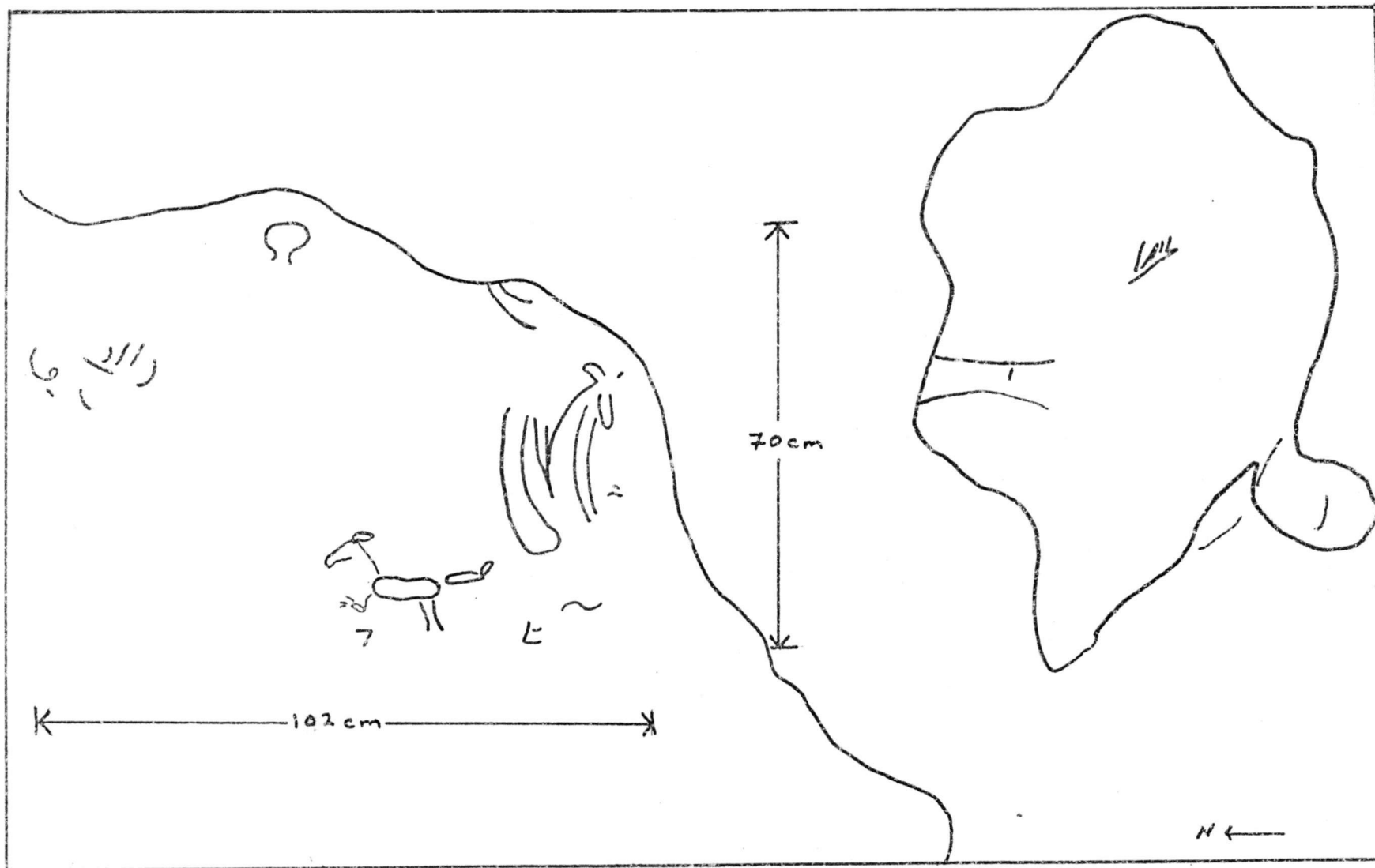


Figure 14: Tulum Castillo Corridor, First Layer Painting

long. It has a flattened oval body, a stick neck, an egg-shaped head and roundish ear. The tail is in two parts: a large oval with a small upward loop at the end. The legs are sticks and the visible front foot is a circle with line claws. Of the other front foot only two claws are visible. South and up from this animal is a series of lines, 23 cm high and above these two lines disappear behind the next layer of plaster. North is a mushroom-like design 8 cm wide, and further north are more faint, broken lines (Figure 14).

Fernández, speaking of this area, also describes a dog, but he calls the series of lines an Indian head with plumes. In addition, he sees a scene of a hunting part with a wounded wild pig chased by a tiger; this is not visible now (1945:101). Possibly the faint broken lines to the north of the dog are all that remains of this scene.

The second area with visible painting on the first layer is where the head and the shoulders of a standing figure have chipped away. This is south of the first section and consists of two lines emerging from the second layer of plaster each about 13 cm long and 4 cm apart. South and up from this is a solid shaded area about 6 cm high and 5 cm wide which forms a narrow V-shape.

There is a section on the second layer of plaster which is similar in line quality to the first layer drawings. This section occurs above the serpent head described below on Layer II (between the two parts of the first layer

painting) and continues for about 22 cm. These lines are thin (average 2 mm) compared to the 3-4 mm lines of the rest of the second layer. They are also much fainter.

One explanation for the appearance of faint lines resembling the first layer is that these first and second layer figures were drawn at the same time. Perhaps part of the second layer had peeled off and someone worked on both layers before the third layer was applied. Maybe in the process of enlarging the Castillo parts of the plaster fell. Perhaps they were done at different times and the first layer really does represent the earlier time and the second layer drawings have simply faded so much that they do not seem to be in harmony with nor of the same quality as the other paintings on Layer II.

Layer II. The middle layer is the most extensive in the corridor. The entire south section and most of the visible north section are from this layer. Lothrop reports that this layer is painted on a natural plaster background (1924:50), but the northern section seems to be painted on a blue background and Fernández depicted the mosaic mask figure of the south section on a blue background (1945: photographic section).

The second layer seems to have been organized with a row of circular glyph-like forms at the very top. (Today most of these are gone or are vague shapes of round forms painted with black lines filled in with blue. For the most



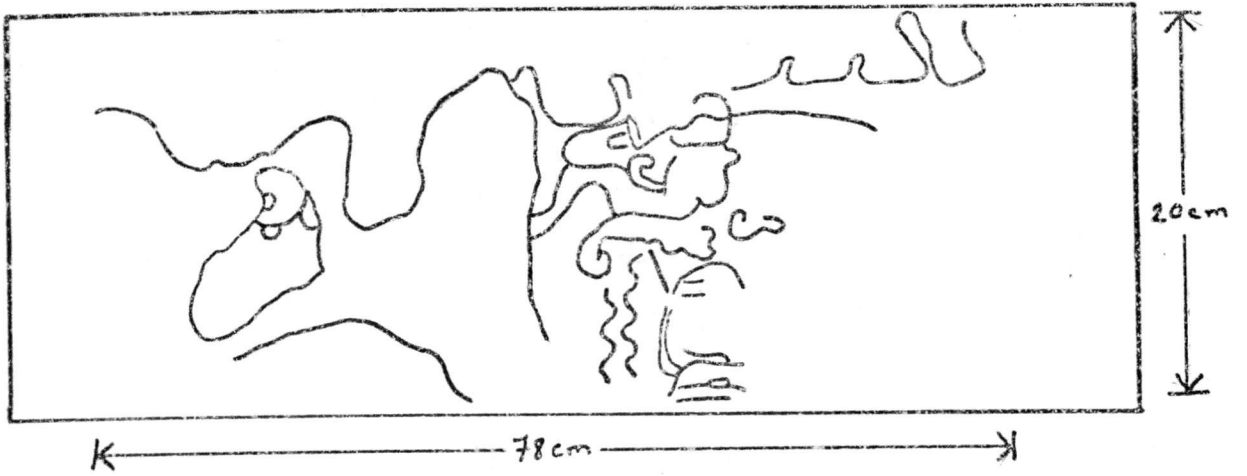
part they are 10-20 cm below the roof). A square scallop decoration of repeating U-shapes with occasional variations in shape ran below the glyph shapes. The next row down is a band containing varied creatures: fish, bird, god, alligator, with wavy water lines coming down from the scalloped design. Lothrop calls this the constellation band. Next comes a parade of large human figures with other designs between them. At the bottom there is evidence of a design forming a lower border beneath the feet of these large figures. The entire corridor seems to have been painted with black lines on a blue background. There are dark blue accents and designs, also both yellow ochre and orange. The line width is more constant at the north end and the lines seem more controlled. (Does this suggest that two different artists painted the north and south ends?) Note the exception of the segment above the serpent's head which is thin and faint (described above).

On the south end of the second layer (Figure 13,15,16) the average line width is 5 mm although the range is from 1-10 mm. Of the top band of glyph-like figures all that is visible today is one complete form (a circle within a circle with two lines joining the circles at the sides) and one curve where the plaster has chipped. The complete form is 102 cm from the south end of the corridor and is 18 cm below the ceiling. The strip of plaster at this height is only 22 cm long. The complete figure is about 12 cm high. Below these, the U-shaped motif is continued from the north

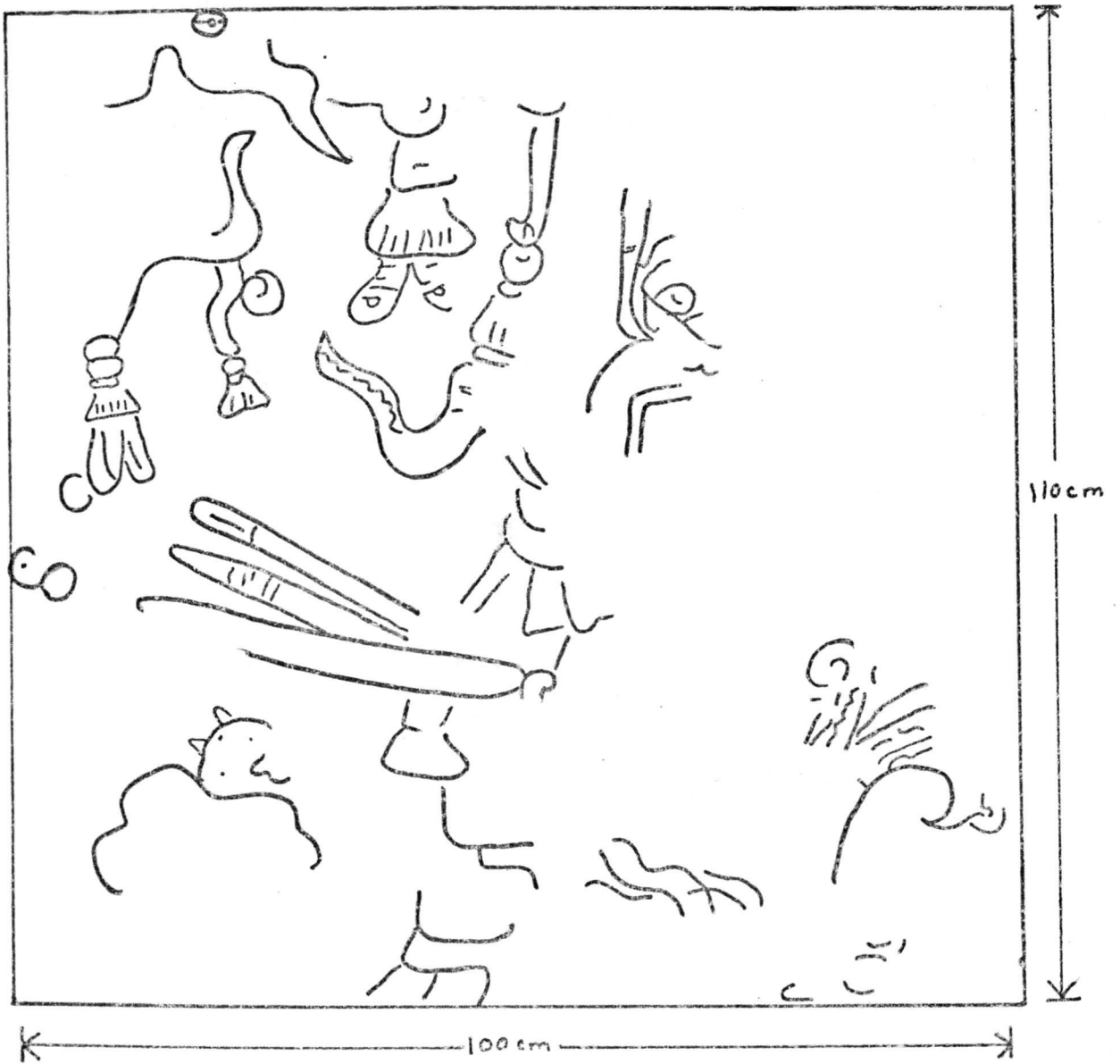
end; here, however, there is a variation since one of the loops, instead of swinging upward on the south end, continues down to a point before rejoining the band. The scallops are drawn in black with a blue inner line. This south end of the passage is very pocked with few smooth surfaces left.

The visible section of the scalloped band runs north from about 80 cm from the south end of the wall to 141 cm. Below the northernmost U-shaped mark apparent are water lines and the top of what appears to be two striped fins. South of these is a figure of a bird with long feathers (one of which is wavy) suspended from the loops. From its long, slender neck hangs an elaborate flower (stylized as a circle hanging from a circle, a skirt and two ties). The bird is shown with an eye, a topknot with three loop-shaped motifs, a beak curving upward and south and another smaller flower dropping from its beak. This flower has a curl from its wavy stem and is simpler than the other. Attached to the neck-flower is a small circle and below, but not connected to the figure, are two tangent circular forms. The bird is 40 cm from the tip of the longest feather to the scallop loop and 47 cm wide from his beak-flower to the last visible feather.

Just south of the bird the scallop loop reaches down to a point and beyond that hangs a very large flower similar to the one suspended from the bird's neck. 20 cm high, it is made of two circles, a pleated skirt and two lower loops decorated with stripes and a circle.



North Section



South Section

Figure 15: Tulum Castillo Corridor  
Second Layer Painting, Upper Portion

South of this flower is a series of less clear designs. A hook hangs from the next scallop and attached to it is a circle, a skirt and a long design which curves down, then waves up to a point. Next, going south, is an unclear section of lines up and down, curving in the center toward the south next to another curved line and a circle. Below this is a partial design with what looks like two coils with four lines protruding from the bottom coil. At the south end is a straight black vertical line, then a horizontal line at the bottom running south.

There is a small section further north (168-198 cm from the south end of the wall) which was brought out by the muriatic acid. This section contains the lower ends of three hanging loops (ends of feathers) and parts of horizontal bows.

The central figure visible today at the south end is the painted representation of a mosaic mask figure studied and copied by Fernández. Not as much of the painting remains today as was visible when Fernández drew it. The present figure measures 78 cm from the bottom of the purse to the top of the headdress and 54 cm from the back of the headdress to the south side of the scepter. The face is blue mosaic except for two bands which run horizontally across the face from the mouth and from the eye. These bands are painted with an orange outline and yellow interior coloring. The mouth is open, showing four upper teeth, and the eye is a peculiar shape, almost like an upside-down

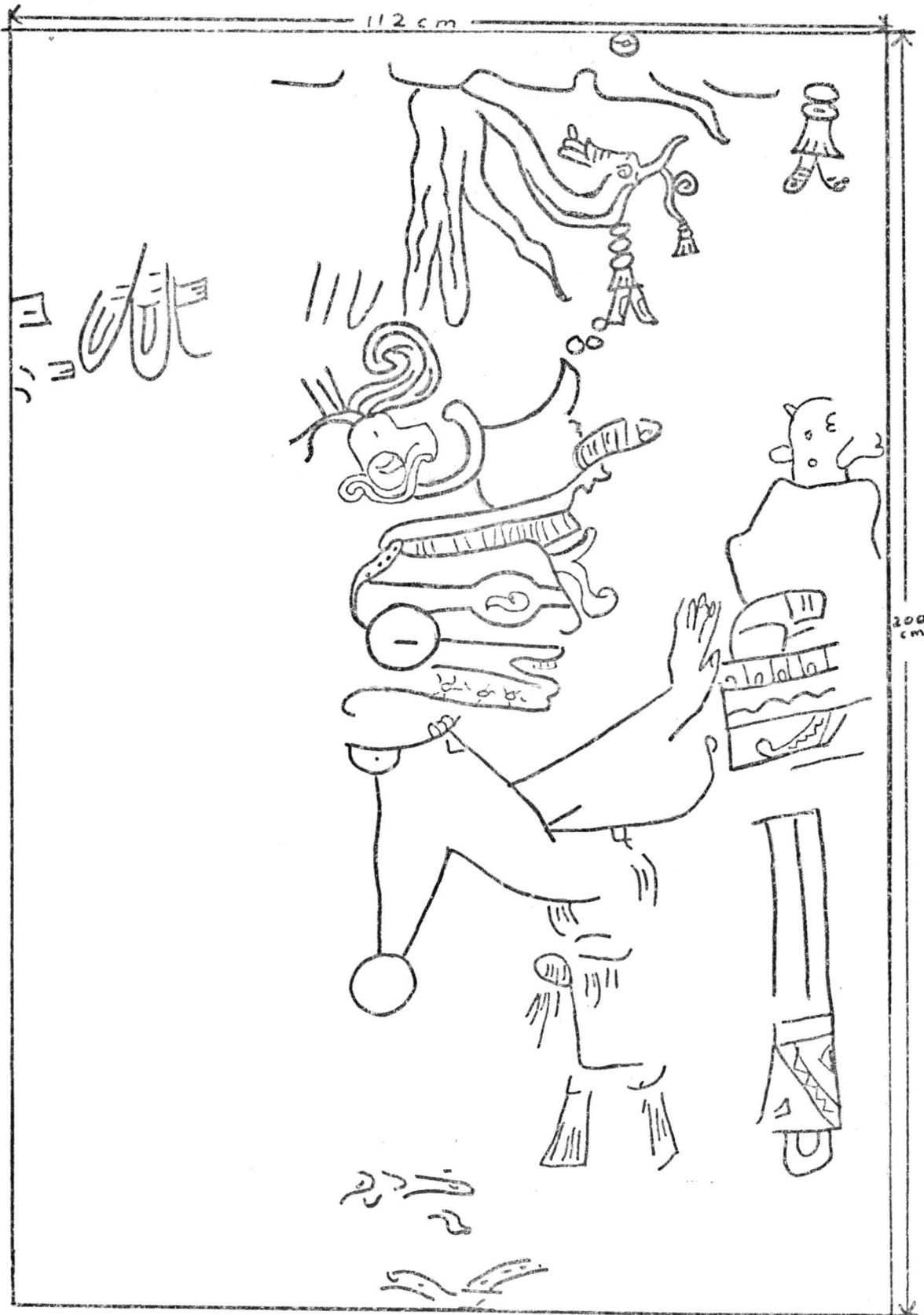


Figure 16: Tulum Castillo Corridor  
Second Layer Painting, South End

serpent eyecrest. There is a circular ear ornament and an elaborate headdress with a striped section above the face and extending south beyond the face. From the forehead protrudes a double loop design in blue: one loop curls up and one hangs down. Above the striped band is a blue band which slants upwards and is longer than the striped band. Above the end of the striped section is a white design continuing beyond the face with a split feather below the form. The rest of the headdress consists of a white wing with a black, blue and white striped protrusion from its base. Also, behind is a dark orange curl and a circle nestled in a curved white cup with two loops at the bottom. A curved orange band appears near the top of the circle. There is a series of concentric swirls at the top in blue, black and white. The back part of the headdress is chipped away, but a series of vertical blue, yellow and black stripes can be seen behind the swirl design.

The figure's arms are outstretched and he holds before him a kind of scepter which is 71 cm high. His right hand grasps the base of the scepter and from this extends a blue hanging with a design at the bottom in black and yellow and a loop at the end. The background is pale greenish-blue. At the top of the swirls of the figure's headdress are traces of orange painted over a different layer of the plaster.

Above the right hand the scepter is designed with black, yellow, blue and green (thinner coat of blue paint?).

There are geometric designs in the square section of the scepter and different designs in the rounded part of the scepter. At the top is a curved shape with a turkey-head form on the top. Visible are the turkey's eye, part of his orange beak and two loops from the back of his head. The left hand of the figure touches the angular part of the scepter with the palm, fingers up. Over the right arm is hung a bag of white and black. Black lines run through the handle, side, bottom tassels and the bag itself like threads. There is some kind of necklace on the figure with an orange and black ornament (or is this a distinct part of his costume?): white is above a black line under his throat. A black line runs down his body to his waist and ends in a circle over a half circle. Some designs are below the figure: black, blue, orange (part of his foot?).

The figure with the scepter is darker in tone than the background. (Is the darker blue a thicker coat of the same paint or actually a different hue?)

To the south the plaster is particularly pocked. There are horizontal lines below the scepter. This is the area in which Fernández saw a serpent head which is not visible today. It is possible that there may have been another figure facing this one. There are designs still extant which could have been part of a headdress--feathers above the turkey head stretch to the south (orange tips and black bands), and there are swirls with interior designs at the headdress level of turquoise, black, yellow and blue.

Fernández says about this area in "Las Ruinas de Tulum, II":

The third layer of remaining stucco is the most extensively preserved. It is of great importance because the figures which one finds are truly artistic and have a great Toltec influence. The technique of drawing, made with a fine, round brush and a free hand, already shows a truly artistic sense. The simplicity of the lines is outstanding as is the sureness of the strokes. For example, the face of the priest with the turquoise, jade and red and white shell mask. In his hands in the gesture of offering he carries a vessel with a turkey placed over a glyph, kan, which signifies food. The expression of the hands is admirable. In front of him there is the remainder of a great serpent head which probably represented Quetzalcoatl (1945:103).

There are many areas which are extremely well executed, including the face and the one hand which is presently visible, but there are other parts which seem less sure in execution. In the mask itself are places in which the inner orange color overlaps the black lines. It is also true that interior color overlaps the outlines in other areas such as in the feathers above the turkey head. Felipe Dávalos' idea is that the painter was not accustomed to painting on a vertical surface. Some of the brush strokes are uneven and look as if the brush itself had not been in perfect control, especially in the headdress of the mosaic mask figure.

The middle layer section of painting at the north end of the corridor, is one of the most confusing and yet interesting murals at Tulum (Figures 13;17-20). The confusion and the special interest both result from the multiple



layers of painting--lines and colors in unexpected places, designs stopping abruptly and new ones starting.

At the top of the north end of the corridor, Layer II, is the row of glyph-like forms which runs along both sides of visible painting in the corridor (Figures 16,17,20). On the north end (Figure 17) is a circle with curved horizontal stripes; next is a small circle with a waved line running from top to bottom; an unclear form follows; then another large circle with horizontal lines and an inner circle appears. Last, there is most of a design showing a circle with three lines across the center horizontally. Below this last visible glyph-form is a peculiar symbol which looks like a figure eight on its side with an extra loop which runs from the middle up above, then down below the design and back. In the center of this are two small circles and two vertical lines. The glyphs vary in height from 8-12 cm and are 10-20 cm below the irregular ceiling. At the extreme north end there is a pointed figure in black paint at the same level where the plaster has broken and fallen away.

Lower is the repeating U-shaped motif, similar to that at the south section of the wall. These shapes are visible almost the entire length of the north corridor. Exact shapes and measures vary slightly in different loops.

Beneath the scallop design (U-shaped motif) are wavy "water" lines of black and blue. These are visible from the north end of the plaster to about 100 cm north of the

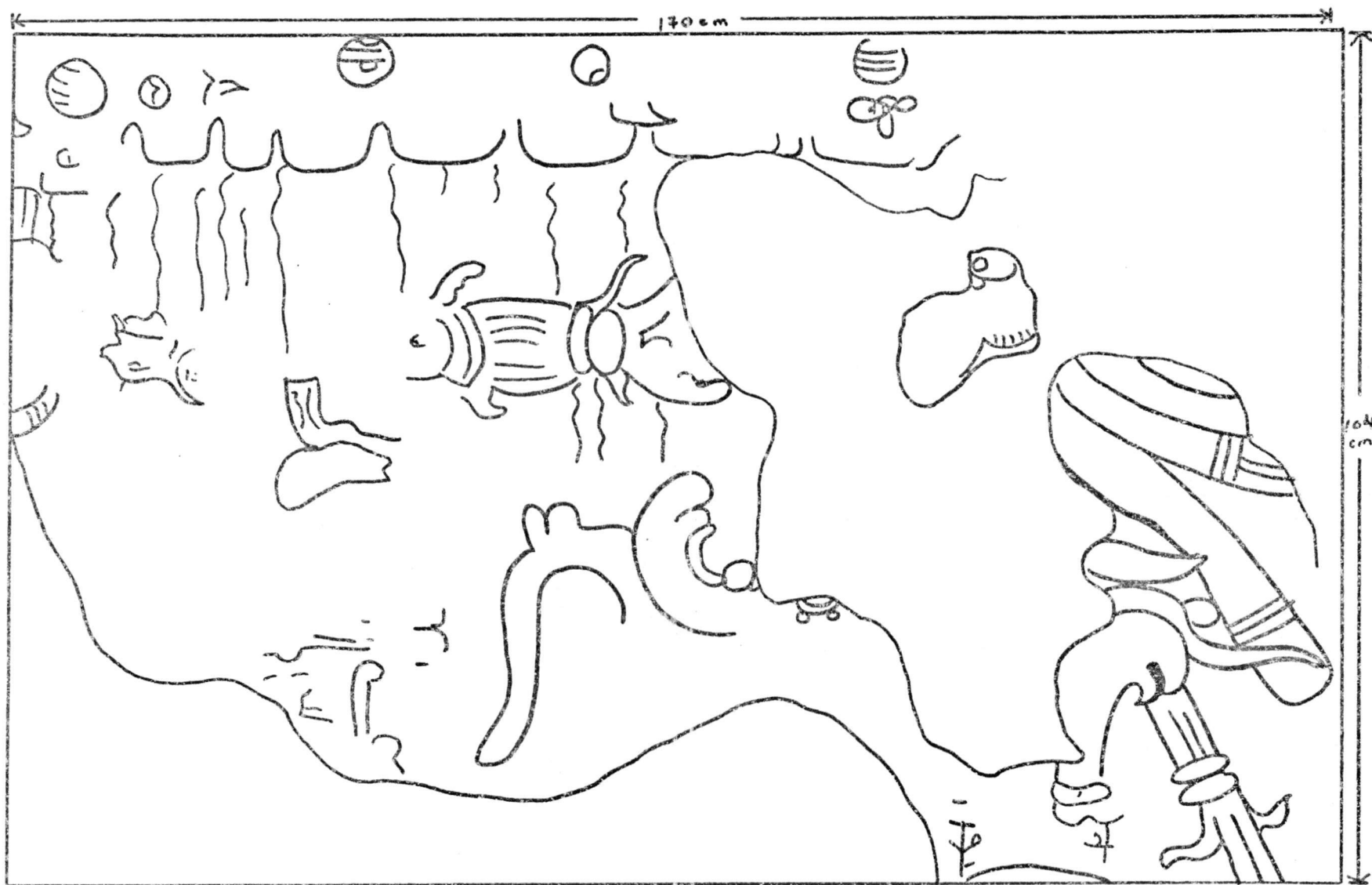


Figure 17: Tulum Castillo Corridor, Second Layer Painting  
North End

walled-up door in the center of the corridor. At the north end just beneath and north of the last scallop is a bright patch of blue. Here the plaster has fallen away around this fragment and it is impossible to make out to what this patch belonged. At a point 68 cm from the north end of the passage is a small 11-cm high, inverted animal head hanging in the water lines. Visible are the eye, nose, tongue and part of an upside-down fish-like shape. North of this head is a curved double line continuing to the end of the plaster. Between these lines, near the place where the plaster ends, are three stripes joining the two lines and a dark patch. South of the animal head is a fainter second set of double lines which disappears beneath a patch of third layer blue and curves around the other side.

Next, at approximately this same height, is a fish which swims northward. It is about 25 cm long and 11 cm high. Part of the face is very faint and the end of the tail disappears beneath the largest section of third layer plaster. The fish has a flowing tail; then appear a large circle and a band from which two fins protrude top and bottom, a fat striped body, two more fins in the front, an eye, a mouth and gills running vertically between body and head.

South of the fish is a section of third layer plaster which is described below. On the south side of this large third layer section, the scallop design reappears and an elaborate ornament hangs underneath the loops. It appears

to be an inverted flower with a wide base and various curves and curls (some of which have faded) which continues downward until the next patch of the third layer. The ornament, made of lines about 4 mm wide, is 18 cm high and 20 cm wide. Around the ornament are some "water" lines.

A third layer fragment sits on top of part of another design. The visible section of this design consists of a vertical line slanted towards the south, three horizontal lines running south from the top, middle and bottom (with a half circle on the middle line) and a curved "handle" from the slanted line disappearing up under the third layer. Many "water" lines emerge from beneath the third layer plaster.

Continuing southward beneath the scallops there are faint lines from an incomplete design and then a hanging animal head which is attached to another third layer fragment (Figure 18). This head (which looks almost like a dolphin head with its long nose, curved head with a bump at the top, small eye and lower mouth) measures 13 cm from the tip of the hanging tongue to the top (back of its head). His hand, or flipper, which holds a double line can be seen poking out from the third layer. Under this figure is a stylized, hanging, double scorpion tail 8 cm wide and 10 cm high (Figure 19).

South of this second animal head and third layer plaster fragment hangs a creature resembling an iguana whose visible remaining parts are 27 cm high and 17 cm wide

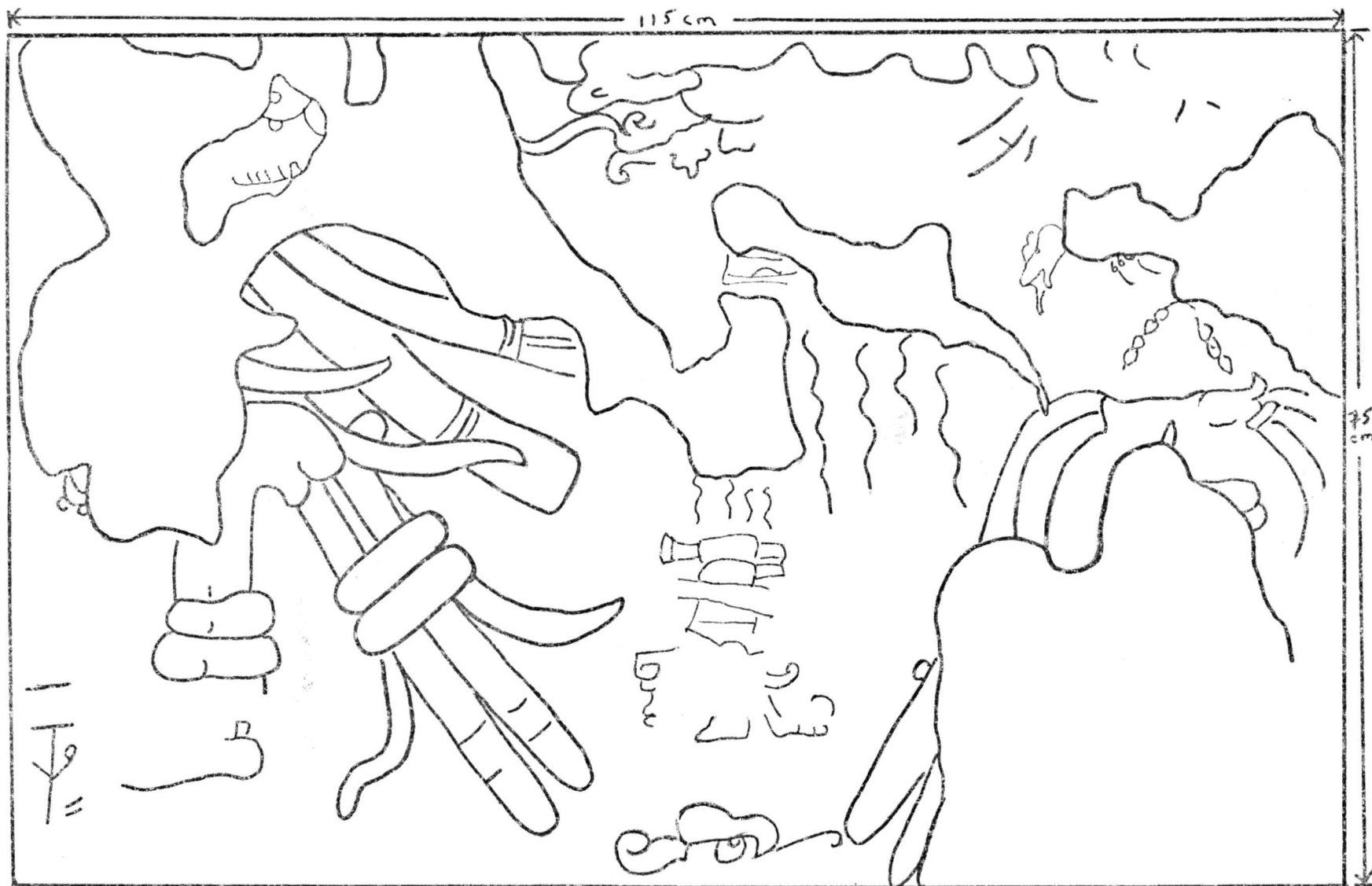


Figure 18: Tulum Castillo Corridor, Second Layer Painting  
North End

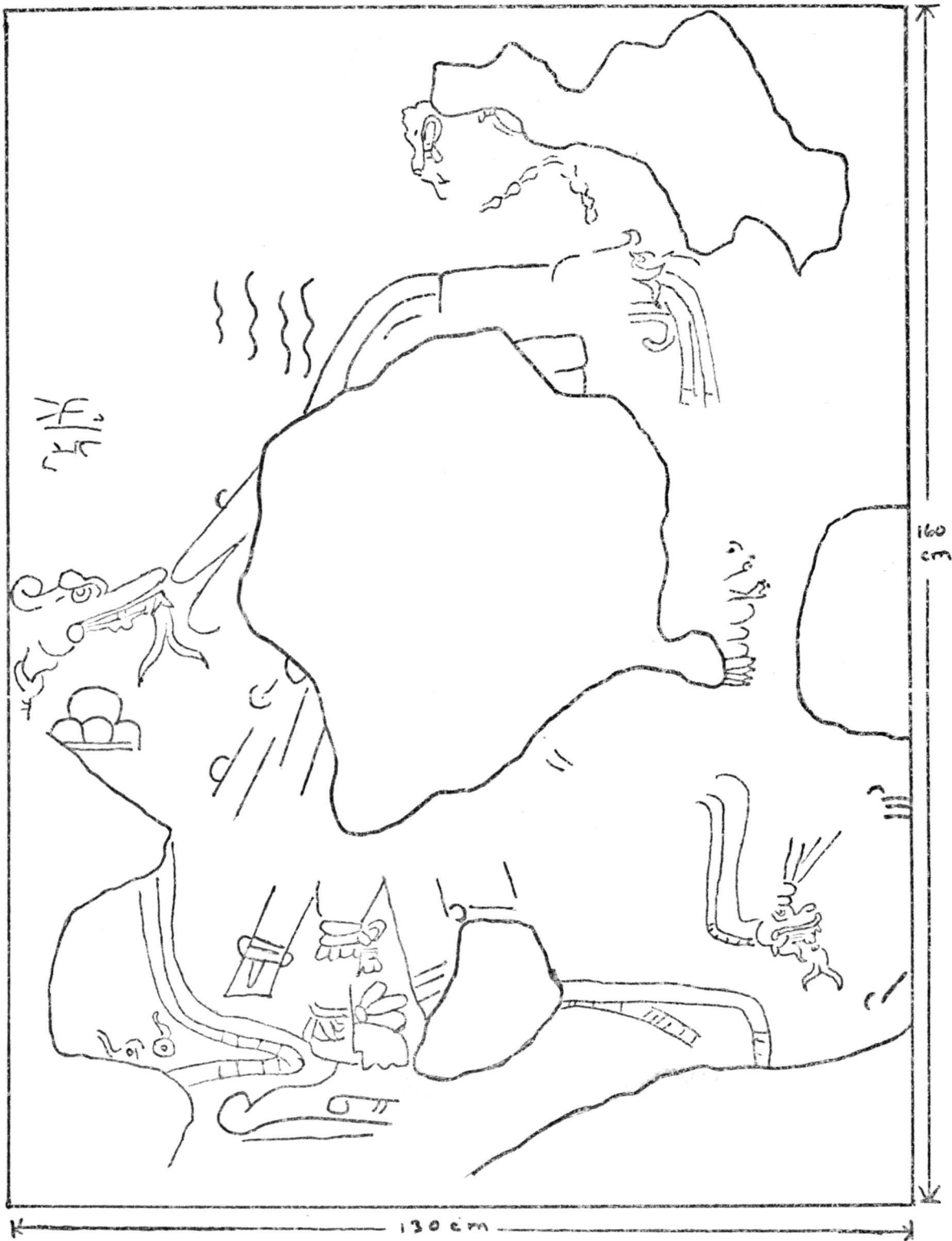


Figure 19: Tulum Castillo Corridor  
Second Layer Painting, North Section

(Figure 20). He is surrounded by blue and black "water" lines and suspended head down from the scalloped loops. His back leg is curved, knee pointing down. The foot is missing, but the front leg, curving slightly downward and south of the body still shows several claws at the foot. He has scales lining his back and stripes on his body and rear leg. The snout is long and the mouth is slightly open showing very sharp teeth with an eye set in line with the teeth. On the lower jaw is a double loop.

Lothrop calls this creature

. . . Cipactli, the primordeal (sic) alligator from whom the earth was created. This beast is definitely associated with the Aztecs, and, like so many other mythological conceptions, was doubtless inherited from their predecessors, the Toltecs. Its presence at Tulum we can only regard as proof of strong Mexican influence (1924:53).

Later, in the same book, he comments that this "figure" is an alligator, the Aztec cipactli, from whom flow torrents of water and that this and the figures directly to the south have "to do with ceremonies for rain" (1924:80). It is difficult to agree with Lothrop that torrents of water flow from alligator figure; rather, the "water" lines seem to surround him just as they surround other creatures on the north and south sides of the corridor. In addition, it can be questioned that the figures are identified specifically with rain ceremonies. It is difficult also to agree with Lothrop that the presence of this figure is proof of strong Mexican influence (there are, however, many other evidences of such influence elsewhere at Tulum). The Maya

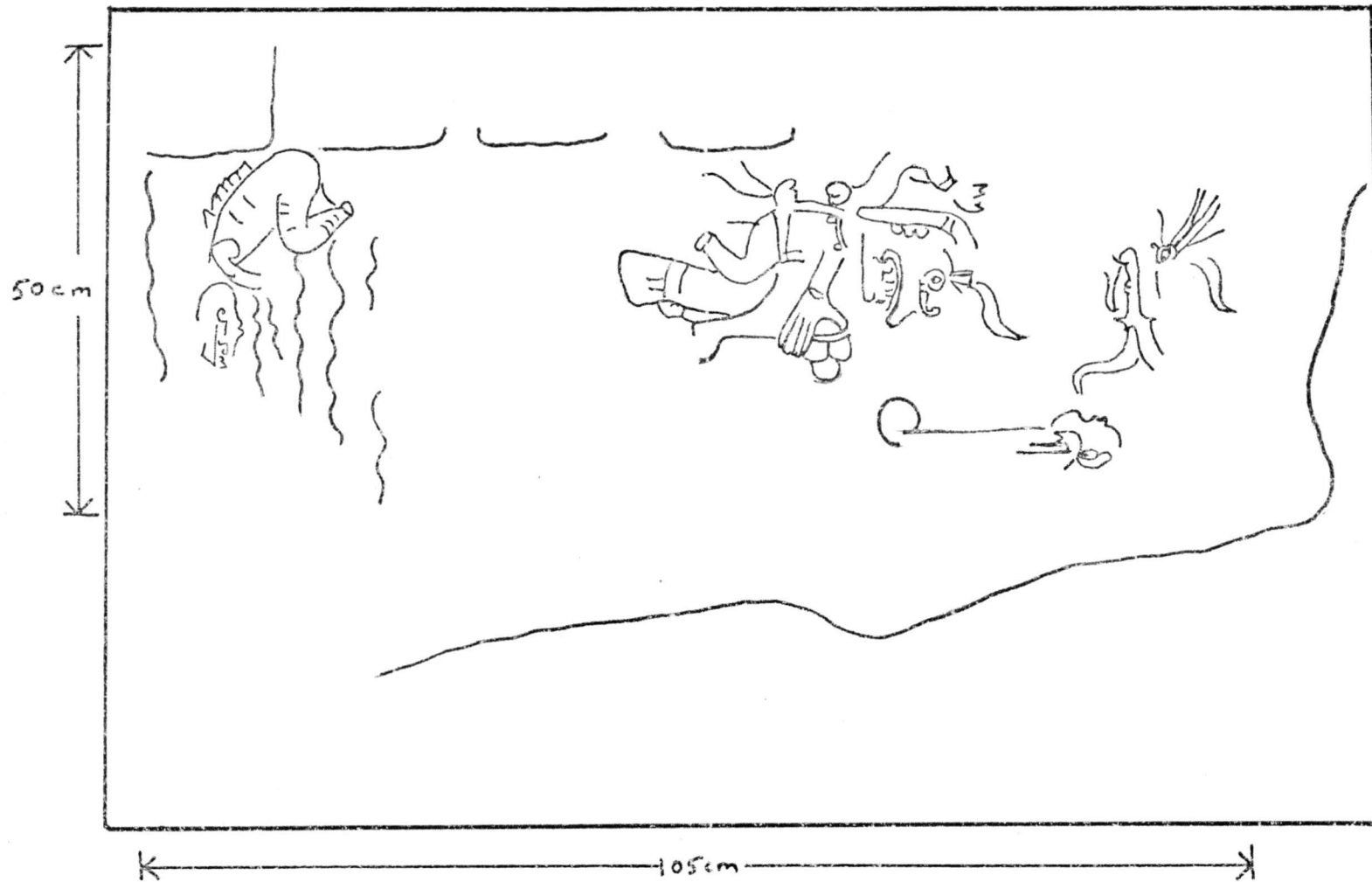


Figure 20: Tulum Castillo Corridor, Second Layer Painting  
North Section



also included an iguana type creature in their mythology so its presence alone is not proof absolutely.

South of the alligator creature is a figure brought out clearly by the muriatic acid. This god is suspended lengthways from the scallops by his left elbow with his face down, head pointing south. His head and right arm hang down, fingers straight holding a vessel pointed downward containing three circular lumps. Both legs are visible and a large, long shape resembling an outside clothing tie extends towards the north. This could actually be attached to his clothes, or it could be an object on which he is riding. Cuffs are on his sleeves and pants, and he wears a belt and neck ornaments. His hair looks as if it were shaved, except for a line down the middle of his head, Huron fashion. He wears an ear ornament of three circles and has a straight jaw, a long nose curving over his lip and teeth. A curl comes from the corner of his mouth. Two small circles are joined to his eye crest from which juts a scroll shape. A feather tops his headdress, and at his back is a circle with a slit in it which both Lothrop and Miller believe could be a bell.

In describing this figure Lothrop contradicts himself. First he identifies the personage as God D (1924:52); later he identifies the same personage as God B (1924:80). In one place he describes the object in the god's hand as "an inverted bowl containing three large lumps of incense"

(1924:53). In another chapter he says that the god "holds a purse" (1924:80).

The god measures 41 cm from his elbow to the lowest circular lump and 55 cm from the feather tip to the end of the projecting shape towards the north. In this area the width of the lines varies from 2-6 mm with an average of 3 mm. The figures are outlined in black on a blue-background. A darker blue interior is seen in several places, such as the god's head, two of the copal lumps and some of the stripes of his clothing. There are orange accents on the god's eye crest and lower lip, as well as the color of lowest copal lump.

Below the god is a horizontal ornament with a loop at the north end and a flower design at the south end. 32 cm of its length remain.

Above the flower is a serpent head face down, measuring 31 cm from the tip of the forked tongue to the scallop loop and 23 cm wide. It is similar to the nearby god in some ways: the mouth curl, the orange eye crest and the feather on the top of the head. He has a bifurcated tongue and additional plumes on the top of his head. His upper lip is orange. Lothrop reports that the god to the north is grasping this serpent's body which is no longer visible.

These three figures--the alligator figure, the god and the serpent head--defy gravity. They face the floor and the lumps remain in the holder despite the attraction of the earth. Could it be possible that these figures were

copied from a portable source or reproduced from memory, and, in doing so, the artist turned the images sidewise to fit the existing space on the wall? There are similarities to figures in the Dresden and Madrid codices in which are also creatures suspended from a band. Some of the figures appear surrounded by water, others, the source of water.

Beneath the stylized scorpion tail and dolphin figure mentioned above is a large standing figure, 129 cm high (Figure 19). It is missing its face and body where the outer layers of plaster have fallen revealing Layer I. There are elaborate loops and ties hanging down from the headdress in back. There are also ties from the clothing visible in back beneath the plaster break. In front of the body which faces south a hand clutches a manikin scepter. An animal with visible nose, mouth, eye, front paw and claws, tops the scepter above three circular bands. Below is a long serpent body ending in an ornate head. This head wears a turban with feathers on top and has a long bifurcated tongue, an eye crest, a curved-up nose, teeth, lips and loops from its mouth.

The line width of these drawings ranges from 1-5 mm; the average is 3-4 mm. The figures are drawn with black lines on a light blue background which has faded to the plaster in most places. Darker blue is used as an accent color in some parts of the figures, and orange is seen on the hand of the large figure, the paw of the animal and on the head of the animal. From the back of the tie to the

tip of the fingers of the large figure is 78 cm. The manikin scepter measures 77 cm from the end of the serpent's tongue to the top of the animal's head. (The assumption is that the serpent is part of the scepter.)

Below this is a straight, blue-colored triple line which curves down at the north end. The figure's leg and elaborately sandalled foot with ties on both can be seen below the chipped section. Behind the foot is a striped design (snake body?) and two very small ornaments. Below the sandalled foot is another ornamental design with flowing line which perhaps formed part of a bottom border.

There is a serpent head just north of the big standing figure. This serpent has an orange eye crest, a curved, split long tongue and two loops hanging from his chin. The back of his head ends in a curl at the top, and he has a segmented neck which disappears because the plaster has fallen. The serpent head measures 34 cm from tongue tip to neck and 32 cm from eyecrest to the bottom of the neck. Below the serpent head is visible the top of a vessel containing four orange lumps which is 13 cm high and 18 cm wide.

Above the orange eyecrested serpent head is a section of black lines which does not seem to be executed in the same style as that of the second layer. The lines are thin and faint. (See Layer I described above.)

There is a series of intriguing designs emerging from beneath the third layer plaster above and to the south of

the serpent head. On the south side are what seem to be three ties which stretch between two sections of third layer designs. There is a hole in the third layer which reveals that above the hanging ties is a glyph-like design (a circle with a smaller one inside and a small circle attached to the bottom), and below this is a curved line with a row of short vertical lines. Below the ties is a series of curves and loops. There is an object with four feathers at the end coming from underneath the third layer. It is 66 cm from the tip of the lowest feather to the point at which the upper tie disappears underneath the third layer.

On the north side of the plaster is part of what might be a headdress with a curved-up section on top, an ornament in front formed by two concentric circles with two small circles at the bottom, and a hanging "tail" at the back with two relatively small, semi-circular bulges at the top. It is 22 cm from the tip of the "tail" to the place where the circular ornament disappears under the plaster. Comparing this fragment with a drawing of a serpent head from Tancah by Felipe Dávalos, it was found that the serpent's eye resembled the circular ornament and that the headdress of the serpent resembled the curve and hanging loop in back of this section.

North of this is a fragmented series of lines.

Layer III. The third layer is an area in which the painted outer layer of plaster mixes with the painted second layer

(Figures 13,21). The two murals weave around one another confusing the patterns of both. Although there are fragments of third layer plaster in about six places in the north side of the corridor, and a section south of the walled-up door, only the large central section on the north side has enough painting to make out more than occasional black lines on a blue background. (The entire background for this layer seems to have been blue.) Above the scorpion tail of the second layer is a third layer fragment on which one can see broken black lines which seem to have once formed a horizontal band with a design underneath the band. (Note that a curve from this design was drawn by Lothrop as being on the same layer as his primordial alligator creature.) North of this fragment is another which has a double black line running over a blue background. One other section of third layer blue exists north of the second layer fish. This patch of blue contains one small black frown.

The central layer of third layer plaster, however, contains much more. This section is about 60 cm high and 37 cm wide and has a long fragment attached to the top of the south side. The lines of this area are drawn surely, and, although they range from 2-8 mm, they average 3 mm in width. There are black outlines on a blue background with some of the designs colored a darker blue and yellow ochre. At the bottom of this section are five vertical black lines, three of which curve to the south and continue horizontally. In the curve is half of a design made of a large double

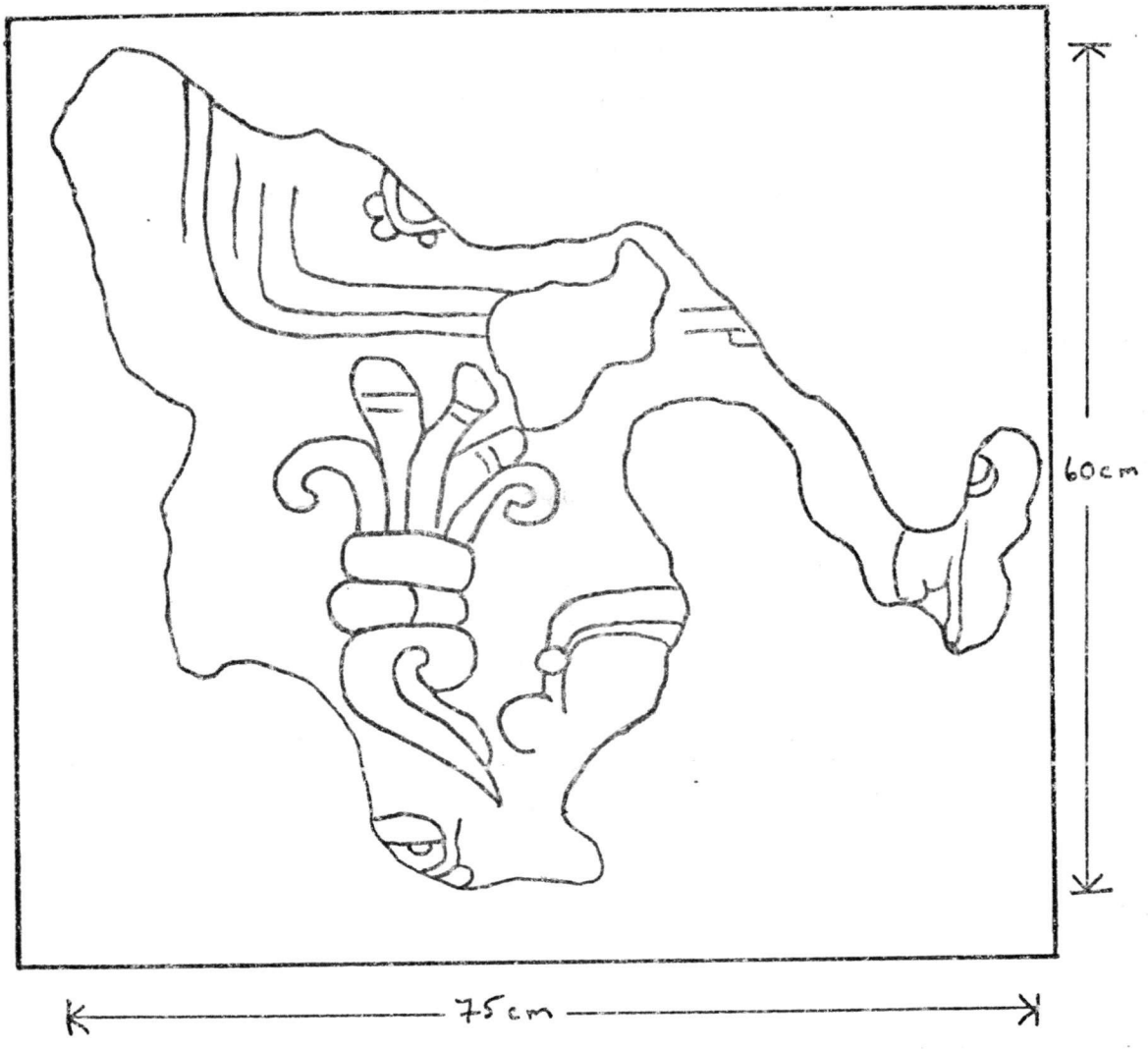


Figure 21: Tulum Castillo Corridor  
Third Layer Painting

loop with two small loops hanging from the lower north corner and one from the bottom. It looks as though the blue paint has a greenish quality in these loops. Traces of fourth layer plaster are found over the entire section.

Below the loop design and the horizontal lines is the main design of this fragment. This is turban-like with feathers at the top. There are five feathers, three of which have a double line near the tip with yellow paint in the last section of each. This paint looks as if it were applied over the blue because traces of blue can be seen through the yellow ochre. The two end feathers are solid blue and they curve down and inward at the bottoms. The turban consists of two coils, the lower one with a line in the center and beneath is a large, curved backwards question-mark shape.

Beneath this is a glyph-like design of a divided circle whose top half is yellow; outside the enclosed design is a line with a lower loop. South of the question-mark is a circle from which a double line goes upwards, then turns south.

On the long tail of this fragment is a continuation of the three black lines at the top. A small circular figure appears above with a vertical line from the bottom. At the end of the tail the fragment widens and a series of faint black lines is visible.



## PART 2: THE TEMPLE OF THE DIVING GOD

The Temple of the Diving God, Temple V in Lothrop's system (1924), is a lopsided little temple northwest of the Castillo (Figure 22). Its doorway faces west and stairs lead from the plaza level up to the platform top. The temple itself has only one room whose floor is now pocked and uneven. In fact, nothing about this temple seems to be straight. The southwest corner has settled below the rest of the temple. All of the walls are irregular. The masonry was slapped together instead of being fitted each stone to the others, and even the plaster overcoat was not smoothed out. The paintings in the interior were done right over the irregularities, ignoring the dips and bulges. Parts of the building, particularly in the southwest corner, were reconstructed and replastered by Fernández in 1939 (Fernández 1941).

Although the interior was perhaps once covered by murals on all four walls, only the painting on the east wall is still somewhat intact. In 1843 Stephens wrote that the "wall and ceiling were stuccoed and covered with paintings, the subjects of which were almost entirely effaced" (1843:394). Since the paintings seem to have been executed without taking into account the irregularities, maybe the plan for the design was thought out in advance and strictly followed.

There is one small window or vent in the east wall above the paintings, and higher are two holes where wooden

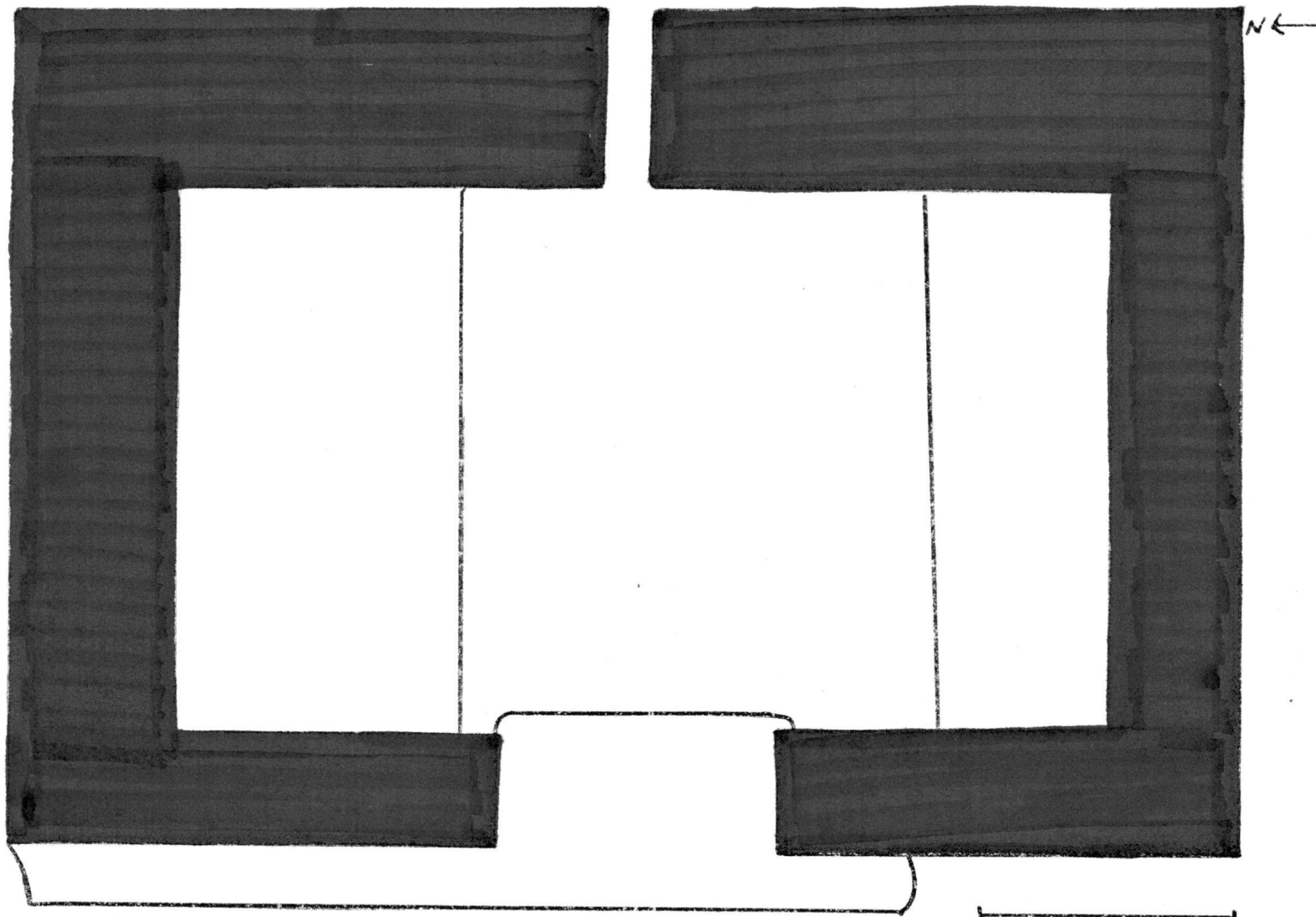


Figure 22: Tulum Temple V, Plan

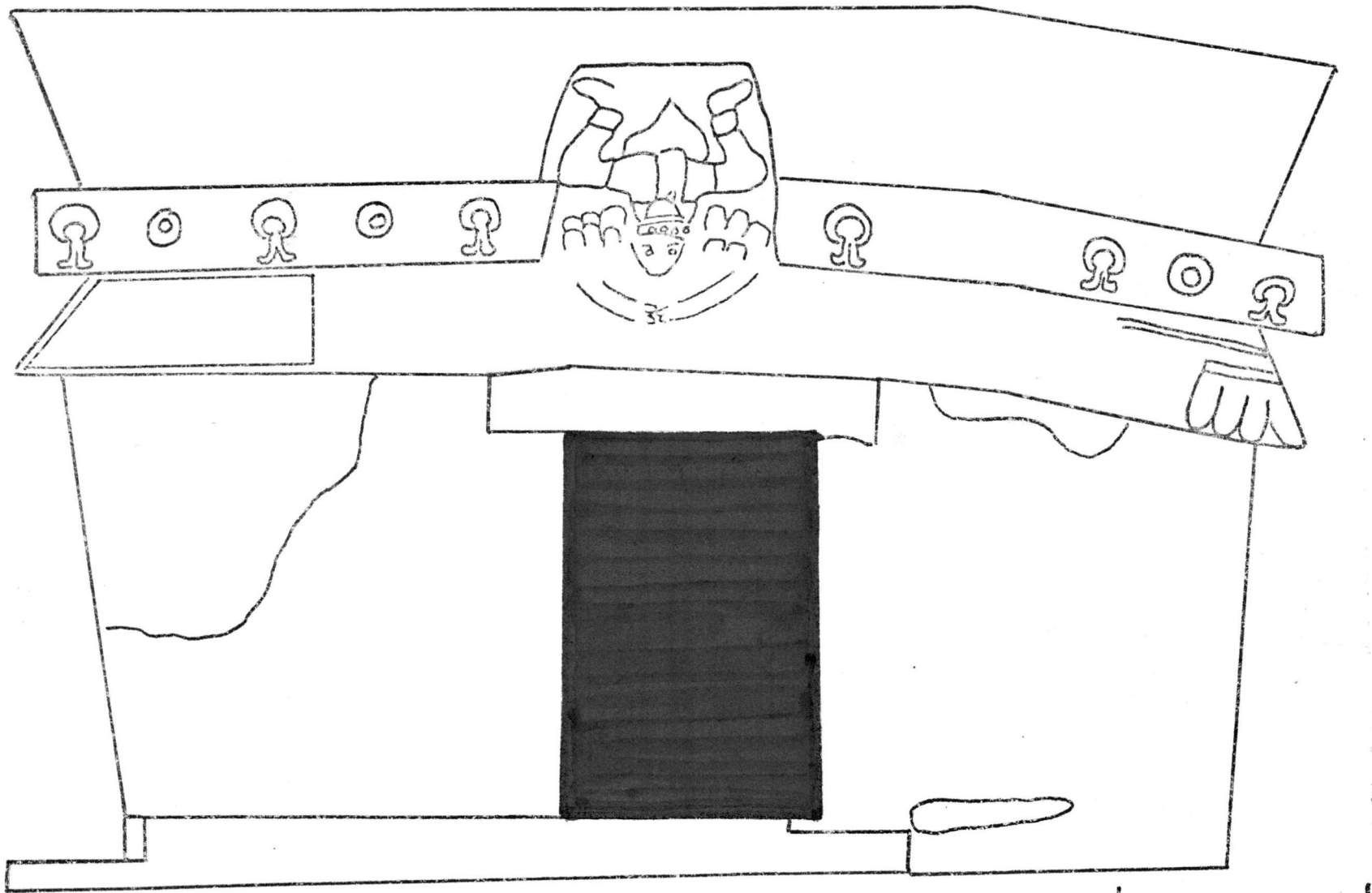


Figure 23: Tulum Temple V, West Façade

1 meter

beams were once inserted. All four walls curve in toward the ceiling with a resulting arch. Along the length of the north and south walls are stone benches and there is a small threshold step.

From the outside one can see where the southwest corner either settled and sank or, as Fernández says, someone tried to break in the substructure looking for tomb treasure. The step which once ran the length of the wall is broken off just south of the doorway and this is the point at which the structure takes its noticeable downward slant. From the base of the building to the top it increases in width, adding to its lopsided appearance (Figure 23).

There is a recessed lintel above the doorway and a double molding above the lintel. The lower molding is a slanted one and the upper is a straight band. Above the moldings the building continues its outward batter. Above the door is a large niche breaking the upper molding and continuing until 23 cm below the top of the structure. In the niche is a relief figure of the diving god. It was painted in many colors, most of which have faded away. Sides and top of the recess were painted blue. Along the straight band is a series of alternating circular designs: one is simply a circle within a circle, the other has a bifurcated hooklike design emerging from the inner circle and extending below the outer circle. According to Fernández, these, too, were painted (1941:169 and Figure 53). There were five on each side of the niche, but on the

south side the central design is missing. It was here that the wall once cracked and crumbled but is now restored.

Between the slanted and the band molding on the south side one can see mysterious blue circles and dots. These continue for 65 cm along the tucked-away edge. On the south corner is a scalloped skirt in relief with four loops and a band. An upper relief band runs above the scalloped relief.

#### Interior Paintings

The mural across the interior east wall of the temple (Figure 24) is extremely carefully executed, even though the painting is on a most uneven surface. The artist was skilled and, unlike the painter of the Castillo second layer in the corridor, was accustomed to painting on a vertical surface. The lines are very even, the width regular and the entire composition well thought out.

The mural is composed of three horizontal registers of unequal heights. The bottom two registers are divided into sections by vertical columns of 'twisted cords.' The bottom register shows several serpents, a fish and a larger indistinct creature. The large middle register is divided into four separate scenes. The two end scenes are almost mirror images of each other: each showing a large winged creature. The two central sections also show the same basic scenes although faces and some details are different. In each of these scenes a standing god and a seated person pass a large object between them. Twisted cords separate these four panels. The highest register, unbroken by cords and painted on a black background represents a celestial bowl topped by a series of other motifs (Fernández 1941:176).

The mural extends from a band 142 cm above the floor down almost to the bench level on the sides and almost to

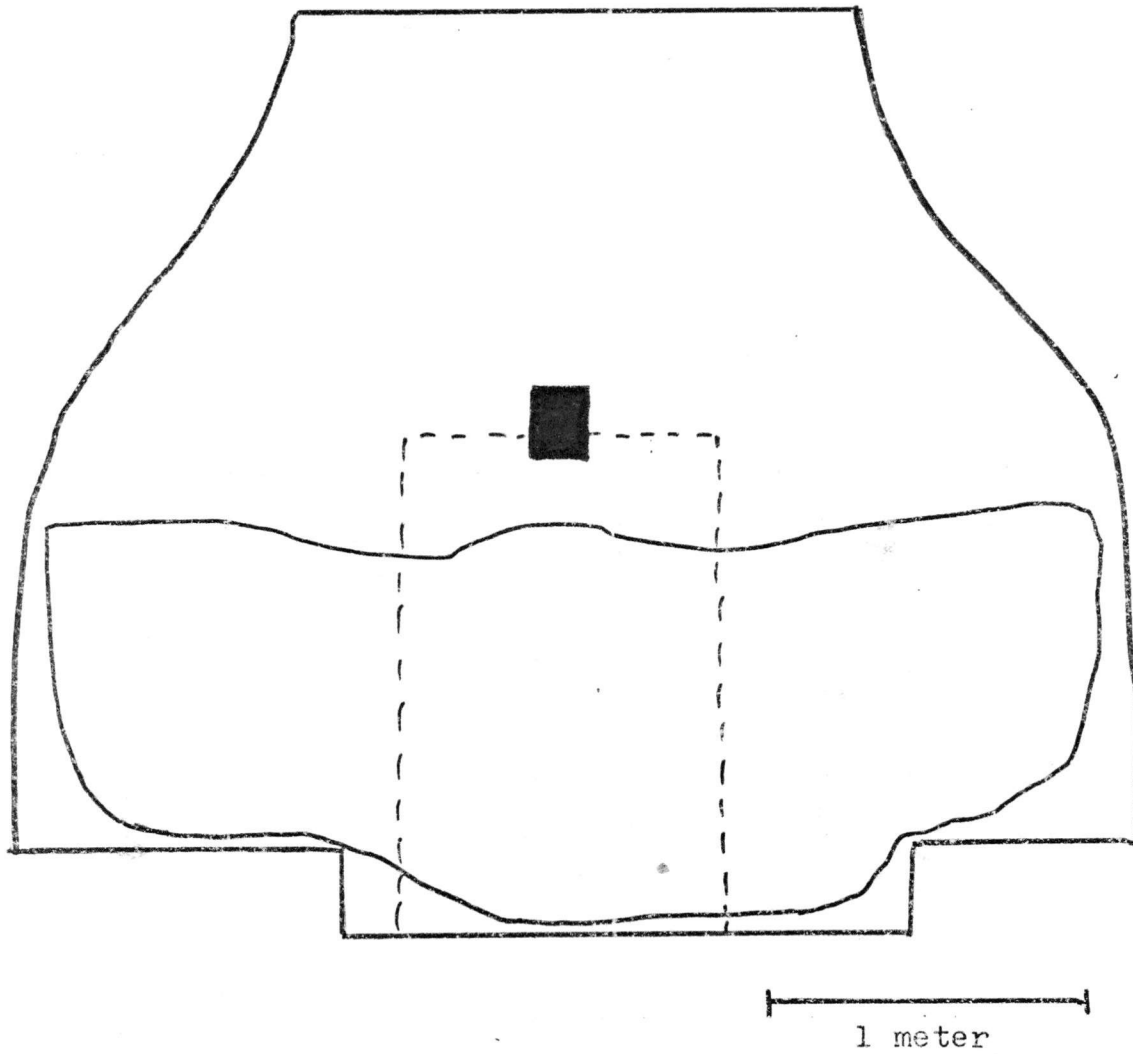


Figure 24: Tulum Temple V, Interior East Wall

the floor in the center. Much of the painting is destroyed, but enough remains to be able to reconstruct how most of the original appeared. Many of the lines have been retouched and some of them incorrectly. When muriatic acid was applied to clean the painting, it had a tendency to harm more than to help. The acid seemed to dissolve the black paint (implying that the paint was made from carbon), so that method of cleaning was abandoned. Instead, Felipe Dávalos relied on water and toothbrush.

Top Register. Across the top of the mural is a wide dark border of painting in two horizontal sections. Across the top band runs a series of segmented designs, while the under-section seems to have alternating designs contained in a single strip. The entire border consists of natural plaster color forming the lines and black paint covering the background area. (The natural plaster was probably once painted blue since this color is visible in traces throughout the painting, and possibly accents of greenish color were also present.)

There are alternating black and natural horizontal lines (also once painted blue) at the top and bottom of the border, as well as running lengthwise through the border dividing it into two parts. There is a light band at the top of the border. The entire border is 27 cm high from the top of the white line to the bottom of the last dark line in the band. This top white line is located 104 cm from the top of the bench. The upper section of the band

measures 10 cm in height and the lower section measures 13.5 cm. The entire border is completed at the bottom by two horizontal, wide white lines (5-7 mm in width) with two even wider (10-11 mm) black lines, one below each of the white lines.

The designs of the upper section of the border are very faded and can be seen in only a few places. (Most of the band is actually completely destroyed.) The designs of the lower section are somewhat clearer, but can be seen just in bits and pieces at the north end of the wall.

At the south end of the border three divisions of the upper band are visible. The southmost division, which is about 12 cm long, contains horizontal dark and light lines. Two columns of these can be seen; the more southerly one is made up of narrower lines than the more northerly one. The areas between the two columns and around the south are obscured. At the top is a thick black line. Above the middle division is a band of black containing a row of white circles. Below this is an obscured design.

The lower band of the border is not divided even though it too shows a series of different designs. Throughout the entire section is a bevy of light dots on the dark background which Fernández believes are stars (1941:172). These dots (once blue) are different sizes, but seem to be generally smaller on the south end than in the center of the mural. At the south end is a design of three (once four?) hanging loops within loops arranged in V formation. Each



loop figure measures 4 cm high. Next is a flowerlike form, light with dark lines inside the lily shape, pointed at the bottom and curving out into two swirls at the top. This is 13 cm high. North of the lily form is a variation of the first loop design. This time, however, the outer loops are more pointed at the bottom. Immediately beyond to the north the plaster has peeled and only a few lines of the next design are visible. Part of this design extends into the double line, lower border of the dark band.

In the middle, below and north of the window, another section of the upper dark band is visible. (The lowest black lines bordering the band are apparent across most of the mural.) In this area just a small piece of the top section can be seen. This piece is 4 cm high and 11 cm long. Visible are the bottoms of two slanted, striped (light and dark) poles with stripes between them and a white (once blue) hook in the middle. A white line separates this section from the lower, more complete section in the bottom part of the border. Here the design of the lower band of the border shows a black line on the top, then a white ribbon segmented by black lines and next an elaborate motif, light and dark on the dark background. There is a central circle at the top with alternating circular designs of black and white inside. Thrusting down and outwards from this circle series are two poles with vertical stripes at the top and bottom and horizontal stripes in the middle. These poles protrude into the black

and white lines of the bottom border. On the inside lower portion of the poles are curving designs which also continue into the lower border lines. The north side of the figure is worn away, but on the south upper half of this design is a ribbon wing emerging straight out and then curving downward. A section right above consists of a double curve which meets in a point. Around the figure is a black background with light blue circles. The figure itself is 17 cm high and 19 cm from the end of one pole to the other.

Fragments of the border are visible at the north end of the mural, but these are not very clear. Only a 12-cm fragment of the upper band can now be seen, and this is on both sides of the dividing line between two sections. Both are on a dark background. Not much is visible of the lower section. At the south end is a fragment with light dots on black. Further north one can see larger light (blue) circles on black and then a design with a circle from which emerge several curved and straight lines.

Only a bit of the north end side border still remains. It appears to have been somewhat thinner than the one at the south end and is closer to the end of the wall. Both end borders are geometric.

Fernández says about the lower band of the border described that:

It has in the left and right sides two groups of seven moons surrounded by stars. Towards the center there are two figures which are reminiscent of very stylized birds observed from the front and it (they) without doubt represent Venus because its (their)

characteristics are very similar to the sign which one finds around the Aztec calendar and the same which I discovered in the top band of the Castillo column at Tulum (1941:172).

Previously Lothrop had described the lower band of the border as a constellation band whose design "is a series of small motives, among which is the sun-symbol, outlined against a black background" (1924:54).

In addition Lothrop believed that the top band of the upper border was the body of a twin-headed serpent. He wrote that the "two heads are found at the base on either side and were joined by a body which ran up the wall and then across the top" (1924:54). Although these sections are now in such poor condition that one cannot be sure, it seems more logical that the serpent head(s) were attached to the bottom border described by Fernández as the bodies of snakes. This is discussed in more detail below.

Bottom Border. The bottom border consists of several bands. The lowest one is formed by two black lines with what seems to have once been alternating blue and lighter colored lines in the center. This is about 3.5 cm wide. The next band, almost 3.5 cm in width, contains black dots throughout its interior. The top band of the bottom border is the one which extends to form the three columns of the main mural. It is made up of two running bands together. One is approximately 2 cm wide with horizontal stripes and the other 1 cm with vertical stripes. There are three places along the lower border where the top band becomes knots. One of

these is in the northernmost section. A second is in the next section southward. Another, the best preserved, is in the third section. The last section is so worn that it is impossible to tell if there were once a knot there also.

Main Body of Mural. The main portion of the mural is broken into four sections by three columns formed of twisted cords. The center and south columns are fairly intact, while the northern one is almost completely chipped away. In the middle of the central column is a repetition of a design on the exterior molding, but somewhat more elaborate. If the exterior designs were painted perhaps they appeared the same way. The interior design has a rosette surrounding three concentric circles with a bifurcated hook emerging from the center and hanging below the rosette. The south column has a rosette surrounding a circle. All three columns were formed by extending and interweaving the top double band of the lower border. The top of the south column branches north and south, then descends on each side and a vegetal design hangs from each separation. Above its rosette the central column changes character by the addition of two black, thick lines inside the wide part of the band and small stripes inside the smaller part. This column continues into the dark upper border.

In discussing the columns Fernández wrote:

From the center of this band there descend the bodies of two interlacing serpents, painted black until they reach to the flower with bifurcated tongue which is to be found in the center. The bodies of the serpents continue towards the bottom but no

longer painted black, but blue which maybe represents the day. When they reach the bottom of the mural, one body goes to the left and the other to the right. After that they use enterlacing with another serpent and thus form the two principal scenes of the mural (1941:172).

The sections of the main mural discussed below are numbered I to IV from north to south. The average width of the black outlines ranges from 1-2 mm.

Much of the southern part of Section I has been chipped away. In the lower southern corner is the base of a stool, stand or some other piece of furniture. Visible today are horizontal lines across the object and vertical on the part resting on the border.

The knot in this section appears between the "stool" and an ornament further north which seems to be a flower. The latter could almost be growing from the border with a curl at its base and a long curved stalk, flower cup, crown and two filaments extending upward.

North of the flower, suspended above the border, is part of a design. What can be seen resembles a snout with a curl at the mouth and a rounded object on the top. This is what is left of a serpent head which Lothrop thought was part of an enveloping two-headed serpent whose body made up the top band of the upper border. It seems, however, more likely that such a head would have been joined to the top double band of the lower border which is in better proportion to the relatively small head than is the wide upper band of the top border. In addition, Fernández' drawing of

the mural (1945:Lamina XVIII) shows that the south end of the lower double border curves upward toward the place where a second head or a tail, as he suggests, would have been (1941:176).

In the upper southern part of this section is a fragment of a small ornament with two striped ties adjoined to a circular knot.

The main figure of this section is a large winged animal form which seems to be attached to the northern side border by another straight band. This band extends behind (north) of the winged figure, then turns 90 degrees upward and parallels the north side border, touching it. The bird-like creature has a very elaborate headdress with curls and feathers in the back, a straight crown section with loops in the middle of the top and flowers in the front. A long flower-type ornament hangs from the base of the headdress down in front of his face. He has a large round ear ornament where the top of the band starts. The face is very faded, but one can faintly see a long hanging ornament in front of the earring, his eye cupped in a crest and the top of his open beak. Behind him two hanging ties are dimly visible. More of this figure was intact when Lothrop studied the mural. He saw it to be "an anthropomorphic creature with a bird-head, human arms and body, and jaguar-claws" with a "long tube with loops at the end" jutting from its mouth (1924:54).

Concerning this section and the similar Section IV, Fernández writes:

The sky band is held by two zoomorphic figures with rich headdresses (each) face represents a bifurcated bird and from his arms grow wings. From the beak there is a sign which might represent the wind. Without doubt this represents Ehécatl, god of the wind who holds the celestial dome (1941:172).

As in all of the sections, the figures are outlined in black. There is a bright blue seen in the background areas, especially below the end of the side border, beneath the headdress, and around the bottom decorations. Blue can also be seen within the forms, but the touches of red which Lothrop found in the principal figures are no longer apparent (1924:54). On the north side of the border behind the blue section is a tie ornament which has a loop hanging from the bottom, a circular middle and loops at the top.

Section IV is similar in design to Section I, although somewhat narrower. An ornament is hanging from the top of the dividing column. The bottom border has faded away, but there are still visible several designs that perhaps were attached to the double border-band (which Fernández indicates curved up at the corner). The southernmost design is a distinct system of loops and curls with interior stripes. North of this are some very faint lines of another design: the two were possibly attached. Halfway between the base of the column and the rosette there is a curved leaf-like pattern emerging from the column itself. Again in this section there is a bird-like creature facing the center of

the mural. Most of the head and headdress of this figure are gone. Some loops from the front of the headdress can be seen, as well as the beak of the animal. The top part of the beak curves downward with two loops (tongue?) inside the curve. A long straight object is held in the mouth and in the left hand. The right arm and hand are stretched out in front with a slight upward slant, fingers and palm down. Two hooks indicate feet. Behind the figure a feathered cape or wing is spread out below and above this two ties stream out. A circular ornament rests on top of the upper tie.

The middle column is technically the structural center of the mural, but, because the door is not in the direct center of the west wall, a viewer upon first entering the room observes instead a standing figure in Section II turned toward the north. This figure is facing a seated personage in the same section and is either being offered the vessel or scepter which the seated figure holds outstretched before him, or he has just given the object to the sitting figure. With feet spread apart the standing figure has his arms extended toward this object. The fingers of his right hand point upward and the palm is away from his body; the fingers of the left hand point downward with the palm also away. His arms are composed of knots. There is a crack in the plaster down the middle of this figure and a deep hole goes from the top of the left foot down to the lowest section of the mural. Parts of the headdress have also been



obscured as the plaster has fallen. The standing figure has a non-human face, a long hanging snout with a curl at the top, a round eye with an eye-crest, a split tongue and an ornament behind his mouth. Part of the headdress hangs down the back of his head below a vertical knot. Facing south from this knot is a serpent head with eye-crest and eye-cup, topknot, leaf ornament standing straight up from the end of his mouth, a split tongue and a long curved nose. The standing figure hangs a long tie. He is wearing a cape decorated with several border bands and a repeating U-shaped finish; a doughnut design runs through one of the bands. Other small ornaments are on the cape itself and a circular adornment with hanging jade pieces falls from the front of his garment below the cape. The lower garment ends with a repeating U and a series of black lines. Two ties with a knot design hang from his clothes, one is shown coming from the bottom of his cape and the other is seen between his legs. He is evidently striding. Both legs are composed of knots and his sandalled feet have ties in front. From his right sandal grows a flower whose stalk goes along the border, then straight up toward his left hand.

The top of the ceremonial vessel (or scepter) held by the seated figure is at approximately the same height as the headdress of the standing figure. Three hanging ties at the bottom dangle from the square portion of the vessel below the right hand of the seated figure, and a crisscross design is within the inner square of the form to which the

ties are attached. Above the right hand is a tall, gently flaring part of the vessel with horizontal lines across the middle and a horizontal knot near the top with two half circles below. Between the hands on the south side is a double hook. To the south of the upper section is a circle. Above the knot there is a continuation of the vase form but split vertically by a line. A circle is above the vertical line and two ties are on each side of the circle. Various loops and curves end in what appears to be a flower facing south.

The seated figure holds the object, which Fernández considers to be a vessel that may contain copal or food (1941:174), with both hands. The fingers of the right hand are straight, the thumb up and the palm on the vessel. The thumb of the left hand is also up but the fingers are exaggerated in order to reach around the vessel. The sleeves of his costume have elaborate cuffs, and the decorations of his long skirt are similar to those on the cape of the standing figure. The barefoot feet, which are faded, rest on a knot. The figure is sitting on a stool with curved legs and hanging loops; three large squares show across the seat, the two end ones filled with crisscrosses and the middle one containing a circle in the lower north corner. There is a knot at the waist of the figure with the end of a rope hanging from the center. (This is so similar to the rosette motif that perhaps the rosette with bifurcated hanging hook is actually a stylized knot.) A long V-shaped cape is worn from his neck, also bordered with bands of

circles and a repeating U-shaped finish. He wears a necklace with a hanging bead and a dangling earring. The top of his eye is visible; his nose is chipped off; his mouth shows one upper tooth; and a rounded chin can be seen. His helmet-like headdress is topped with vertical loops and feathers curving south. The rosette in back of his head has two curls below and a long tie hanging from it.

Section III is similar in format to Section II, with the positions of the standing and seated figures reversed. The standing figure with his back to the central column seems to be walking towards the seated figure who holds out a vessel or a scepter. It is more likely that the seated figure is offering the object to the other than that he has received it from him because the upright figure appears to be coming towards the person holding the massive article. The positions of the figures, the clothes and the vessels (or scepters) are close in resemblance to those depicted in Section II. It almost seems as if different actors were performing the same roles.

The face and most of the headdress of the standing figure have faded. Remaining are faint stripes from headdress feathers and ornaments. The suggestion of a long curved design across the top, and also the suggestion of a long curved design reaching from the column to the headdress, can be perceived. The left hand is gone; the right hand, like the left hand of the upright figure in Section II, shows the palm away and the fingers down. A tie hangs

behind the cape with loops across the top overlapping into the cape. This cape appears to be almost identical to the cape worn by the standing figure of Section II. The same jade ornament hangs below the front of the cape. Again two ties hang from the clothes--one behind the figure and the other between his legs; these, however, do not have the knot design. There are ornaments around the legs at about the knee, different on each leg. The feet are poorly preserved, but there seems to be a rosette beneath the rear foot (breaking the bottom band). He also appears to be wearing sandals.

The vessel (scepter) here is very much like that in Section II with three hanging ties and square sections with interior squares filled by a crisscross design. The left hand of the seated figure is visible on the vessel, then there is a missing section topped by a horizontal knot. Although only part of it is still visible, the upper portion is different from that in Section II. Here is a striped band where that of Section II had a circle and tie. Above this is a curl to the south and more vertical stripes. On top is a hanging hook and above that a horizontal rounded band.

The seated figure is barefoot with his feet close together and resting on a knot. His skirt is almost identical to that of the seated figure of Section II with a repeating U finish, a striped band at the bottom with a doughnut design in the center and hanging tassels. The same knot

tie is shown around his waist and a tie hangs behind the figure. The stool itself is different. This one has straight legs with vertical lines at the sides, horizontal lines in the center with a crisscross above and below the horizontal lines. A flower design is exhibited on the seat, two flowers with circular centers and four petals each. The figure's hands grasp the vessel in the same manner as those of the seated figure of Section II, left hand on the vessel with straight finger, right hand above with fingers wrapped around from the back. He wears the same cape. Seen are his large nose, the upper part of his eye and his curved chin; stripes are visible on his face. He has a long, hanging headdress with loops lining the back and feathers from the middle and top. Feathers are shown on his topknot, one curved forward. The upper section of his headdress stretches upwards, then curves toward the south in a series of curls and loops ending in a flare of feathers. The entire headdress is striped. At the front is a small ornament with a rounded band and double loop. From the back of the cape--actually emerging from the cape--is a narrow V with the end encircled with a large curve made up of a double line which looks almost like a key to wind up the back. Behind the seated figure are several additional ornaments. Near the bottom a flower grows out of the column, and above fragments of rosette designs survive.

Lower Section of Painting. Between the benches below the lower border there is a lower section of painting. The

Section I

|                                     |      |    |
|-------------------------------------|------|----|
| Height of section                   | 68.5 | cm |
| Width of section                    | 75   | cm |
| Height of bird-figure               | 53   | cm |
| Width of bird-figure                | 49   | cm |
| Height of stool (remaining at base) | 10   | cm |
| Width of stool                      | 17   | cm |

Section II

|   |    |    |
|---|----|----|
| Height of section                           | 68 | cm |
| Width of section                            | 93 | cm |
| Height of standing figure                   | 67 | cm |
| Width of standing figure                    | 38 | cm |
| Height of seated figure (Headdress to base) | 68 | cm |
| Width of seated figure (tie to hand)        | 48 | cm |
| Height of stool                             | 18 | cm |
| Height of vessel (scepter)                  | 62 | cm |

Section III

|                            |      |    |
|----------------------------|------|----|
| Height of section          | 68.5 | cm |
| Width of section           | 89   | cm |
| Height of standing figure  | 67   | cm |
| Width of standing figure   | 32   | cm |
| Height of seated figure    | 66   | cm |
| Width of seated figure     | 46   | cm |
| Height of stool            | 16   | cm |
| Height of vessel (scepter) | 59   | cm |

Section IV

|   |    |    |
|---|----|----|
| Height of section                         | 67 | cm |
| Width of section                          | 39 | cm |
| Height of bird-figure (headdress to feet) | 45 | cm |
| Width of bird-figure                      | 42 | cm |

Sections numbered north to south  
Average line width: 1-2 mm

Figure 25: Tulum, Temple V  
Measurements of Figures on the  
Interior East Wall

condition of this section is extremely poor, and it is very difficult to decipher the painting at all. At the south end is a serpent head and body, but the body is visible only in a couple of its loops. Most of the head can be seen, the eye crest, jaw and topknot. Next is a large serpent head which is almost invisible. This is hanging nose down, and it is possible to see his eye crest and the general shape of his head and nose. Further north is a rosette of which all that remains are parts of the upper leaf and a bit of the bottom. A large creature is in the middle and another rosette, serpent head and a little fish. Almost nothing can be made out except by piecing together fragments of lines.

. . . there exist remains of painting which without doubt represented the sea, which in the special case of Tulum symbolize the lower world (that which is below the earth) and without doubt they painted fish and other marine animals as can be seen in the lower part of the facade (Fernández 1941:176).

The combination of serpents and fish, however, makes more sense as an underworld scene composed of underwater and underearth.

#### Exterior Painting

Lothrop writes about the exterior painting of the Temple of the Diving God, "It seems probable that they once continued around all four sides of the building, . . ." (1924:55). In disagreement, Fernández states that "a close observation showed me clearly that these pictures cover

about 40 centimeters of the north façade, all of the main façade that looks toward the west and another 40 centimeters of the south façade" (1941:171).

It seems more likely that Fernández' interpretation is accurate because the painting on the north side seems to be completed by the eastward border. Similar examples of painting which continue for a short distance around corners and stop occur in the Temple of the Frescoes in the north corridor and in the entrance to the inner chamber off the west corridor.

Nevertheless, Lothrop himself added that he saw figures only on the west side and two on the north side. Today paintings can be seen drawn in black outline which averages 1-2 mm wide on the west side and 2-3 mm wide on the north and south sides. The wider lines on the sides could have been intended for clearer vision from below since there is only a very narrow walkway around the sides, while on the west is a terrace.

Blue and blue-green are still apparent in various places. (Are the changes in color due to varying thicknesses of the same color or do they actually represent different hues?) Blue appears mostly as a background color, below the slanted molding and in the lintel. Blue-green is seen inside the figures, such as in stripes and cross-hatching.

West Façade. Generally the painting on the northern section of the exterior west wall is better preserved than



that on the southern section. This is true both on the molding and on the lower façade (Figures 23,26).

Painting is on the slanted molding at the north end. The surface of the molding here is 44 cm high and the visible paintings cover an area 129 cm long, measuring from the bottom of the molding southward.

A painted scallop design is evident at the top of the slanted molding with black spaces between the scallops and blue lines within. At the north end a second layer of painted scallops occurs and beneath this a band containing two different geometric patterns. South of these two layers (scalloped and geometric) are two stands which look like vessels with handles at the sides, a crisscross design in the base (the south one is obscured), and a knot (mat) motif above. Then appear three horizontal lines and two half circles in the top of which are two small circles. The crest is split and curved in two directions, feathers issuing from the sides away from each other. South of these vessels is another section of the painted scallops and geometric designs.

In 1843, Frederick Catherwood showed in an engraving four scalloped skirts in relief intermittently placed across the slanted molding of the temple: one at the extreme south end, another south of the god's niche, a third immediately north of the niche, and a last one near, but not at, the extreme north end (Stephens 1843:393 facing). Only the one at the south corner (see above, p. 74) is still present;

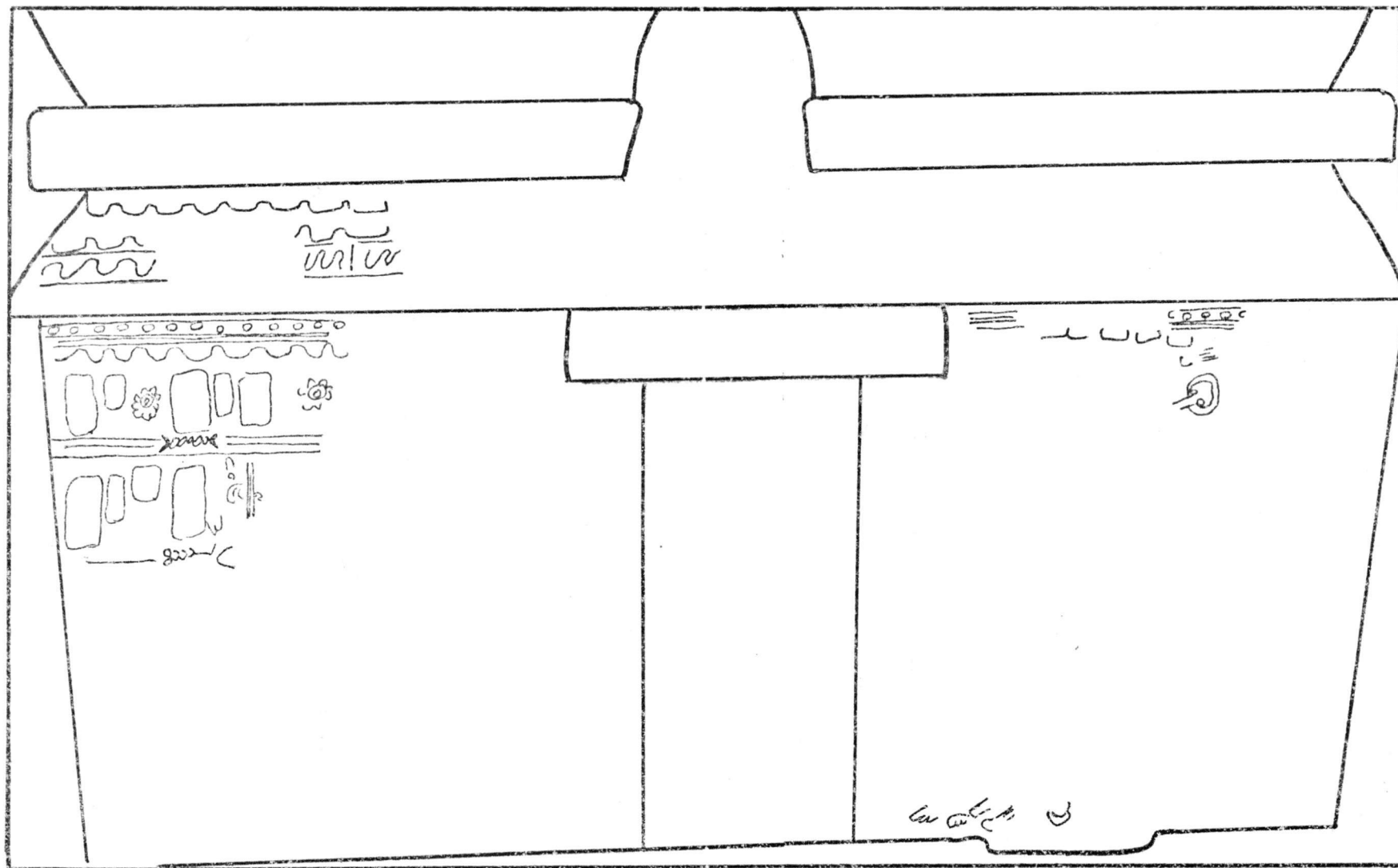


Figure 26: Tulum Temple V, West Façade, Location of paintings  
(not drawn to scale)

the others have disappeared. However, at least part of the painting visible today on the slanted molding appears on at least one of the places at the north end of the molding where Catherwood depicted a scalloped skirt in relief. Several questions remain unresolved about this feature. When was the painting done? When were the scallops applied? Is there other painting underneath the surviving scallop skirt? If the painting was done earlier and the scalloped skirts applied later, the implication is that the temple was remodelled at some point.

On the lower façade across the top is the same design system which borders many of the clothes of the interior figures: three horizontal lines, next a series of concentric circles (with a horizontal line through the center of the middle one and a small circle hanging from this line), and then three more long horizontal lines. Scallops occur beneath. Short blue-green vertical lines decorate the straight borders; also there is color in the circles and their background, and vertical colored lines are inside the scallops.

This border is 22 cm high on the north side where it continues for 139 cm from the north end just under the molding. Directly south of the door this design band runs for 86 cm, but it is only 14 cm high.

Both Lothrop and Fernández describe the lower façade as being divided into three horizontal bands showing scenes of gods separated by intertwined columns made of serpent

bodies. In addition, Fernández states, "In the narrower lower band there were representations of fish and water; so that in the lowest part is represented the element water; the three bands from above represent the earth and the highest celestial band symbolizes the sky" (1941:169).

At the very bottom of the exterior west wall on the south side is a part of a small figure near the entrance. It seems to be on its side with its hand a little lower than its foot: the discernible portion is 10 cm high. A few other lines are on the same level--mostly indistinct near the top of the door, are black lines and blue color. Under the slanted molding are faint black horizontal lines and blue paint. In the middle of this side towards the top are blue-green crosshatch lines inside a loop (or a knot). Above this are black lines and tie loops. Only these fragments survive today south of the doorway.

Parts of the bands and columns which divided the west wall into sections can still be perceived on the north side of the lower façade. The bands consist of three straight black lines forming a thin strip at the top and a thicker one underneath. These meet and intertwine to form the vertical columns, each of which is decorated with a rosette in the middle. Parts of three columns with rosettes are visible. They all seem to have plants of some kind growing from their sides.

The top horizontal division which is still apparent extends 130 cm from the north end southward and is 39 cm

high. The separating band is 3 cm high. The lower horizontal division now extant is 91 cm long from the north end and 42 cm high.

In the northernmost section of the top division is a standing figure 38 cm high holding a vessel 24 cm high. Much of the painting is gone, but the rear leg and sandal, clothes ties hanging in the back, crosshatching on the clothes, feathers flowing backwards from the headdress (he faces south) and a serpent eyecrest in the headdress are discernible. The hands stretch out, holding a vessel which looks as if it contains copal in its square section. Above the copal are ties and a top section of the vessel curves towards the south. There is a curved projection from the square section of the vessel, and a flower, 15 cm high, grows behind the figure's foot.

The next section southward, divided from the first by a column with a rosette, contains two figures facing one another with a vessel between them. The northern figure, 37 cm high, is seated. Below his stool is a knot design in the lower border. The stool has concentric circles on the seat. Only a large circular ornament with hanging jade and fragments of this figure's clothing remain. (Here this whole ornament is visible hanging on a necklace, unlike the depiction in the interior which appears from under the cape.) Some lines of clothing--perhaps a cape--appear at the back, and two circular bands with a line of loops are around his neck. His ear ornament consists of two concen-

tric circles from which dangle a flattened oval and a V-shaped design with a large curve connecting the sides. This is the same design as that protruding from the back of the interior seated figure in Section III, the helmet-like headdress exhibits a line of circles and a vertical knot is shown behind it with lines continuing north. Also four loops bound by three curved lines hangs behind his head. The face is zoomorphic: a serpent eyecup with lower circles and a curving line enclosing the chin and mouth with its two teeth, one upper and one lower.

In writing about the figures in this division, Lothrop proclaims:

The upper panel contains the representations of two deities. The figure on the left is God D, the Roman-Nosed god, one of the most important figures in the codices, who is usually identified as Itzamna. God D is obviously a benevolent deity with universal power; he rules both the night and day, and he is connected with the serpent, though not so closely as Gods B and K (1924:54).

It is interesting to note that Fernández noticed the same thing in the same way without mentioning Lothrop.

En la escena superior del lado izquierdo se reconoce al dios "D", de nariz romana, una de las figuras más importantes en los códices, el cual está identificado con Itzamná. El dios "D" es una deidad benevolente con poder universal, que manda a la noche y al día y que está relacionado con la serpiente, si bien no tan íntimamente como los dioses B y E (1941:169-70).

The part of the vessel (or scepter) which can be seen is 28 cm high. A square section with crisscross lines and an upper section which looks like three lumps of copal with concentric circles above are evident. Ties are seen toward

the north, and the top part curves up and then southward, ending with curls and a hanging curve. At the peak is a form containing a cross. There is a design between the vessel and the southern figure which probably protrudes from the vessel: its stalk curves south at the upper part and ends with two circular forms.

The right hand of the next 36 cm high figure is held before him, grasping what appears to be a double curved line in his fist. The arm is not visible, but may have been bent at the elbow. The left hand is reaching behind and holding a slender, crosshatched object which is possibly a snake tail. Were this a snake, the head would be in the chipped away section above the right hand. Fernández thinks that this object is a deer; Lothrop identifies the figure as god E and says, "An arm clearly runs across the body, terminating in a hand which clasps another hand" (1941:55). There is a curved loop, which is striped rather than crosshatched, in front of the figure. The face has circles around the mouth which is open, showing full teeth. The nose has been decorated with a plug protruding from the top. A necklace of balls hangs from an encircling band. A long, dangling earring is drawn, and ties from the headdress are shown passing behind the left arm and hand. Both the feathered top of the headdress and the section behind the ear with its design radiating from concentric circles point south.

Between the second column in this division and the door there are ties hanging almost to the bottom band. The upper portion curves southward in the fashion of the crest of a ceremonial vessel or scepter. Closer to the door is part of another design which is very faded. Apparent today is a circular object with horizontal bands with loops at the top and a mixture of horizontal and vertical lines below.

Only the northernmost section of the horizontal division which is right below the top horizontal division on the north side of the lower façade remains. The painting reveals two seated figures, a vessel (or scepter), and an incense burner. A column can be seen on the south end of this section; the top and bottom are bordered by the horizontal bands and the north end is the end of the wall. There is a knot in the lower border under the stool of the southern figure: this knot lies directly beneath the knot on the upper border.

The northern figure of this section (38 cm high) sits on a stool with elaborately decorated legs. The seat of the stool is divided into three parts by vertical lines: the sections were once crosshatched. The pattern on the clothes of the figure is different from any of those of the interior figures. The skirt is short with vertical stripes and ties fall below the knees. Sandals, badly faded, can be discerned. The cape has the same border design of bands and scallops as figures inside the temple, but the cloth itself is embellished with concentric circle



flowers separated by horizontal lines. A tie hangs from under the cape down below and behind the seat of the stool. Only the back of the headdress is visible: two ties stream behind from two concentric circles, and feathers at the top point northward. Fernández identifies this figure as god E, the young corn god who he says is a dominant figure depicted at Tulum (1941:170). He holds a vessel (or scepter) 28 cm high; the fingers of his right hand are straight, and his left hand is above with the fingers curved around the vessel. Two ties hang from the vessel, and an X design is seen in the square section below the figure's right hand. Three lumps are drawn above the left hand; above these are standing loops and a faded design on top.

The top section of an incense burner, measuring 20 cm, is directly south of the vessel. The parts which can be perceived are a horizontal knot on which rest three lumps of incense, a second horizontal knot, and then the top design which heads straight up before curving southward and ending with feathers hanging downward.

The figure to the south measures 36 cm in height and the lower half is extremely faded. He sits above a knot with one arm stretched out before him, a decorated cuff on the sleeve at his wrist. A necklace of hanging circles or a bead band is shown. Ties are shown behind his body. His face is similar to that of the standing figure in Section II of the interior, i.e., with serpent eye and crest, long nose with a scroll at the top, tongue curl from the corner

of his mouth and split fangs at front. He wears a hanging earring of loops and circles and has a high straight head-dress with a circle band at the bottom and geometric designs at top. Both Lothrop and Fernández identify this figure as the same god and in the same way. First, Lothrop maintains that the likeness ". . . on the right is clearly god B, already seen in the Castillo passage, who may be recognized by his long, turned-down nose, surmounted by a scroll, and by his peculiar mouth" (1924:55). Remarkably similar are the words of Fernández: ". . . la figura de la derecha es claramente el dios B, que se reconoce por su larga nariz retorcida, que tiene superpuesta una voluta, y por su boca peculiar . . ." (1941:170).

South Exterior Wall. Under the protection of the slanted molding on the west end of the south wall (Figure 27) are scattered remains of paintings in black and blue. There are two scalloped skirts in relief with a band, also in relief, continuing from around the west corner and running above the scalloped skirts. Two splotches of green paint remain on the slanted molding on the west side.

On the lower part of the band molding is painted a double line with double loops beneath which continue just into the underside of the molding. These lines are black and again visible only at the west end.

Below the slanted molding on the lower façade are scattered lines of black and areas of blue. The lowest section of visible painting shows part of a design with

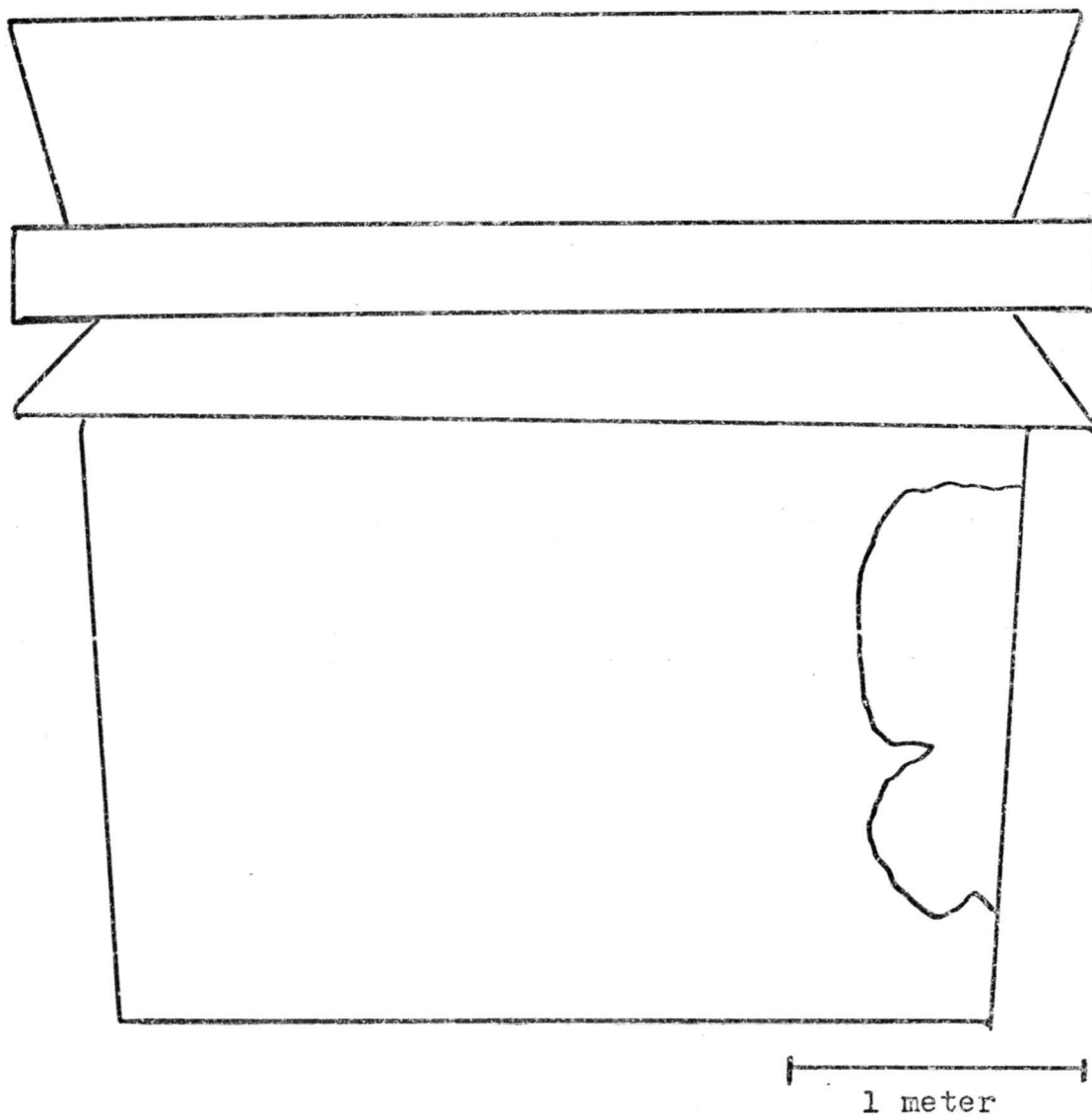


Figure 27: Tulum Temple V  
Exterior North Wall

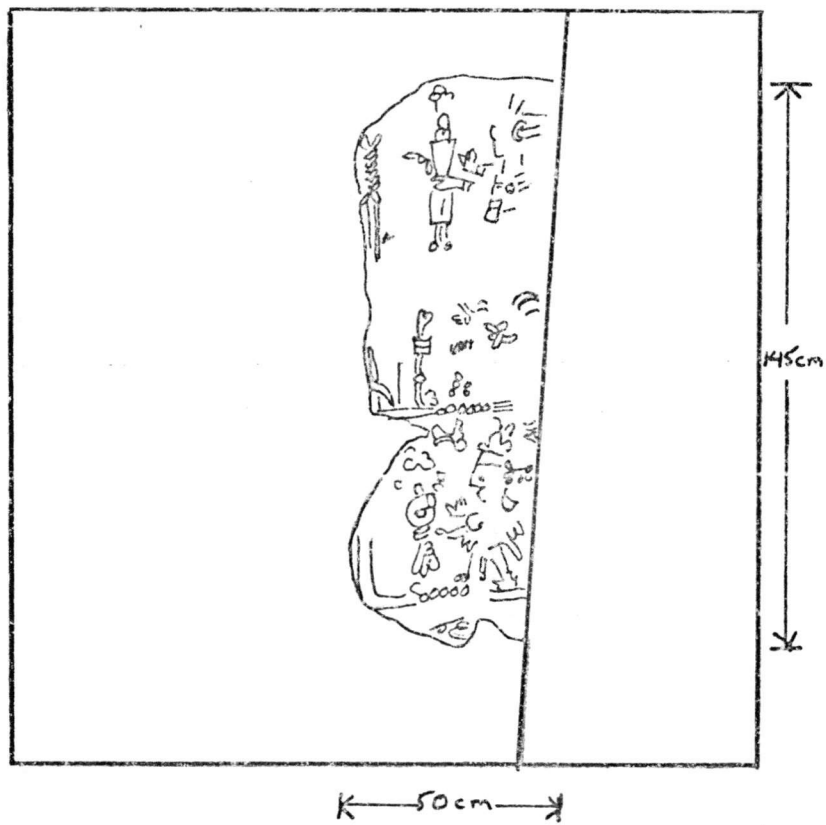


Figure 28: Tulum Temple V  
Exterior North Wall, Painting

three coils and a hanging double hook 19 cm high. The section showing paint measures 48 cm from the bottom of the hook to the underside of the slanted molding.

North Exterior Wall. On the north wall is a continuation of the paintings of the west wall. Plaster remains only at the west end of the wall (Figures 27,28). As on the west wall, there are figures separated into sections by horizontal bands and vertical columns which are formed by two ends of the band meeting and twining together. The top vertical column, however, is decorated by a knot instead of a rosette. The two visible horizontal bands also have knots in the center.

At the very bottom, below the last horizontal band, is the head of a fish whose mouth is open and teeth are pointed and sharp.

The lowest section shows a walking figure carrying a vessel (or scepter) in his left hand. Also stretched out before him is his right hand with fingers and palm out. He is dressed similarly to the interior figures with an elaborate headdress, cuffs at his sleeves, a jade ornament at the front of his clothes and ties hanging down in back with one between his feet. Lothrop identifies him as god E who, he claims, is the most important god in the paintings at Tulum (1924:56).

The middle section is very faded and only part of a design and the suggestion of a knot with curves above are visible.

The upper section again depicts a figure carrying a vessel (or scepter) in his left hand with his right hand also stretched out in front. Instead of ties at the bottom of this vessel, there are circles. Part of the headdress of the figure can be seen, as well as his earring and a portion of his clothes. In 1924, Lothrop was able to draw more of this figure and described it as "an aged divinity with bent back, who carries the usual standard" (1924:55).

## PART 3: THE TEMPLE OF THE FRESCOES

One of the more architecturally complicated buildings at Tulum, the Temple of the Frescoes appears also to have been the most ornate (Figures 29,30). Its walls, both exterior and interior, still bear many of the frescoes and reliefs which once decorated the entire structure. The building is located in the center of Tulum east of the Castillo and has been partly restored by the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (Tulum Official Guide, 1961:29).

Superstructure

Like the upper structure of the Castillo, this was a later edition. When this smaller building was constructed, a column support was added in the entrance to the lower inner chamber and the west wall of the chamber was strengthened. There is a recessed border around the entire door of the upper structure instead of merely in the lintel. The lower façade is constructed of two overlapping parts with concave sides. There are two moldings above the door, the upper one broken in the center for a recessed niche containing a badly weathered relief figure. The walls batter gently outward.

The west wall still exhibits some paint in the doorway recess and on the lower façade. There are many red handprints superimposed on the north end at the level of the

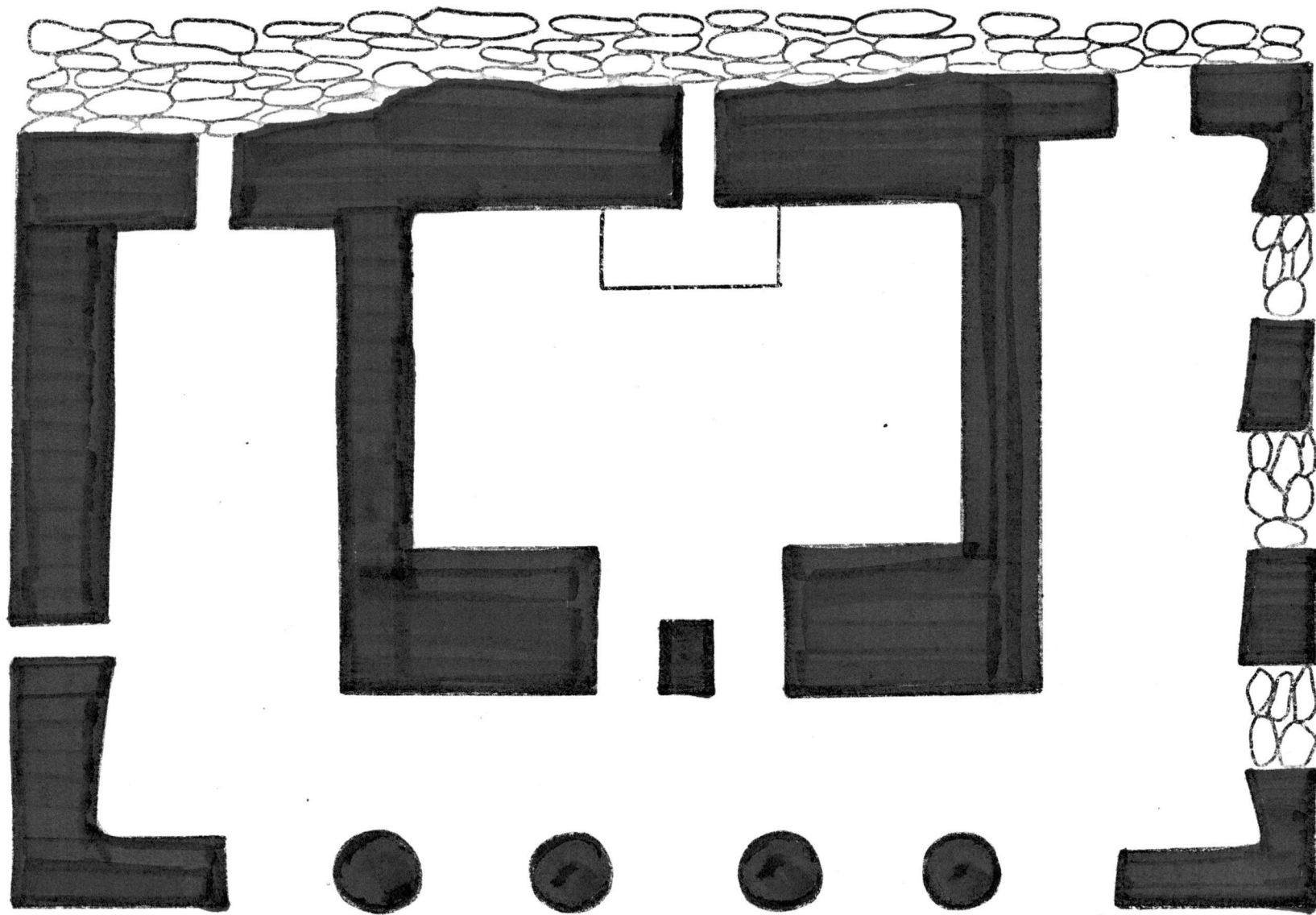


Figure 29: Tulum Temple XVI, Plan

1 meter





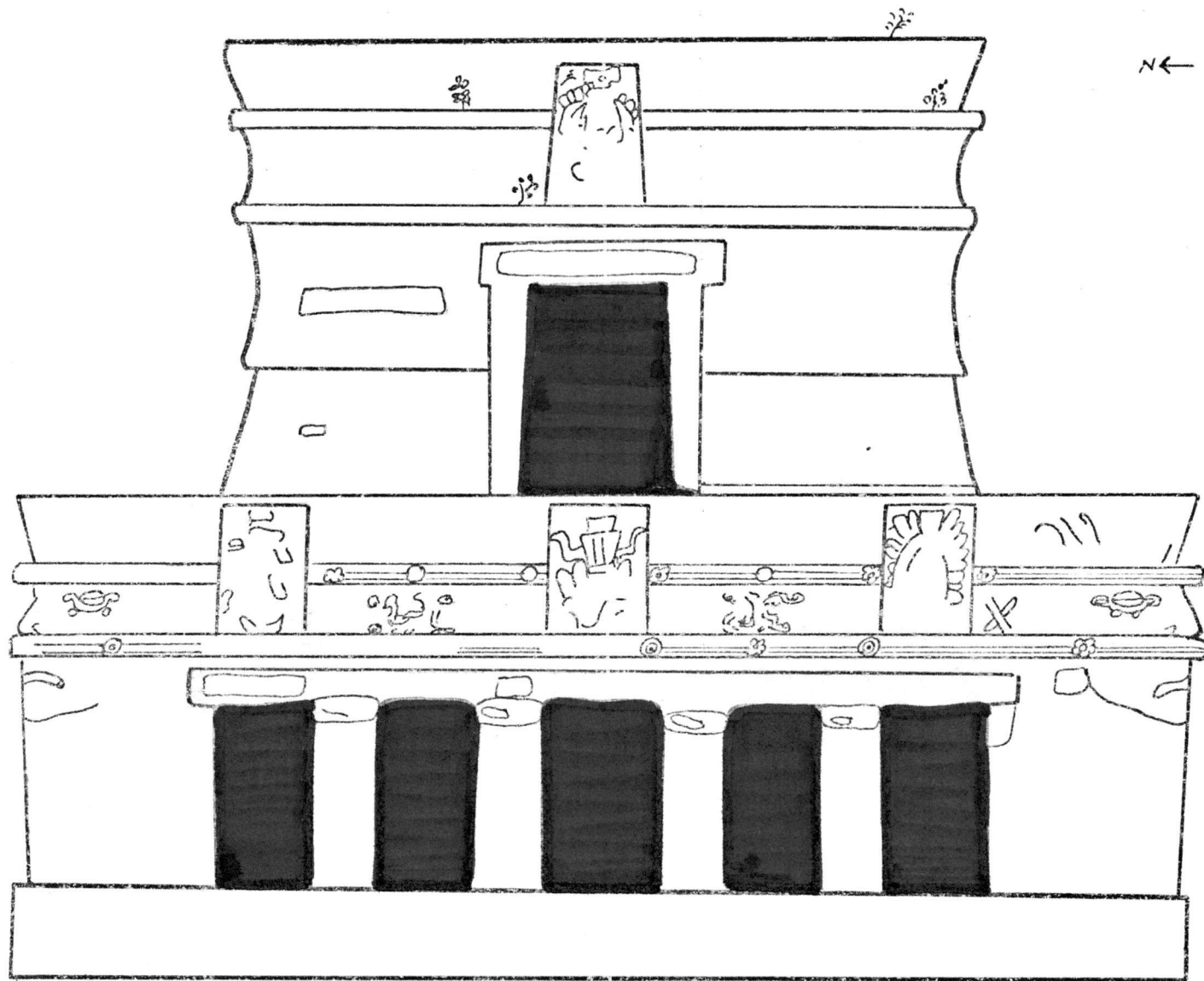


Figure 30: Tulum Temple XVI, West Façade

1 meter

top of the door and in the recessed lintel. Other hand-prints can be seen at the south end in the middle of the west wall and on the lower molding at the west end of the south wall.

Black scribbling is evident in the middle of the west wall, south side. On the north side there is a spiral design, 15 cm wide and 14 cm high, in the same color red as the hands. It is located 33 cm below the lower molding and 47 cm from the north end.

#### Lower Structure

This aptly named temple was built in several periods. Originally there was a single chamber entered through a wide doorway. In 1843, Stephens wrote that the walls in this room "were covered with paintings, decayed and effaced" (1843:403), but no paint is apparent now.

#### Architecture

A window or vent in the middle of the east side has been blocked off by a later edition. The original exterior of this small building had a double band molding. The upper band was broken on the west side for a niche containing a relief representation of the diving god. There were relief rosettes along the molding on this side. Paintings covered the south and west walls and the western end of the north wall. This building was later enlarged in plan, forming a corridor along the north, west and south sides. The

north corridor has one window in the east wall which was partially covered during an addition and a second window in the north wall which Lothrop, and subsequently Fernández, missed in their plans. The west corridor is bordered on the west by four columns which support the main entrance. The east wall is the painted main façade of the original structure. The south corridor has four narrow openings (windows/doorways). Three are in the south wall and one is on the east side. These are partly filled with stones, but, nevertheless, much daylight is admitted to illuminate the painting on the north wall.

At the exterior northwest and southwest corners are large relief masks which Lothrop suggested might represent Kulculcan, whom he equates with the Lord of the Winds, doubtless extrapolating the Central Mexican Quetzalcoátl-Ehecatl relationship to the Maya area (1924:95). Two band moldings are in the upper façade. The lower molding runs under the noses of the masks, and the upper molding runs under their headdress feathers. On the west side there are rosette and concentric circle designs with a relief band running these designs. On the west façade the upper molding is broken in three places for recessed niches containing relief stucco figures. The central figure is a diving god. Only parts of the side figures remain. Between the moldings on each side of the central niche are relief representations--each of a human figure intertwined in curls.

## Painting

Speaking about the technique shown in the paintings of the Temple of the Frescoes, Fernández, Lizardi and Rozo observe, "The paintings were done in a free hand on a very fine lime background. They show great mastery and they were made with a round brush." In addition they comment that the background "is black and the figures show thin lines of green and brown" (1945:117).

Exterior Painting. There are bits of red paint visible at the bottom of the exterior south wall directly below the relief mask. On the mask itself red lines outline the top of the mask, short vertical red lines are visible above the upper lip, and red is seen on the nose and on the nostril. Also, there is a thick red line under the eye and two more red lines follow the curve of the eye cup. There are black lines and black dots at the west curve of the eye where some blue appears around the outside. Red shows behind the eye and splotches of blue and red behind the mask. Some red occurs on the uppermost section, such as on the feathers behind the headdress.

The paint on the northern mask on the exterior west wall has worn away (Figure 30). The southern mask, however, still bears red above the eye and red and black below the eye. In addition, there is a red line around the mouth. Orange and red traces are found behind the mouth. Below the back of the jaw are paintings in thick red lines with orange accents: an incensario, decorative designs and seed

poes, and long vertical and horizontal straight lines. These paintings continue around the inside corner of the entrance. Although no clear designs remain here, at the top one can see straight red lines and at the bottom red and orange paint, as well as black and a tiny bit of blue.

Paint is still apparent on the figures in the three niches. Red and orange occur in the feathers of the northern figure. There is a red stripe across his crown and other bits of these colors on his clothing. A serpent head is in the center of the northern end. His nose points upward, and he has a black tongue, orange lips outlined in red, red around the eye and orange behind the head. The central niche is occupied by a very colorful diving god. Bright, thick, red-striped lines accent his wing feathers, his headdress feathers and his clothes. Much blue paint and orange is found at the tips of these feathers. While the figure in the southern niche has almost disappeared, a ring of feathers with a headdress in the center remains. Again, there are red lines and blue and orange on the feathers; bands of red, blue and orange join the feathers together.

Interior West Corridor: East Wall. The most extensive murals of the Temple of the Frescoes are on the interior west corridor east wall (Figure 31). Here paintings once covered the entire wall, and now, thanks to the protection provided by the enlarged structure, most of the painting is

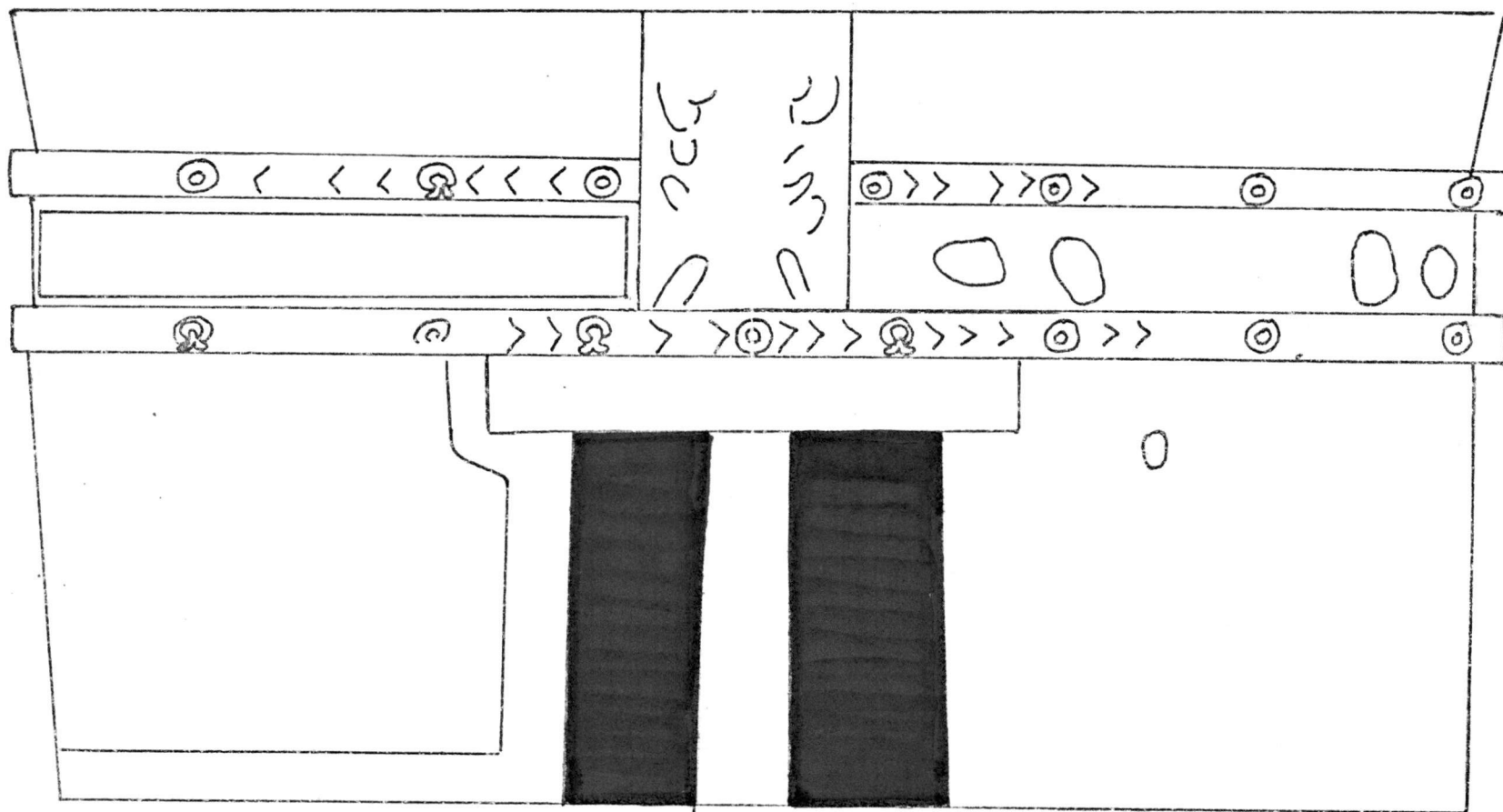


Figure 31: Tulum Temple XVI, West Corridor, East Wall.

1 meter

still visible. (Other authors have studied and described these paintings in great detail, e.g., Lothrop 1924.)

Both moldings were painted with sideways V designs and with decorated relief circles and rosette "knots." The V's point southward on the lower molding, and on the upper molding they face northward on the north side of the niche and southward on the south side.

Between the moldings on the north side the paintings cover the entire area. On the south side, however, only one bent over figure in the center, part of a seated figure at the south end and part of a figure holding a scepter/vessel on the north end are visible.

The recessed lintel was evidently once painted blue, and the supporting column and the sides of the doorway were decorated. Since the column was added later for support, these paintings were probably done in a style to match any other pre-existing paintings. Only the west, north and south sides of the column were painted. The paintings on the walls of the door opening continue in only for about 55 cm on the north and about 44 cm on the south side.

Almost none of the painting on the south side of the west lower façade remains, just a fragment representing intertwined cords and a few other assorted lines. On the north side there are three levels of painting sectioned off by knotted bands and a central woven column with a rosette. At the bottom is a creature level containing a strange circular fish, perhaps a flounder because both eyes are on top

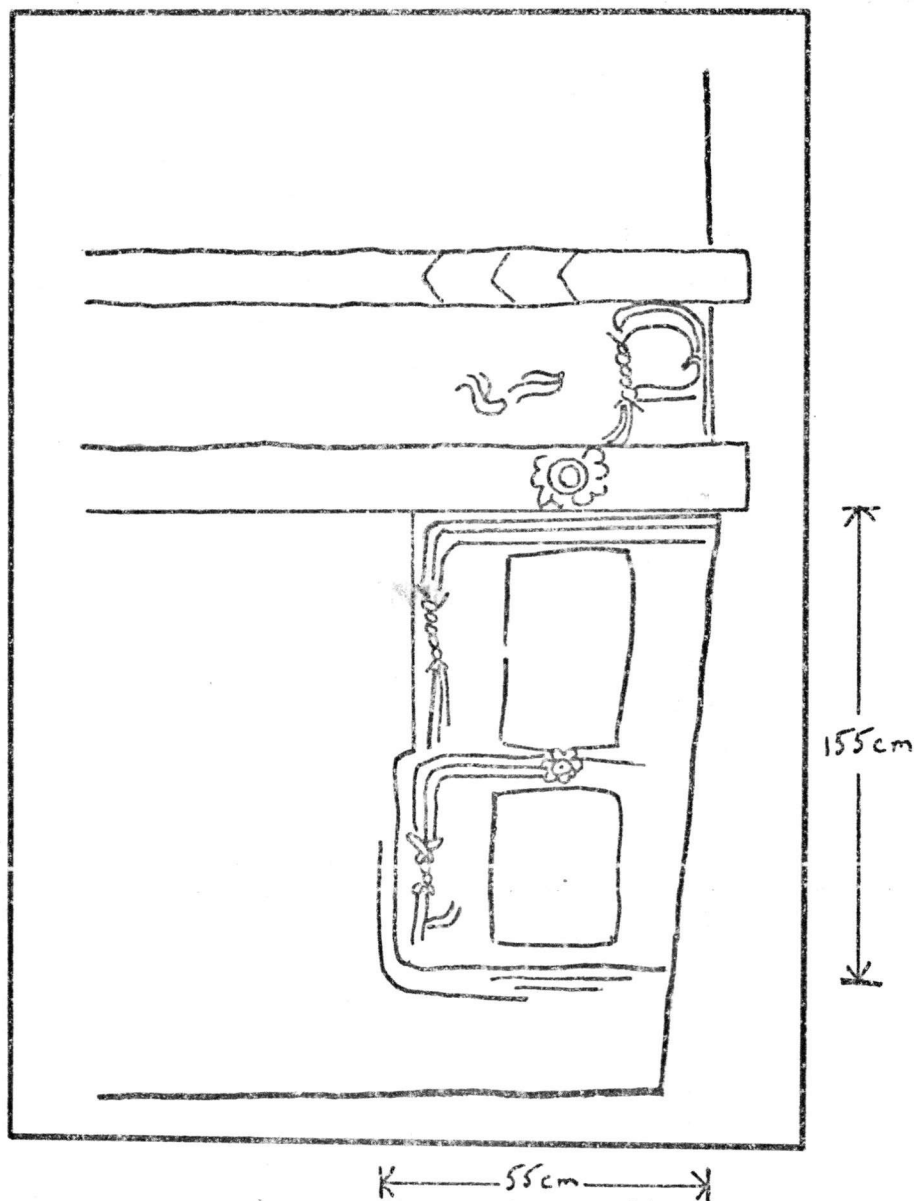
of his head. Painted on the wall at the sides of the lower façade are elaborate columns.

Interior North Corridor: South Wall. The paintings on the south wall (Figure 32) of the interior north corridor exist only at the west end where they continue from the west wall for about 55 cm. Paintings are still extant on the lower façade and both on the moldings and between the moldings.

The upper molding exhibits three sideways V designs with the points toward the east. The lower molding shows the top of a V pointing west, and to the east of this is a rosette. This rosette, however, instead of being in relief as those are in the west corridor, is merely painted on the band. Could it be that the painting continued onto the side as an afterthought and that an extra rosette was needed to balance the composition because there were relief rosettes on the molding of the west corridor?

The lower façade has two layers of painting separated by a horizontal, intertwined base with a painted rosette in the center. There is a top border band of three light (blue) cords which bend down to form the east side border of the upper layer. A painted knot is in the middle. This band is woven with the border band of the second layer to form the dividing column. The lower border band also has a knot in the middle. Because of the weaving, this band is 2 cm further east than the upper one. The bottom border is made of several wide light bands with blue decorations.





North Corridor, South Wall



South Corridor, South Wall

Figure 32: Tulum Temple XVI

Both levels of painting feature a blue figure with black interior lines and a dark background. Both figures face westward and carry scepter/vessels.

Lothrop (1924:61) identifies the figure on the top level as the corn god. This figure is 41 cm high and 40 cm wide. He has sandalled feet and one clothing tie hangs in back, another between his legs. The bottom of his clothes are scalloped, and in front of him swings a necklace with a large circle and hanging jade beads. Also in front but below this, a long straight object juts forth, coming from around his back; another stalk emerges from his back and bears seed pods. Behind his head is a half rosette with a serpent head facing east. The serpent head has an eyecrest and an eyecup; a flower protrudes from the eyecrest, another swirls up from his nose. The figure wears a dangling earring and circles are drawn across the bottom of his headdress. A horizontal knot appears above the circles, then two circles, finally, the headdress splits in two directions--feathers to the rear, curls forward.

Only the top part of the vessel/scepter remains. Part of the fingers of the right hand are showing holding the object. Growing from its front is a flower which loops down and another ornament which goes upward. Beads line the top and bottom of a circle on the vessel. While the bottom and the very top of the vessel are missing, a flower and seed pods grow from the upper band of what is visible.

In the lower level section of this façade curved stalks grow from the bottom of the side border and a flower hangs from the top border. The figure's feet are chipped away. Stooped, it appears to be wearing a skirt with a knot tying the front. Bands cross the center of the skirt, and ties stream out behind, while a long sheet of material hangs in front. Both hands held in front, the figure clutches a scepter/vessel with the right hand, the left arm uplifted. Even though a nose extends beyond his mouth the face of the figure resembles a monkey with an open, protruding mouth and flat front teeth. A serpent head with eyecrest and a curved-down nose topped with a curi, faces east from behind the figure's head. The figure has a high head crown with feathers falling behind. The scepter/vessel has a flower growing up from the front and a curl down below the flower. Ties hang from the bottom of the vessel, but the top is indistinct. It looks almost as if a second serpent head, with an eyecrest and a long snout protruding beyond the figure's nose, faces west above the figure's head.

Interior South Corridor: North Wall. Lothrop wrote the following about the paintings on the north wall of the south corridor: "They are not so far gone that they could not be traced if the paint were brought out by some liquid, though we do not envy anyone the task" (1924:94). After studying the paintings in this and the other corridors, Fernández, Lizardi and Rozo wrote:

The theme of this fresco in the south gallery is similar to the other frescoes of the same Temple 16. It relates to scenes pertaining to fertility (as seems to be indicated by the serpent heads and their intertwined bodies which form the frames and subdivisions of the tableros of the Fresco). Fruits and flowers abound in this picture. The fruits are shown as pods and as stylized ears of corn, food par excellence. Both of which indicate the agricultural scene and the religious nature of this fresco (1945:118).

The visible paintings are at the east end, along the bottom border (faint traces exist over the rest of the lower façade) (Figures 33,34). Dim lines can also be seen on the lower molding and painting between the molding at the east and west ends.

Painting Between the Moldings. Between the moldings at the extreme east end is an elaborate snake head, 19 cm high and 19 cm wide. The head, adorned with a feather crown, faces east. A flower swings up from the end of its nose and another ornament projects upwards from in front of its eye. A circle with vertical loops is seen behind its head as well as a hanging design from under its mouth. Back of the head is the top of an intertwined column. West of this is a faint figure, 27 cm wide and 17 cm high, whose hand almost touches the ground, giving the impression that the form is crawling westward. At the far west end there is a column with lines extending out on each side; some of the lines continue around the corner. This column, 23 cm wide and 24 cm high, looks almost like a tree with branches curving to either side from the center. A design to the east, at-

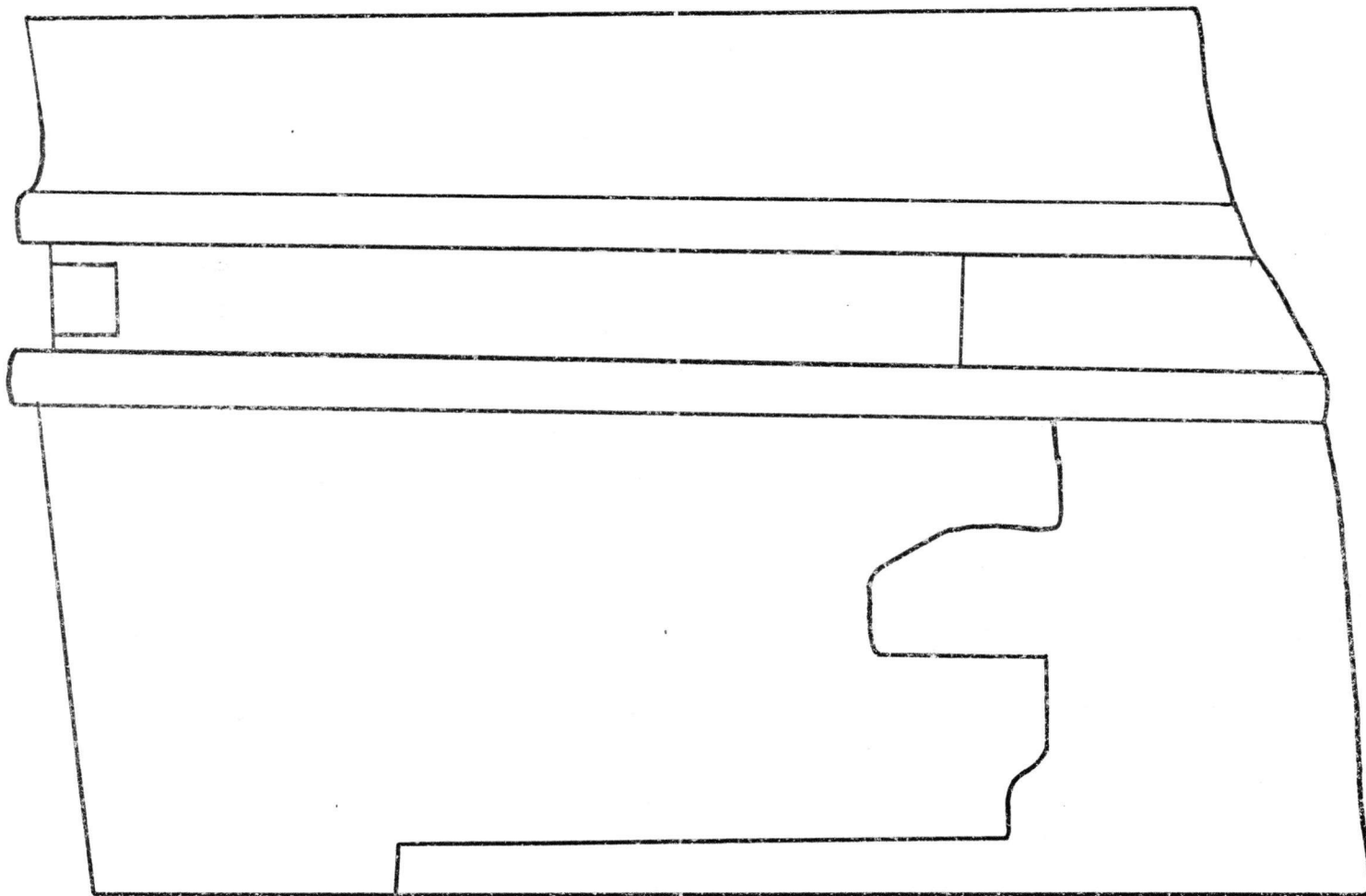


Figure 33: Tulum Temple XVI  
South Corridor, North Wall

1 meter

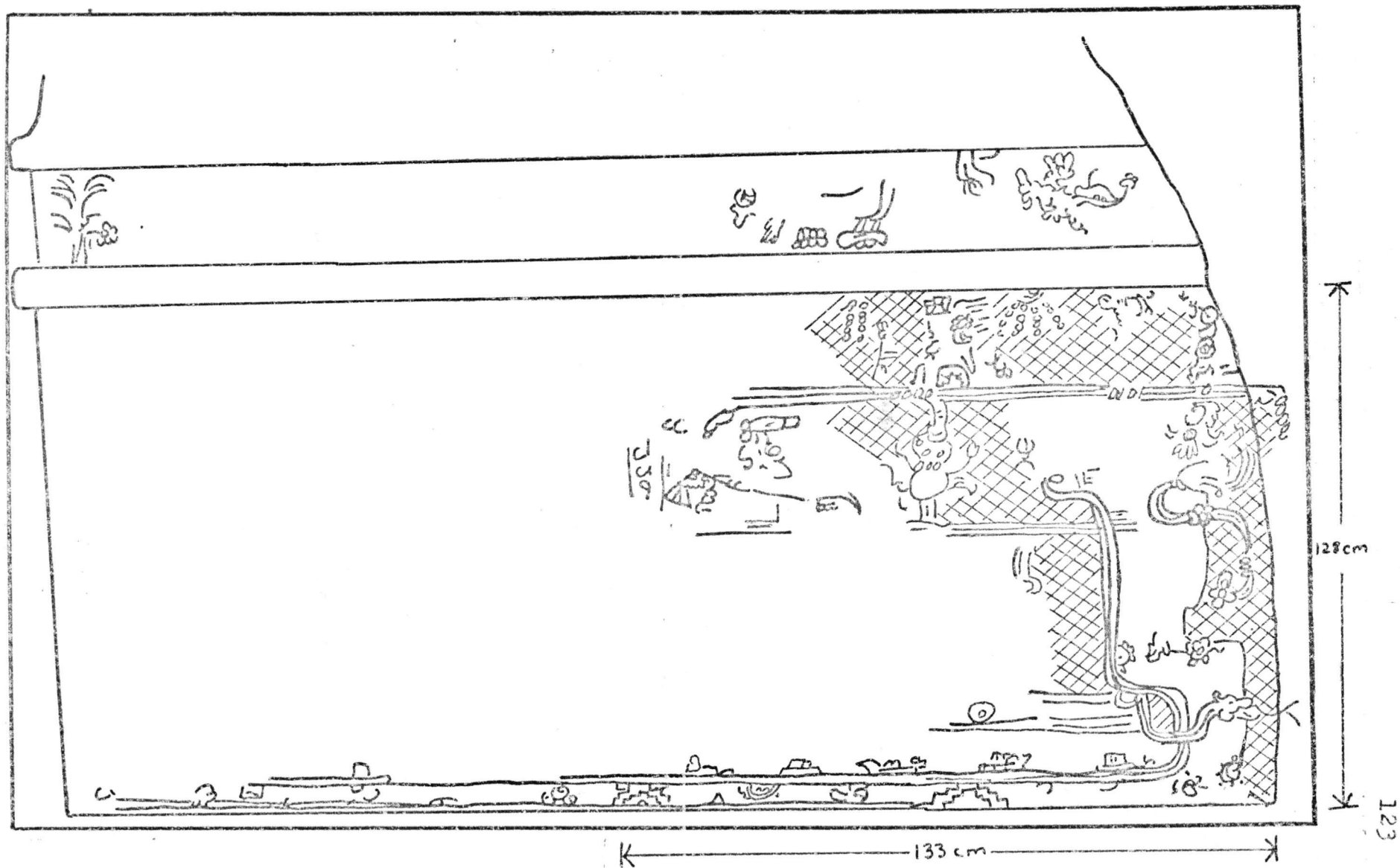


Figure 34: Tulum Temple XVI, South Corridor, North Wall: Painting

tached to the tree-like column, is drawn with radiating lines. Other indistinct painting fragments can be discerned to the east of this. Blue paint is visible at the west end. All the figures were probably painted in blue with black interior lines against a black background.

Some weak lines can still be marked on the lower molding, such as circles and V-shaped designs turned sidewise.

Lower Façade. Along the bottom of the lower façade is a band 9 cm high composed of several repeating designs, although Fernández, Lizardi and Rozo suggest that there were two alternating patterns (1945:118). The row is bordered by a single black line at the bottom and a triple line at the top. The designs are geometric steps, circular glyphic forms, knot ties, and combinations of curls and headdress-type arrangements. No effort was made to contain these designs within the band because they frequently loop below. They were drawn in black outline on the once blue plaster. Above the triple-line upper border of this band is another band, 11 cm high, in which designs tend to sit in a row along the bottom.

The three lines which make up the division between the lower band and the one above curve up near the east end to meet the neck of a serpent which swings down from an upper border, then up to end in a snake head. The serpent has an open mouth, a tongue curl at the side, double fangs and a long tongue which continues around onto the east wall. Below the serpent head is a design composed of two concentric

circles with scallops in the interior, a double slanted band through the middle and small circles around the exterior. This design is cut by a dark section on the east side which continues for 7 cm to the end of the wall.

Behind the serpent head is a square black section, and behind that another light band with circular designs. Above the serpent head is a light area containing a serpent eye, a double curl and a mirror half of the concentric circle and scallop ornament below. This space is bordered on the west by a triple black line; above is a black section containing a knot and tie design which swings down from the upper part. In this upper section there is a figure, 29 cm high and 18 cm wide, riding westward on the band. The legs are bent back at the knee, ornaments are on the legs below the knees and a waist tie hangs behind it. A circular device with hanging jade lies around the neck. The left hand is raised toward the back clutching a hatchet. The right arm has disappeared. Designs are on the cuffs of the left sleeve, and the headdress curves upward and back. Most of the face is gone, but the back part of the eye and the curve of the mouth can be detected. Feathers from the headdress fall behind the head. The band of lines on which the figure is riding curves up behind it and ends in a flower.

West of this figure is part of a vertical section band and on the other side is a dark portion in which is a column that features a large zoomorph or "Earth Monster"



instead of a central rosette. This creature, 21 cm high and 23 cm wide, resembles an inflated Psammead (MacDonald 1948: 29) with his circular body and arms stretched to each side. His head is straight up and from the open mouth the column emerges. He has a circle necklace and three eyes.

Fernández, Lizardi and Rozo say this about him:

To the left one sees an object which first appeared to us as a zoomorph or a divinity with the head of a turtle. But we considered it later as a vessel out of whose mouth sprouts an object similar to the figure which represents "food" in other frescoes of the same temple (1945:119).

West of the zoomorph is a seated figure, 32 cm high and 37 cm wide, holding a long object before him. His stool is gone except for horizontal bands across the seat and repeating U-shaped designs underneath. A loop hangs down in back. The fingers of the right hand are hooked over the pole of the object, and the hand is near his face. At the end of the pole is depicted a rectangular section, similar to a banner, flanked by a hanging flower at the west end and by a tassel design near the hand. Two interior rectangles are seen within the banner. The figure's face is obscured, but a line around his mouth can be detected, as well as a tassel earring. His headdress sports feathers at the top and the back section curves eastward. A flower which resembles the tassel on the banner hangs from the upper band in front of the figure.

One final section of painting is found above the upper boundary of this division. Here, at the east end, there is a column with a central rosette and a flower which grows

from the top. Two knots are discerned in the lower band, above which are two figures separated by four hanging seed pods under which a flower is placed. Only the feathered headdress of the eastern figure remains; its top curves toward the east and small loops line the back of his head. One of the knots is located under the figure.

The western figure, which is 30 cm high and 25 cm wide, is sitting on a stool decorated in a stepped, geometric design. One foot [not a hand as Fernández, Lizardi and Roza state (1945:119)] rests on the seat, the other on the knot under him in the lower band. There is a clothing tie behind the figure, and he wears a necklace with a hanging circle and jade beads. The scepter/vessel which is held before him to the west is adorned with ties at the bottom and feathers at the top. The open mouth of the figure can be seen. Hanging behind his head is a tie with a crisscross design, as well as loops and a rosette from which lines stream eastward. He wears a crown headdress which curves toward the east. This headdress is quite similar to the headdress worn by the standing figure in Section II, interior painting of the Temple of the Diving God. Two seed pods hang before him from curved-up hooks.

Interior South Corridor: East Wall. On the east wall of the south corridor is an interesting double-profiled face south of the door opening. The south face of the figure has a clear double infinity sign on its head (Figure 32).

Also on the east wall is a continuation of lines from the upper band of the lower façade of the north wall, south corridor; these lines curve down and form a knot on the east wall, a puzzling situation if the east wall is a later addition and if one assumes that the paintings precede the addition and were only on the original walls.

### CHAPTER III: TANCAH

#### PART 1: STRUCTURE 12

Structure 12 is located on the west side of Plaza B at Tancah (Figure 3). One enters the doorway from the east. The sea can barely be heard above the movement of wind through the thick green vegetation and occasional passing cars on the road directly below the structure on the west. It is a single-room, vaulted building, smaller than Temple V at Tulum, with no benches (Figure 35). Only one window interrupts the mural on the interior west wall. A tree growing through the floor has split this wall apart, forcing the southern end to settle slightly. The entire south wall and south end of the floor have collapsed into rubble which cascades down the southside of the building. A large gouge into the stone has been made in the north side of the mural by a souvenir seeker (Figure 37).

This building has not long to survive. A corner crack separates parts of the north and west walls. Another crack appears in the center of the southern section of the mural. In the past year not only has the tree split apart from the west wall, but also the entire roof has separated and the roof comb is in two parts, collapsing the center corbelling and placing the lintel at a precarious tilt, waiting for an

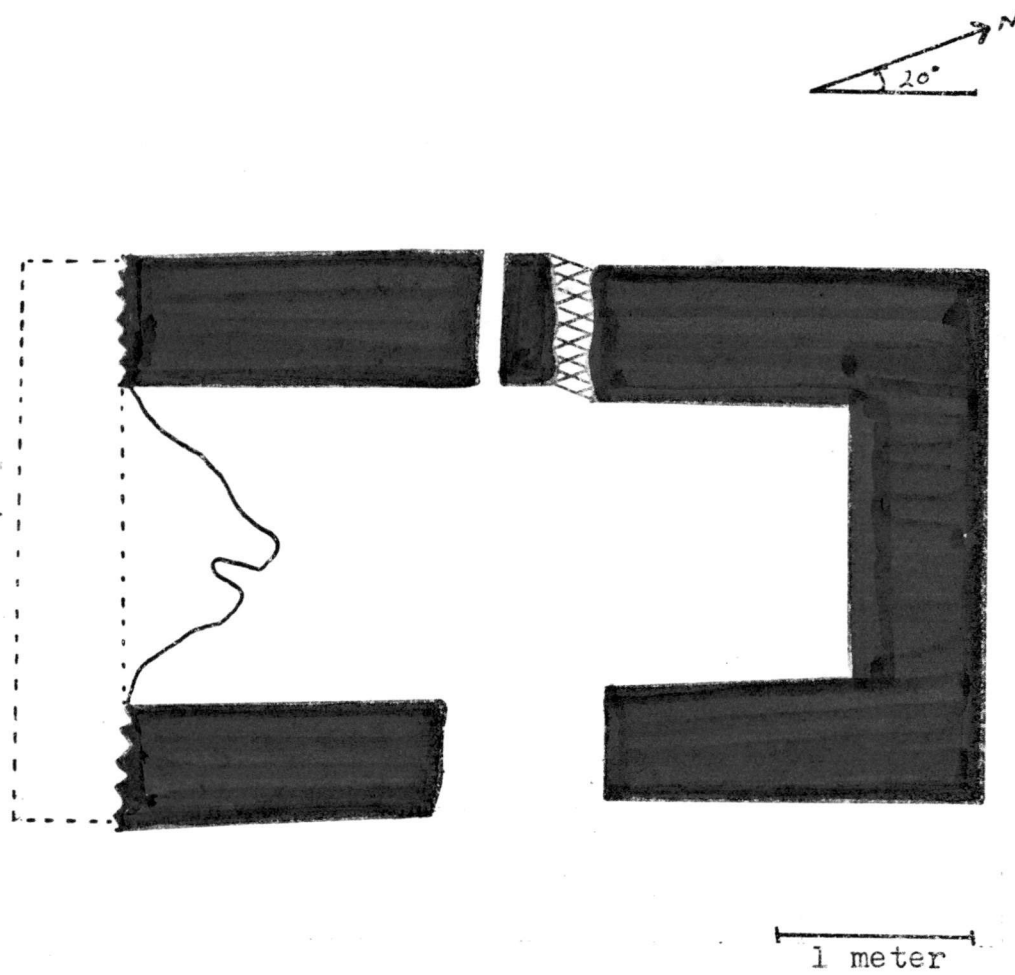


Figure 35: Tancah Structure 12, Plan

excuse to crash completely to the floor. On the lintel one can still discern red paint on the underside and east face. Red is also apparent on the exterior south where the lintel is attached into the wall.

The roof comb atop the building has two east-west openings under recessed lintels (Figure 36). (Actually only the southern part is intact.) A molding runs above the lintel and a second molding above the door aperture is today almost totally destroyed, except on the ends where the three parts are visible. Once upon a time stairs led from the plaza up the east side of the structure. Now only vines, trees and insects choose this entrance. An ominous sign is a road crew below.

#### Mural

Like the Tulum Castillo Corridor painting, the Tancah mural is outlined in black (2 mm wide) with coloring-book style interiors. The red, yellow ochre and blue used here have retained more color than those at Tulum. There are seven figures, both seated and standing, on a tri-colored bottom border band consisting of three painted horizontal stripes running the length of the mural. The bottom stripe is red, the middle yellow and the top blue. Each colored band is about 4 cm in width with 5 mm black separating lines. This mural is similar in style to Layers II and III of the Tulum Corridor, and like Layer II, it represents a procession of figures. These figures, however, face both

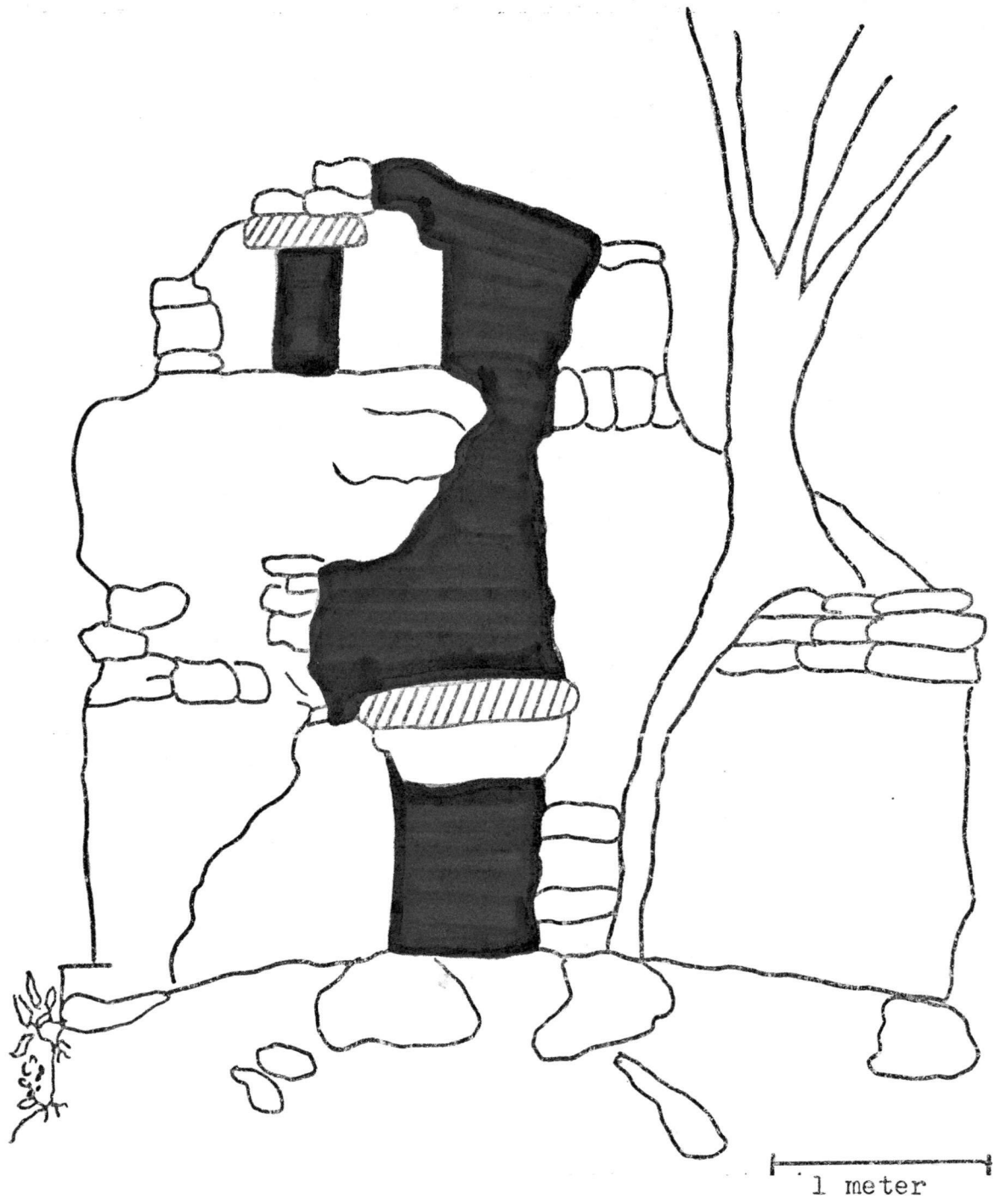


Figure 36: Tancah Structure 12  
East Façade

north and south while the Tulum figures only look toward the south. Since the south wall of Structure 12 has fallen, the painting at this end has been most exposed to the elements and is most faded.

First, the northernmost figure, (Figure 38) dressed mainly in blue with yellow and red accents, kneels facing south. He is holding something (an offering?) out before him, just below face level, in his cupped hands. Much of the paint has faded leaving suggestions of headdress, clothing and face. Three blue feathers (two of which have red tips) dangle behind his back from the headdress. The headdress itself, basically yellow with blue and red, reaches up in a curve above the feathers and ends in a crown-type affair with plumes very like those in Layer III of the Tulum Corridor. The most fascinating aspect of this figure, however, is his Chac mask with long, curving blue snout, yellow mouth and yellow eye cup. This figure measures 29 cm from hand tip to the back of his headdress and 68 cm from stool to headdress top.

Figure II is standing or walking with bent legs, facing south. Here the painting is in fairly good condition, excluding the portion in which his head was executed. An area 28 cm wide by 17 cm high has been removed from the wall. Although the legs suggest movement southward, the torso is seen from the front with the right arm out to the south and the left toward the north. He wears blue sandals with ties, blue pants with red cuffs and circular designs



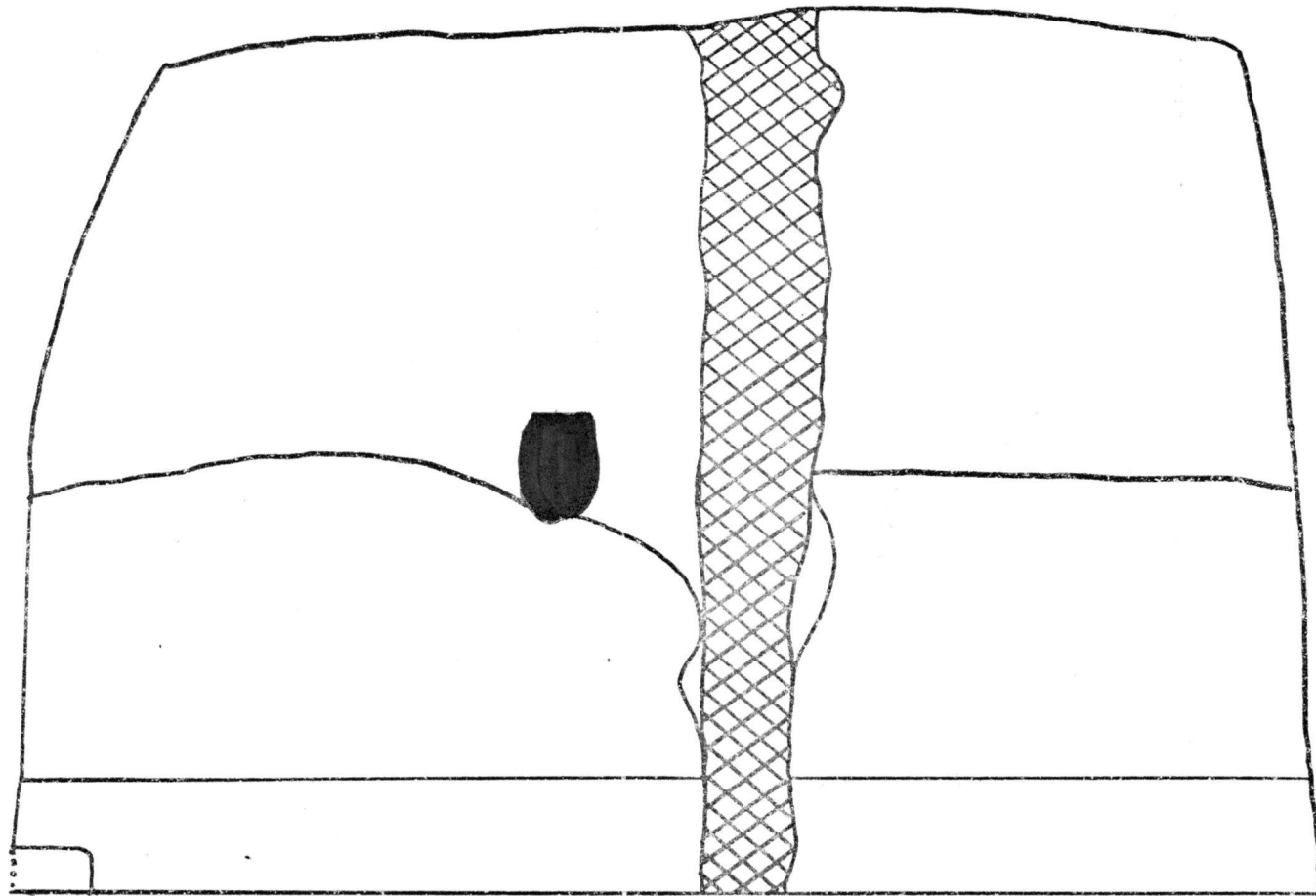
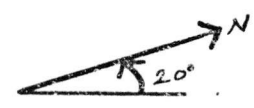


Figure 37: Tancah Structure 12  
Interior West Wall

1 meter



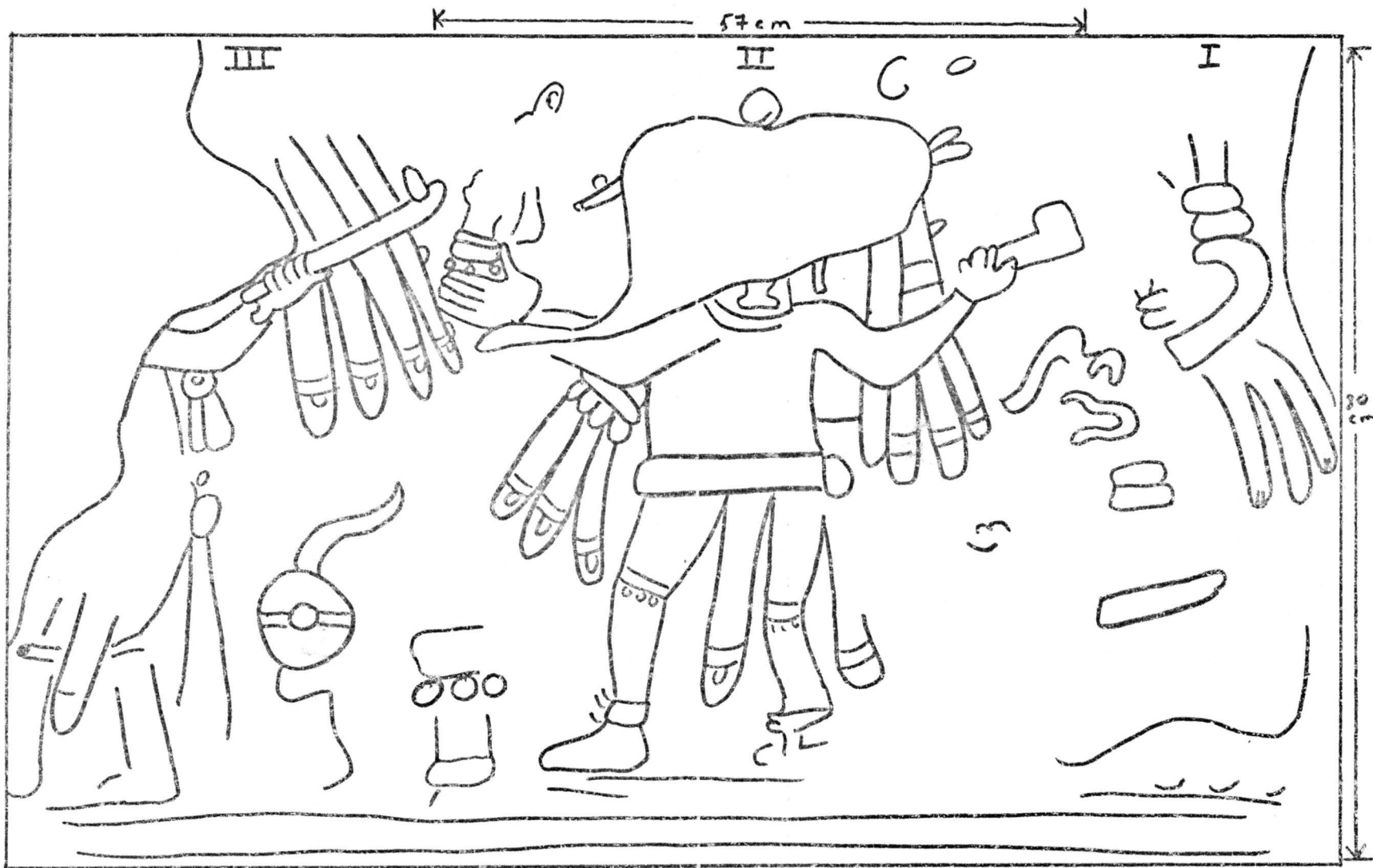


Figure 38: Tancah Structure 12, Interior West Wall  
North End: Painting

around the knees. A blue sash is tied in the back with a yellow knot, as well as two clothing ties: blue with a yellow stripe which ends in red. (One hangs behind the left leg, the other between his legs.) A feathered ornament is visible beneath his right arm (a sort of pectoral?). He has a yellow "collar" and a touch of red on the right cuff of his blue shirt. Above the collar is the bottom of a red object, chipped away like the head. North of the hole in the wall, yellow and blue headdress feathers hang: yellow swirls above and a blue-and-red design in front of the hole. The right hand is holding a red tripod containing yellow and blue objects. The left hand clutches a blue axe. This figure measures 67 cm from shoe soles to headdress and 57 cm from finger tips to axe end.

Between Figures II and III are two objects resting on the border stripes. The first is perhaps a blue bowl. The design is red dot on a blue and red base: 15 cm high and 9 cm across. The second object is completely blue and 26 cm high and 12 cm wide. It consists of a blue base on which rests a circular, glyph-like form with a circle in the center and a horizontal band through the center. From the top emerges a design which could almost be a blue flame.

Figure III is split by the tree. Like Figure II he is walking with bent legs toward the south. His clothing is similar, with blue legs and sandals and red encircling his knees. His sash is secured with a red knot; two blue clothing ties with yellow at ends hang down from the figure. A

yellow circle hung with blue ties hangs below the left arm which is stretched to the north clasping a blue axe. Blue feathers with red and yellow tips are suspended behind the figure from yellow headdress curls. The face and the rest of the torso are replaced by the tree, but on the southside of the crack, the right hand holding a red container with yellow and blue contents can be discerned, as well as a few blue feathers below the arm. The figure is 66 cm high and 45 cm wide north of tree; south of tree 12 cm wide and 25 cm high.

Between Figures III and IV (Figure 39), south of the crack, a large vessel stands on the bottom border. It is 17 cm high and 12 cm across. It has a blue base, the body is polka-dotted with blue, a band of red circles is near the top and the mouth is blue.

Figure IV is seated and shows some similarity to Figure I. One leg rests on a foot stool; the body faces south, inclining slightly forward. He wears blue clothing with a red cuff at one foot and a yellow and red object which dangles below his arm (from the neck?). Feathers of blue, red and yellow hang, possibly from his headdress, behind his back. Most of his face has faded, but the lower section of a yellow mouth or "beak" can be discerned. Suspended in front of the face is a red circle with a yellow skirt and two blue tassels. His hand (or hands?) is before him and holds a red bowl containing four lumps of yellow copal. This seated figure measures 32 cm from bowl to

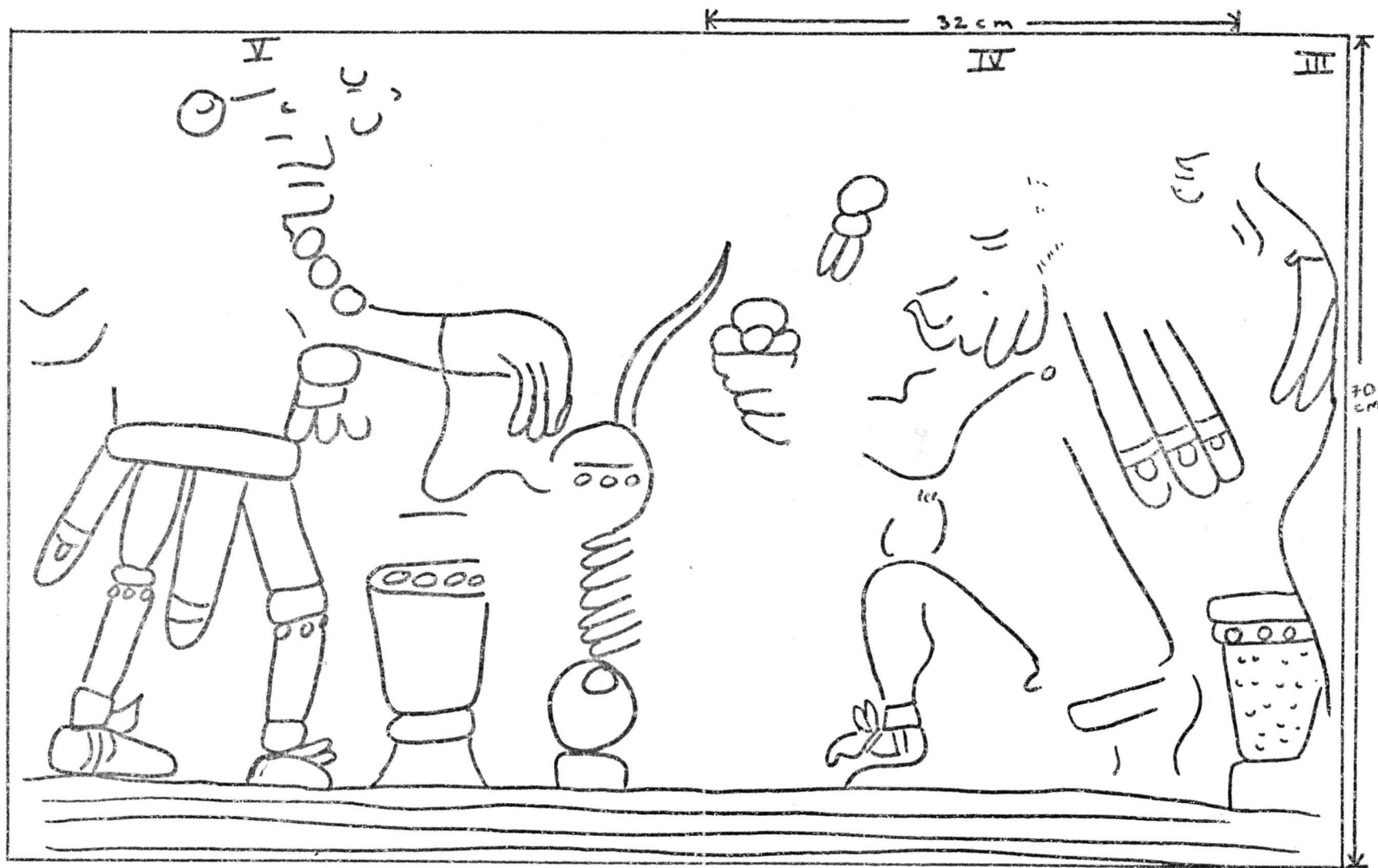


Figure 39: Tancah Structure 12, Interior West Wall  
 Middle Section: Painting

feathers and is 48 cm from the top of the border to the highest visible spot of headdress.

Between Figures V and VI are two objects similar to those between Figures II and III, but in reverse order. First is a tall form: circular base, vertical knot, then a ball with red dotted band through the center and topped by the blue "flame." It is 9 cm wide and 37 cm high. The second object is a blue container with a red band above the base and a ring of red dots near the mouth. It is 19 cm high and 9 cm wide.

Figure V is large compared with the other figures of this mural. He stands facing north with slightly bent legs. He is, however, dressed like the other members depicted in the painting: blue sandals with ties, red cuffs at ankles, blue pants with red circles at knees, blue sash with two ties dipped in yellow, red, blue shirt with a colorful (yellow and red) object hanging in front. His left arm extends to the north and his hand is pressed, fingers down, over the container. A prominent red object is represented below his hand. The other arm reaches behind him to the south (holding a hatchet?) (Figure 40). The face is human, but delineated yellow and black--perhaps like the mask figure in the Castillo Corridor? Also visible are a circular earplug and spots of a red headdress. The figure measures 52 cm in width from arm to hand and 57 cm from feet to eye--much more with headdress.

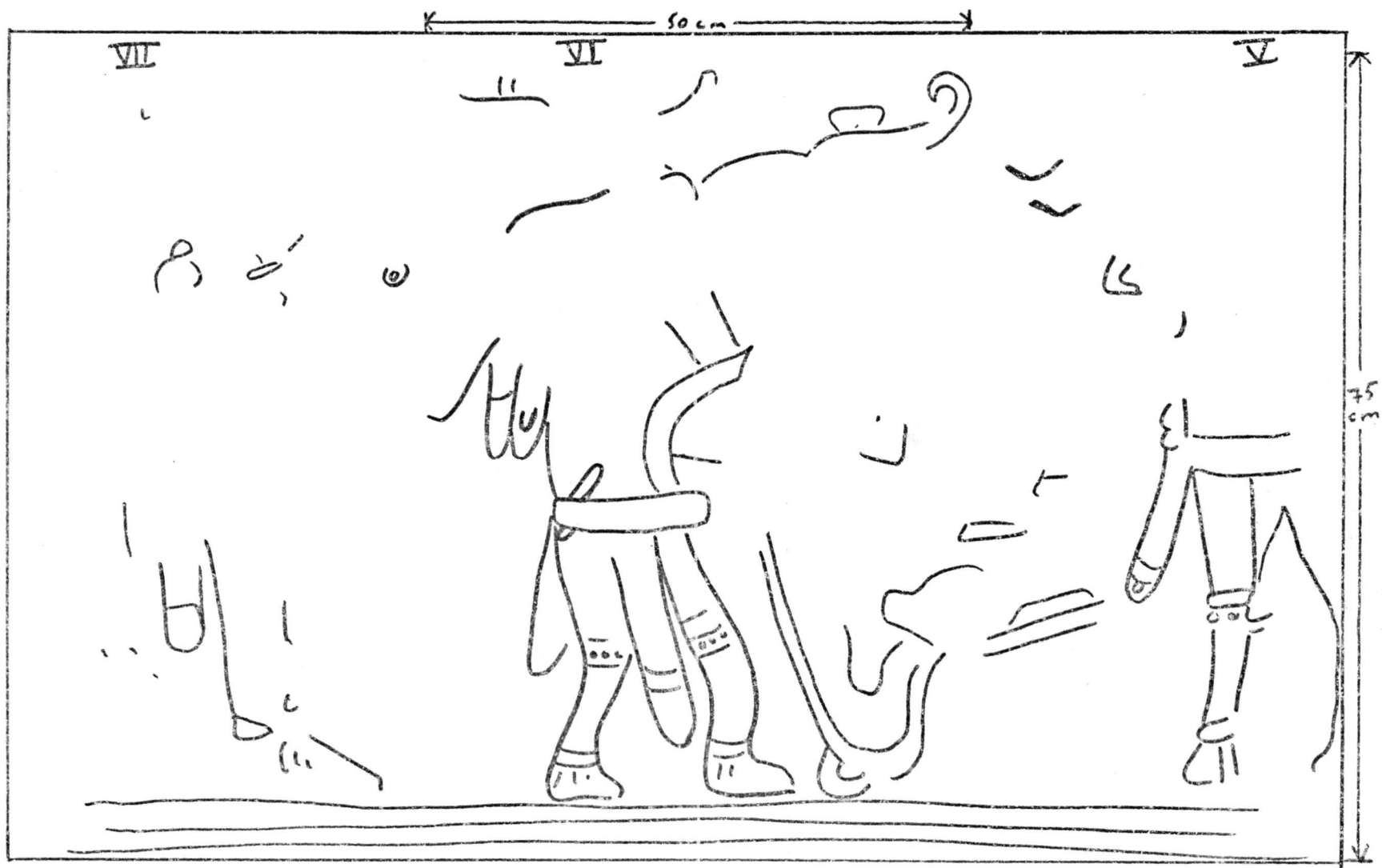


Figure 40: Tancha Structure 12, Interior West Wall  
 South End: Painting

Figures VI and VII (Figure 40) on the exposed south end are very faded, but they face the same direction as Figure V (his retainers?) and appear to be dressed almost identically. In this area, below the border band are traces of red paint. Perhaps the entire lower section was at one time painted.

In front of Figure VI, resting on the border, is a curved yellow object with blue interior painting and touches of red which may be part of the same figure.

Figure VI itself measures 70 cm high from shoe soles to top of his headdress, and from feather tips to front of headdress is 51 cm. He is clothed in blue sandals with red cuffs; red circles are on his knee guards; he wears blue pants, sash and has hanging ties (one behind, one between legs dipped in red). There appears to be a knife-like object tucked into the back of his belt. Before him is a red, curved object. His face is missing, but yellow swirls from the headdress are visible above.

Figure VII is practically gone. One blue sandal with red cuff can be perceived. The clothing tie is dipped in red. Part of a blue-clad leg remains. Above is a yellow earplug, and splotches of blue and red can be seen. Sixty-one cm high from shoe to the red spot in the headdress, the figure is 16 cm across its visible section and about 10 cm from the south end of the wall.



## PART 2: STRUCTURE 44

Across the modern north-south highway, to the west of Plaza B and Structure 12, is an additional complex of buildings. One of these buildings, Structure 44, contains mural painting in a style reminiscent of Codex Pérez.

Structure 44 is a long, low palace with three doorways leading inside from the west (Figure 41). The interior was composed of two long vaulted rooms running north-south. Three interior doorways lead from Room I into the easternmost room. Room I is in reasonable condition--most of the vaulting is still in place although the northernmost end has collapsed from the doorway. A huge ramon tree grows along the outer wall between the north and middle doors then drips over the roof itself. Room II has fallen to rubble leaving only a trace of the vault at the south end.

The two visible exterior doorways of the building and the middle interior doorway possessed recessed lintels. Around the exterior, above the lintels, ran a three-member molding like that around Structure 12. Just how the roof behaved above the molding is not clear although it was possibly of the same style as Tulum Temple V. The front of this structure faces onto a raised platform and the back drops by tiers to ground level. The platform is perhaps a two-step drop from the doorways. About 380 cm in front of the center of the building, resting on the plaza, is a circular altar 60 cm in diameter. To the west, still on the platform is the rubble of a small stone structure.

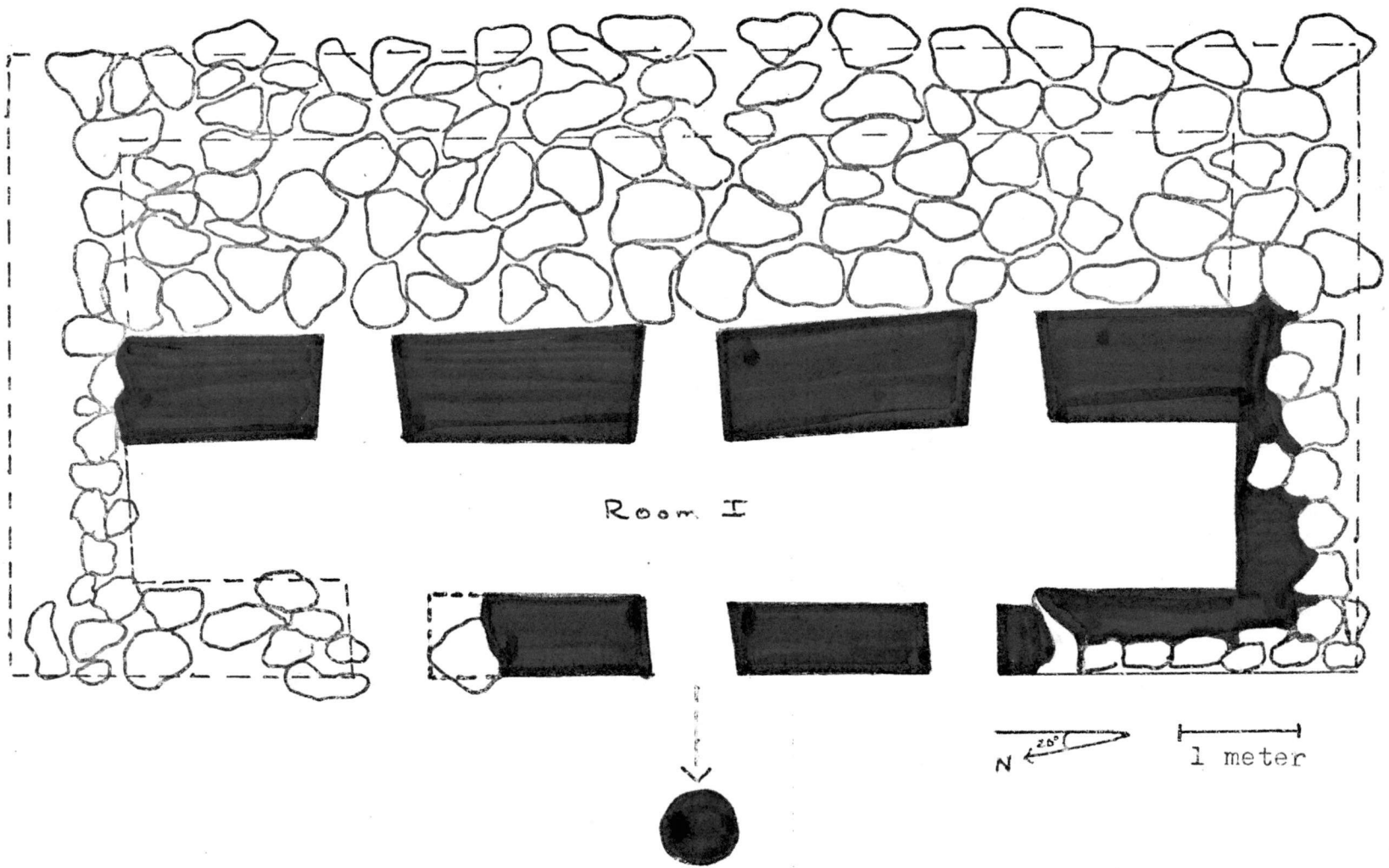


Figure 41: Tancah Structure 44, Plan

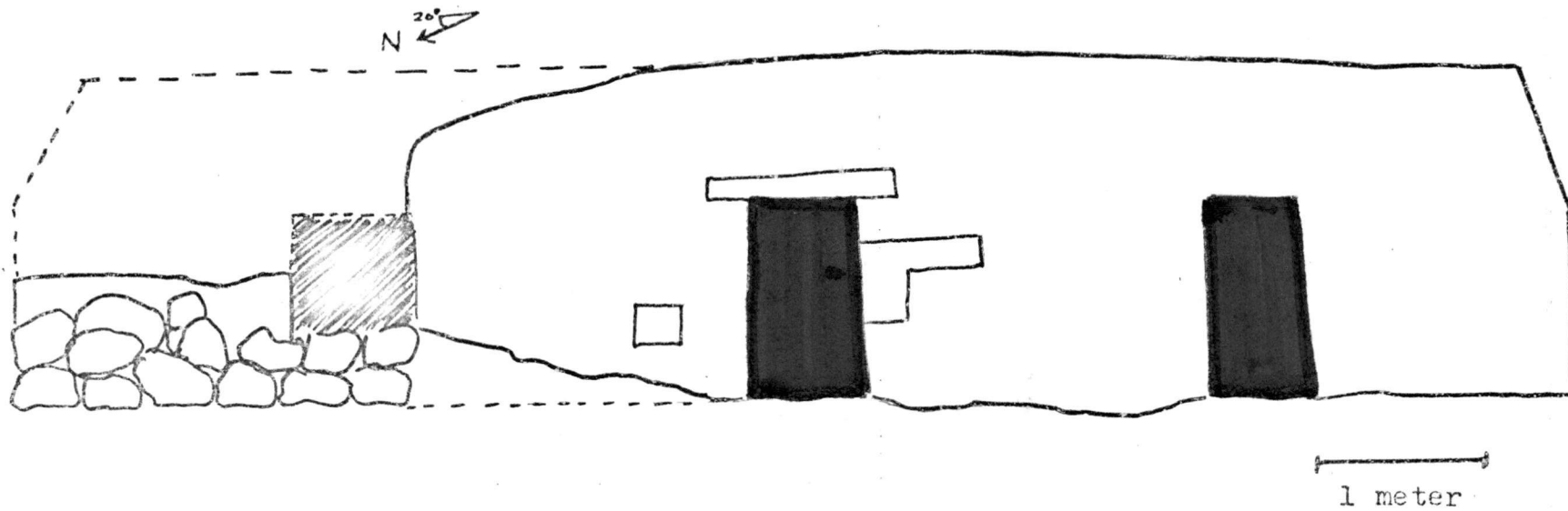


Figure 42: Tancah Structure 44  
Room I, East Wall

## Mural Fragment I

The paintings are located on the East wall of the interior Room I (Figure 42). Although only traces are visible now, beneath the layer of calcium, much more painting remains intact. The murals visible at this time are only fragments on either side of the central doorway (numbered I and II north to south). Around the doorway itself run lines of red and blue. Traces of these lines can be seen lining the recessed lintel. They are unevenly painted and the width varies 5-12 mm.

Fragment I (Figure 43) exhibits a cartoon-like appearance. A running figure facing south carrying a container before him. His face emerges from the open jaws of a fantastic creature which floats behind him like a balloon. The right leg is bent under his body and the left leg is bent extending in front. All of the lines of the figure are black, but with casually applied red accents. There are red bands around the ankles and one rectangular red patch is above each band. The man is barefoot. From a red sash around his waist hangs either an elaborate tie or some kind of sheath for a knife. His right arm, colored red, is bent at the elbow and holds a container with a tall object shaped somewhat like an ear of corn with speckles and a circle midway up the south side. From his open mouth black lines, perhaps a speech scroll, extend and run along the edge of the corn-shaped object without touching it. The figure's face emerging from the creature's mouth has a high forehead,

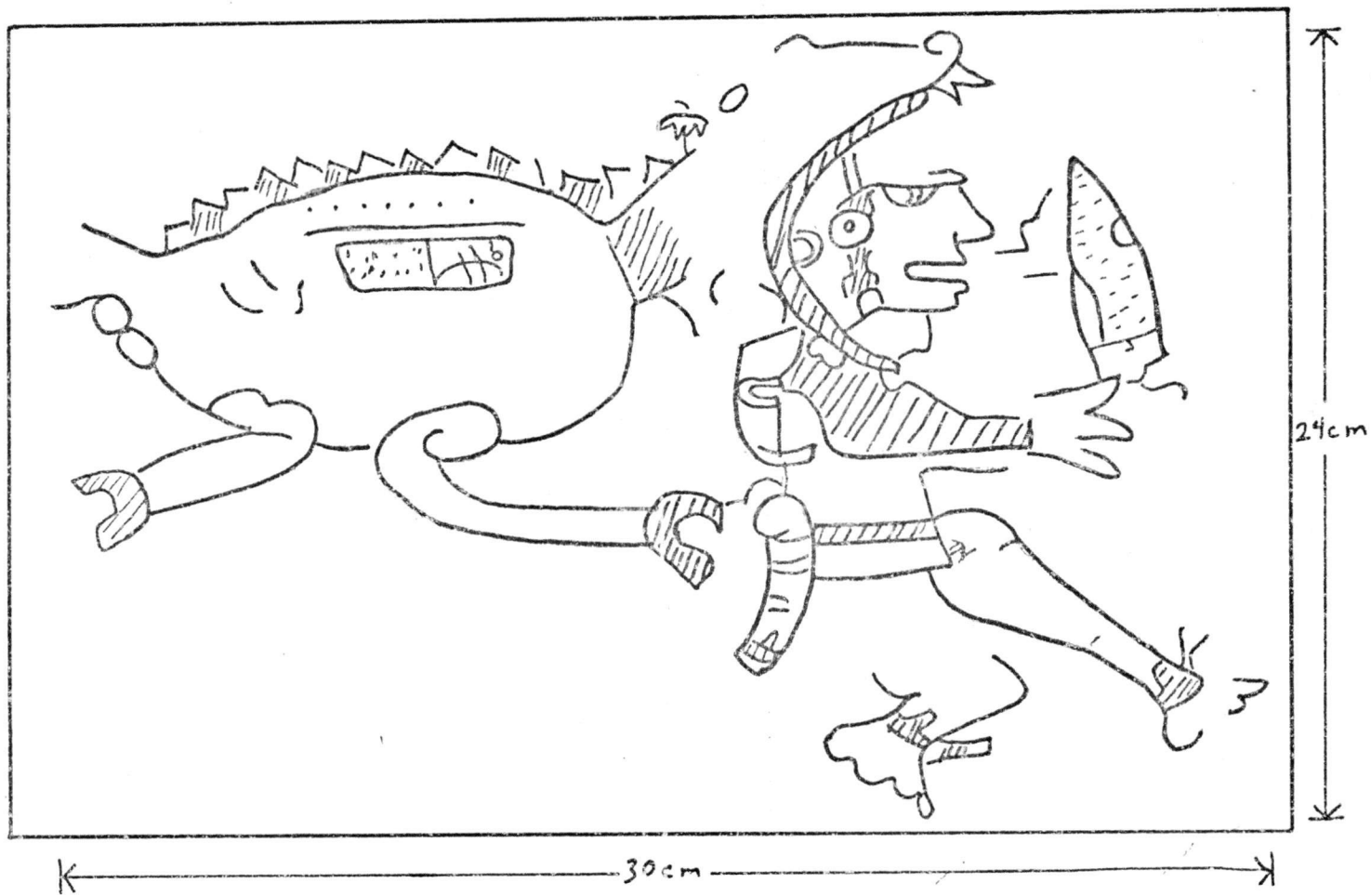


Figure 43: Tancah Structure 44, Room I, East Wall:  
Mural Fragment 1

a ridged eyebrow, a large almond eye, an open mouth and a prominent chin. A circular earplug and a vertical red band with a circle appear between the earplug and the eye.

The creature, with wide open red jaws, has a double loop below the lower jaw. The snout shows two fangs at the top above the red of the upper jaw. It has a circular eye and red and white pointed scales alternate down the neck and back. The egg-shaped body has a peculiar central design of two joined rectangles--the northern one with speckles, the southern one with lines and circles suggestive of a glyph. A black line runs above and dots appear above this line. Two legs with claw-like feet on the right side of the body can be seen. One stretches toward the south (front) the other bends toward the north. Testicles are depicted beneath the beginning of the tail. Plaster has peeled away with the rest of the animal. The total figure is 24 cm high, 30 cm wide.

To the south of this figure and a bit lower are black lines of a drawing on the same layer of plaster, but cleaning is necessary before it can be seen.

#### Mural Fragment II

Mural Fragment II (Figure 44) lies just south of the central doorway. The figures are sketched in black. The top figure is reminiscent of a court jester. The head or headdress is split above the eye to form a V-cleavage. The front section grows into a curl and the rear extends up before curving backward. A circular glyph (Kan--yellow, also

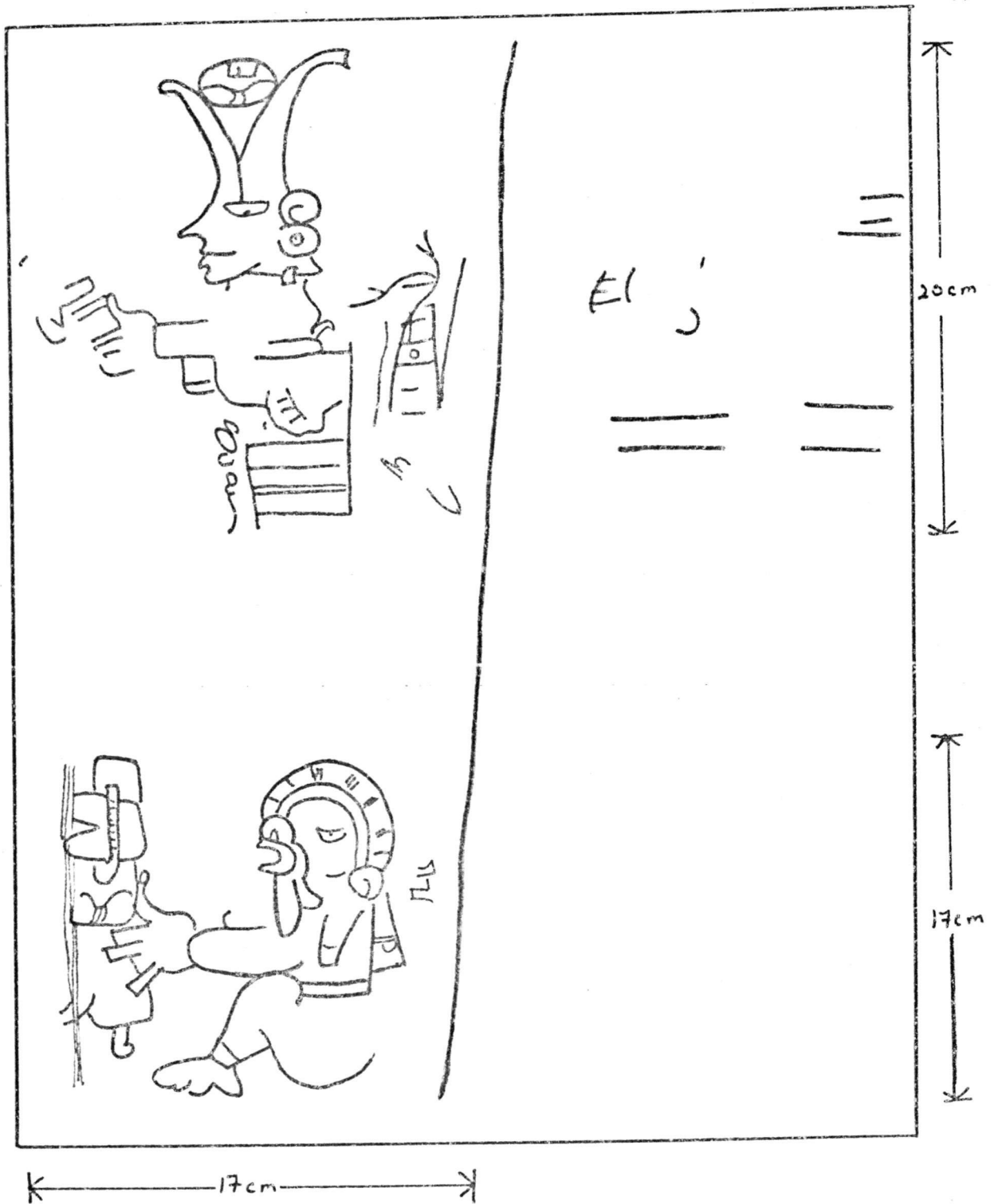


Figure 44: Tancah Structure 44, Room I  
 East Wall: Mural Fragment 2

associated with maize) sits in the open space. The eye of the figure is flat on top and curved beneath. A short line connects eye to bottom of the headdress cleft. The face has a sharp nose, a closed mouth and a rounded chin. There is an elaborate earplug with two double circles as well as a bell-shaped ornament beneath with a hanging tassel. The left hand stretches before him to the north holding a container (with black lines and a touch of red). Below the waist is a slanted rectangle with white, black and blue bands, possibly it could be a skirt. A chain of circles falls in front. Behind the figure, perhaps attached is a long vertical object composed of stacked squares and interior circles. Some blue can be seen running down the south side. Below is a solid black patch. This figure measures 30 cm high and 17 cm wide.

Figure II of Fragment II is just below Figure I. This is a seated god C again facing north toward the doorway. A striped helmet-like object encircles the head from the nose to the back of the neck. A second curved line is drawn under the striped pattern. An upside-down U-shaped nose continues around back of the open "beak" mouth and curls behind and below mouth. A second larger loop hangs before this one. A circular knot appears at the neck end of the helmet shape and two hanging ties make it appear as if the headdress is a mask. The clothing is indicated with simplicity. Also drawn are a sash at the waist and a cuff at the ankle. The shirt is not cuffed. This figure is



seated with his left knee drawn up to his chest. The left arm stretches out in front and rests on his knee. His left hand is rather crudely drawn (four fingers show), holding a long vertical object. His thumb curves up supporting the object while the other three fingers stretch forward.

In the object itself is a central rectangle with Kan-type markings. Below the rectangle hangs a peculiar form which breaks into a curve at the front and a squared off section behind. Beneath the squared piece a curl dangles to the north. Above the central rectangle is a rounded V form turned on its side. A vertical band with slanted stripes runs through the center and continues up into a quadrilateral shape resting on top of the V. The upper edge of the V has been painted black. A black drop emerges from the intersection of the V and quadrilateral shape. Figure II measures 17 cm high and 20 cm wide.

Behind Figure I, 49 cm from the doorway, two parallel horizontal lines continue for 29 cm. Probably when the wall is cleaned they will extend further. Above these are three parallel but shorter lines. Also are assorted black curves for which the wall must be cleaned to decipher.

## CHAPTER IV: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### PART 1: COMPARISONS AMONG TULUM AND TANCAH MURALS

The previous two chapters have dealt with descriptions of the murals at Tulum and Tancah. How can the various paintings be analyzed and what relationships can be found among them? When paintings are studied in relation to each other, there should first be established points to compare. Each researcher finds a slightly different orientation most helpful in his particular study. George Kubler outlines his course of study under three dimensions: the technical, the symbolic and the sensitivity of the individual artist. He comments:

In the technical dimension, we are aware of a long cumulative tradition of stock forms and craft learning, in which the maker's every gesture arises from many generations of experimentations and selection. In the symbolic dimension, we are presented with a cluster of meanings infinitely more complex than the single functional meaning that attaches to a tool or to a bit of information. In the individual or personal dimension we become aware of the maker's sensibility. Through it the technical tradition and the symbolic matter have filtered, undergoing alterations leading to a unique expression (1962:15).

George Stuart has considered mural painting in terms of style, motif and theme, which he comments, "do not necessarily go hand in hand with any consistency in terms of culture diffusion or culture change" (1941:19-20). Quiarte has

studied murals in terms of their objective form (1964:361) and theme (1964:371), while Robertson preferred to deal with style to the exclusion of iconography. He was "concerned with the vehicle itself rather than the burden of its contents" (1968:78). For my purpose (in this chapter), I have delineated three categories for consideration: style, content and aesthetics.

Style is here considered to be the characteristic mode of execution and the distinctive appearance and character of a painted representation. The features of style deal with the form of expression rather than with the content of the depiction. These features include: technique, defined in this paper as a method of performance; color, the physical attributes of hue, intensity and value, the iconographic use and the physical handling including use of outline, shading and flat painting; line, with its dimensions of width and value is used to define or suggest shape and to delimit details; texture, both the depiction of physical surfaces and conscious employment of color and line to vary these surfaces; form, the visual result of the uses of color, line and texture to define objects; space, which is so intimately connected with form that one cannot exist without the other--in pre-Columbian painting, space is initially bounded by the presence or absence of a ground line, frame or available area and, in addition, space is either defined by line and color imposing themselves upon the surface or by the forms themselves filling the available surface, whether

it is two or suggested three dimensional space; and composition, which is the way in which different features are organized into a total unit, embracing the principles of balance (including symmetry and asymmetry) dominance and harmony which give continuity within the variety of movement.

Content is the presentation of meaning, both literal and evocative. Iconography, the corpus of the symbolic representation of a particular culture, is reflected in various dimensions in pre-Columbian painting; in overall expression, in individual sections and in smaller details. Iconography is a major factor in the expression of content in this art. Content is here considered in three levels, theme, motif and elements. Theme is aptly defined by Stuart as "the depiction of distinctive action or episode relative to individuals, or groups of individuals (which), presumably, reflect underlying concepts of cultural significance" (1971:20). A motif is a recurring form composed of individual elements which tend to have symbolic meaning even though used in a decorative fashion in many instances.

The third aspect of pre-Columbian mural painting for consideration here is that of aesthetics as reflected both in the quality of execution of the art and the gestalt (the total visual and emotional impact of the piece). To an unavoidable degree, aesthetics is subjective because of the necessity of being acquainted with the background of the particular culture which produced the art. Neverthe-

less, there are certain common denominators in all forms of art, such as communication, organization and execution. Recognizing that my aesthetic reaction to Tulum and Tancah art is not necessarily identical to that of the people producing the art, I feel justified in making aesthetic evaluations based upon my study of the painting and my individual reactions to it.

Following is a consideration of the murals presented in the previous two chapters in terms of the three categories: style, content and aesthetics.

### The Murals

#### Castillo Corridor, Layer 1

Painted only in thin, faint black lines with no other color, such a small section of painting on Layer I in the Castillo Corridor at Tulum is visible that it is difficult to perceive the conception of form and space. There appears to have been neither ground line nor frame. The one clear remaining form, a dog, is small within a large space. The scene depicting a hunting party, wild pig and tiger, as well as the Indian head with plumes, both described by Fernández (1945) are not now visible. The dog itself is not painted in as sophisticated a manner as are the other layers of painting in this corridor.

#### Castillo Corridor, Layer 2

The painting of the second layer of stucco in the Tulum Castillo Corridor is presented in bold black outline

on a blue background. There is a more spacing use of dark blue, yellow ochre, orange and white, but much of the original color may have faded from view. The lines, which vary in both width and value throughout the long mural, are more regular at the northern end where the swirls extant in the southern section are not visible. Lines are used to suggest texture in areas such as the jade mask and the purse of the southernmost figure, and wavy lines are used to suggest water. Although both space and forms in this mural are basically two dimensional, the total painting is not of a flat texture. There is a hint of the third dimension in the overlapping of forms. Movement is suggested along the flat plane by the apparently striding figure at the north end and by the appearance of creatures surrounded by wavy, water lines. Forms are distributed within the space with a defined order. There was a bottom ground line and an upper frame. Large forms evidently occupied the major area above the ground line, although the spaces between these large figures appear to have been filled with smaller forms that may represent a horror vacui, while the smaller upper area just below the upper framing device was filled with smaller forms. This does not seem to be a rigid separation because there is no evidence of a dividing line; there may have been area overlap. The individual figures demand their individual points of reference as a viewer moves along the wall, but the compositional organization provides unity.

There is both variation and repetition in content expressed in this mural. A row of glyphs runs along the very top and a U-shaped element is repeated by the length of the visible painting. Several serpent heads appear as well as flower motifs. Two ceramic bowls contain circular objects. Water waves continue the length of the corridor surrounding the smaller forms at the top of the mural. Individual elements such as the stylized scorpion tail appear to be highly symbolic. The theme seems to be a ritual procession of priests, although only two depictions remain visible. The southern personage with the mask holds an object in what I interpret as a gesture of offering. The northern figure, who holds a manikin scepter, is immediately followed by a ceramic vessel with round objects which might represent copal, a ritual incense. The creatures and god figure at the top form what is often described as a celestial band.

This is a bold, definite painting showing some striking figures and characterizations, such as the priest at the southern end and the small god in the northern celestial band. The sensitivity of the artist is apparent, especially as executed in the face of the southern figure, yet some areas show a carelessness in execution, such as the overlapping of color outside the outlining black.

#### Castillo Corridor, Layer 3

Layer 3, of which only a tiny bit remains, appears stylistically to be very much like Layer 2. A black line

defines forms on a blue background. Darker blue and yellow ochre accents are visible. Although not enough is extant to get a true idea of the composition, the forms appear two dimensional and seem to be arranged in two dimensional space as were the forms in Layer 2. A form at the top is sectioned off by black lines, but there is not enough of the painting left to be sure about spacial boundaries. Although the central turban-shaped form is topped by feathers and the form at the bottom resembles an eye, there is not enough to suggest the theme. The quality of execution and general gestalt are very close to those of Layer 2.

#### Castillo Substructure, Room I

There is no guarantee that the two fragments of mural in Room I of the Castillo Substructure are from the same layer of stucco. They were both painted in angular, wide black lines and have been so exposed that only a few traces of orange paint supplement the outline. They are located at different levels of the wall: Mural I is 99 cm and Mural II 139 cm above the bench marking the bottom of the wall. These incomplete figures both appear standing or walking eastward. The top portion of neither is visible. Possibly they were figures in a procession such as on the second layer of the corridor, but both fragments are more rigid and smaller than the corridor figures.



### Castillo Sanctuary, Columns

Before the serpent attributes were added, the Castillo Columns on the upper sanctuary were painted with black lines on a blue background. These black lines are thin and the individual forms defined by the lines are small and are arranged in a space bounded by horizontal frames. Column 2, on which the painting around the capital is visible, shows two repeating forms filling the spaces between vertical and horizontal boundary lines. Below the capital the top of the column shows forms arranged in a horizontal space. Column 1, which shows only a lower section of painting, reveals a lower border band of alternating elements above which there is a series of horizontal registers separated by bands which may intertwine and form vertical frames as well. The forms are evenly spaced in the registers.

Column 1 shows, among several indistinct forms, a vessel containing two glyphs and a knot motif composed of the lower border bands. Column 2 in the upper celestial band shows at least one Venus symbol, and a series of the so-called celestial eyes. From these fragments, I will not suggest a theme, but the painting was obviously well organized and probably detailed and highly symbolic. Outer layers of plaster are visible over the painting and a black line encircling Column 1 disappears under the serpent head.

### Tulum Temple V, Interior

The painting on the interior of Temple V is one of the most interesting in terms of style, content and aesthetics.

As with the other paintings considered in this study, it was executed on a stuccoed surface. The colors, limited to black, white and blue, were used to give both positive and negative backgrounds. In the upper border black appears as the background color showing forms in the white of the plaster. In the main body of the mural the strong thin black lines are even outlines and in many areas more details are added by blue lines. Although much of the blue is faded there are no large filled-in blocks of this color. This is a very detailed and textured painting--both in depictions of physical texture and in the resulting texture of the composition itself. The forms, although technically two dimensional, hint strongly of the third dimension through overlap of feet, fingers encircling objects and textures on materials. The figures themselves, however, are somewhat stiff and regularized. Space, framed by borders and columns, contains a wealth of forms and no blank areas; in fact there is a slight crowding. The composition is highly symmetrical. There is an upper section, a lower section and a large central section divided into fourths. The northern two central divisions are mirror images compositionally of the southern two.

The vertical and horizontal symmetry is also reflected in the content. The elements and motifs of the upper section are celestial (stars, moons, Venus symbols), while the lower part reflects fish and serpents as of the underworld. The central area seems to show an event happening on the surface

of the earth. Sections I and IV show mirror images of the same winged creature or god. Sections II and III depict the same actions performed by different individuals. The clothes of the mirrored figures are almost identical, as if they were the garb for traditional ritual. A possible interpretation would be that these scenes represent the accession of a priest/ruler to power through the symbolic union of gods and men shown by the passing of an offering from the seated figure to the standing god. Some motifs which might be important to the theme are the plants and flowers, the knots, the intertwining borders and rosettes, including the central rosette with bifurcated element (see Miller 1972).

This is a beautifully executed mural painted by a skilled artist accustomed to working on an uneven vertical surface. The composition was well thought out and is the most coherent of all of the extant Tulum and Tancah paintings.

#### Tulum Temple V, Exterior

On the south end of the exterior north wall and around the corner on the north end of the west façade of Temple V is a series of figures about half the size of the interior ones. They are depicted in thin black lines. On the west façade an upper border with repeating U-shaped elements is visible, and on both walls the space is divided into sections by horizontal bands and vertical intertwining columns composed of these bands and containing central rosettes.

Although not all of the painting is clear, some of the figures on the west wall seem to be similar in depiction to figures in interior sections II and III. On the north wall, however, there are two profile figures carrying objects similar to the interior ones. These paintings lack the unity of the interior scene, but of course, they are incomplete.

#### Tulum Temple XVI

The majority of the painting in Temple XVI at Tulum is in negative on a black background. The forms are the natural white of the plaster with interior details in black and blue (now mostly faded) fine lines. In areas of white background, black is used as an outline and again details are shown in blue and black. The result of this and the spacial arrangement is a richly textured appearance with a varying background as well as foreground. Space is defined on the west and south walls into four basic horizontal registers of negative painting (dark background with lighter figures), one of which is between two painted moldings, and a lower section with a light background. The north wall, on which painting extends only a short distance, lacks the lower section and one of the four negative registers. The registers are divided by borders composed of intertwining serpent bodies and are subdivided into rectangles of differing sizes. These rectangles are filled mainly with human figures which Robertson accurately describes:

The human being in the (Temple XVI) murals is essentially composed of an assembly of separable parts. The basic fact of the body is the torso. The head is attached directly, the neck lost. The face is not the face of portraiture but is rather an interchangeable part. All faces are the same for male or female; only age can be shown. The same face can face right or left. The height of the head is remarkably large in comparison with the torso, a factor of its greater importance. Arms, like hands and faces are interchangeable parts. There are no shoulders linking them to the torso; rather, they both protrude to the right or to the left, or one can project from each side. Their range of position is limited; they are either straight or bent at an angle at the elbow. Legs are invariably attached to the torso in the same way and at an angle common to all figures. There is no pelvis to link them . . . This means that the ankle of the near leg bends awkwardly in walking or striding figures (1968:80).

Robertson continues by commenting that the figures escape monotony through the richness of their accoutrements (1968:82). The total composition reflects a careful balance of form, color, rich texture and spacing without a formal one-to-one symmetry.

The repetition and abundance of seed pods and other plant motifs are immediately evident as are the sideways V elements and rosettes of the moldings. I suspect that the rosettes and the bifurcated element which sometimes accompany them have celestial meanings. (Perhaps the rosette itself is an alternate depiction of the celestial eye and the bifurcated element, which I am tempted to view as a knot, represents Venus--a heavenly object which descends below the horizon and somehow symbolically unites heaven and earth.) Quiarte has written, "in Tulum . . . the very stylized human form is used simply as a framework or carrier

for attributes of the deities" (1964:374). In Temple XVI the majority of the figures appear to be representations from the pantheon and the theme of the entire mural may be an assemblage of gods and goddesses relating in some way to fertility (as reflected in the multitude of vegetal motifs), or a collection of mythological scenes, or a series of scenes illustrating a myth.

The paintings are sensitively executed and finely detailed. The organization and balance are well conceived and satisfying to the viewer, but the composition is that of an assembly of related parts rather than an integrated scene.

#### Tancah Structure 12

The mural in the interior of Tancah Structure 12 is the most colorful of all the paintings considered here. All shapes and details are outlined in black and most are completely filled with flat, non-vibrant colors. Turquoise blue, ochre and two shades of red are visible. Texture is shown on two objects by dots of blue over the surfaces. The value of the black outline seems fairly regular although the width is more varied, reaching an extreme of 5 mm in the lines of the bottom border. The forms are two dimensional in a two dimensional space. In this painting, as in Teotihuacan mural art, blocks of color accentuate the flatness as Miller pointed out (1943:25). The tri-colored bottom border provides a ground line for the forms which are ar-

ranged evenly with no overlap, except in minor details such as feathers which are part of a larger form. Since the top of the mural is faded, it is impossible to tell whether or not there was at one time also a top border. The figures which are fairly tall in relation to the available space, are not smooth, flowing forms, but are angular with awkward anatomical junctures where they are visible. The standing figures are shown frontally with no twist in the body, although the head and legs are in profile. The two squatting figures are more naturally depicted. The composition of this mural is symmetrical. A large standing figure facing north dominates the scene. Behind him two smaller figures stand appearing to mirror his pose. To the north two figures stand between two squatting figures. Even though the individual forms are not smooth, the entire composition is balanced and bound together by the continuous bottom border.

There are repetitions of elements and motifs throughout the painting: a couple of basic body postures; clothing, including details such as feathers and ties, are the same on all figures; several figures carry bowls and two carry a bowl in one hand and a hatchet in the other. Both squatting figures appear to wear Chac masks. While I cannot be sure of the subject of the scene, the theme seems to represent a historic event or be symbolic of a happening; perhaps this shows conquest and supplication represented by the hatchets

and bowls of offerings in the hands of the four northern figures who face the large major figure.

The mural is not finely executed and the blocks of color surrounded by black outlines give it a coloring-book attitude. There is, however, a pleasing coherency to the whole.

#### Tancah Structure 44

The paintings in Structure 44 at Tancah are depicted in what has been called Codex Style. As with all the examples discussed in this paper, the figures are painted on a stucco wall. Although there are a few lines in red and blue drawn freely with varying widths, use of color is restricted. A black outline delineates the figures and details and the only blocks of color are accents in red apparent in Mural Fragment I. Blue is used for accent in figure 1 of Mural Fragment II. The black outlines show varying widths but are too faded to judge true value differences. Texture is suggested by alternating colors on the scales of the creature in Fragment I, by dots on the handheld object, by stripes in Fragment II and by the various color accents. The forms are two dimensional in an undefined space. They appear to float--to run and sit on air--without the benefit of a groundline or frame. Unfortunately, the figures are isolated and fragmentary, so it is difficult to see the unified composition.

Although the painting is fragmentary, the recurrence of motifs and elements relating to maize suggest that the



theme dealt with such a topic. The Kan glyph, associated with yellow, maize and growing things; is found in the cleft head of figure 1 in Fragment II and is held by figure 2. All three figures support objects with outstretched fingers. The figure in Fragment I holds what might represent an ear of corn; figure 1 of Fragment II holds an unidentifiable object while figure 2 holds a tall object including a Kan glyph. Although I cannot identify the humanoid figure in Fragment I, the creature behind him may represent Itzam Na, a celestial monster which sends rain (Thompson 1972:37). Thompson comments that celestial bands are representations of the bodies of these creatures (1972:37) and, if the creature in Structure 44 is Itzma Na, the rectangles on his body would reflect the association with the celestial bands. Figure I of Fragment II is almost certainly a late version of the Maize God (other versions of this later period are seen in the Madrid and Grolier Codices), and figure 2 has all the classic attributes of God C. Details on these figures are scanty. Also the clothing is simple with no suggestion of cuffs on the sleeves, and the feet are bare.

These figures appear to be casually sketched rather than carefully painted. There is an almost cartoon-like appearance accentuated by the crudely drawn hands and fingers. The accents are applied without a great deal of care and the uneven lines add to their loose appearance.

## Comparisons

How can the ten areas of painting in the five separate structures be compared now that they have been analyzed individually in terms of style, content and aesthetics? First, in the stylistic dimension, a series of similarities is apparent. The painting of the Castillo Corridor Layer 2 and Layer 3 are almost indistinguishable (for as much of Layer 3 as remains). The black outlines with blocked-color features of this style as well as the organization of large central forms in space along a ground line are reflected in the mural in Tanchah Structure 12. The stylistic dissimilarities lie mainly with the compositional features. The brisk black outlines of the mural fragments in Room I of the Castillo substructure are also similar, if more angular than those of Layer 2 in the Corridor, but color and texture have faded from the Room I paintings and arrangement of the forms in space appears to be different. There is a second group of painting with stylistic similarities. The paintings of Temple XVI and those of the exterior of Temple V are very close in style. Organization of forms in space, lines and textures are similar, as are aspects of the general composition and size. A difference lies in the positive background of Temple V and in the use of black in Temple XVI. This, however, is minor. Many stylistic features of the mural in the interior of Temple V also relate to these others, such as use of color, line and texture.

The major difference is in the organization of space into a large central area even though it is bordered similarly to the others. The Castillo Columns also seem to be organized into bordered registers and painted in black outline with no evidence of blocked-color. The two styles which do not seem to relate to any others are the stick figures of the Castillo Corridor Layer I and the sketched drawings in Tancha Structure 44.

There are also a number of correlations revealed by the content of the different murals. An assembly of gods and figures, linked by the bodies of intertwining serpents, knots and rosettes is seen both in the interior of Temple XVI and on the exterior of Temple V. The figures in Structure 44 also appear to be gods, but of a different set. The painting in the interior of Temple V with its apparent scene of ritual has a different theme, but it shares certain motifs and elements with the exterior of the same temple and with Temple XVI, such as the details of clothing, serpent borders and held objects. Elements from the Castillo columns are also reflected in the celestial band of the Temple V interior mural. The second layer Corridor paintings share the act of procession with the mural fragments of Room I. Neither Corridor Layer I nor Structure 12 paintings share the themes of their scenes with any other murals, although certain elements such as colored feathers appear both in Structure 12 painting and on Layer 2 and Layer 3 of the Corridor.

From an aesthetic point of view the paintings of the second and third layers of the Corridor should be linked together and somewhat more loosely added to them should be the mural in Structure 12, which, although not as well executed, has a similar gestalt. The painting fragments in Room I of the Castillo substructure also has a general correlation with these paintings. The paintings of Layer I and those in Structure 44, however, each must stand alone. The painting of Temple XVI is closely related to the mural in the interior of Temple V regarding the quality of execution. The details on the outside of Temple V and on the columns are faded, so it is difficult to make a judgment about their quality or visual and emotional impact. The gestalt of the interior Temple V scene and of the Temple XVI art differs mainly because the themes vary.

## PART 2: RELATIVE CHRONOLOGY

Information concerning stylistic, contextual and aesthetic similarities among the murals as discussed in the previous section can be used in conjunction with other archaeological data to help construct a relative chronology for the paintings. Sanders' study of the ceramics and settlement patterns in Quintana Roo (1960) and the architectural analysis by Lothrop (1924) are useful in establishing these temporal relationships.

Lothrop, working with only a portion of the structures at Tancah, those located in groups A and B, commented that the architecture of Tancah was "surprisingly" different from that of Tulum (1924:121). Since he did not have access to Structure 44 and the more western buildings he stated that at Tancah there were no buildings of the palace style and he used this observation as a basis for one of his major features of difference between the two sites. After careful consideration of his available data Lothrop decided that the Tancah structures were constructed a bit earlier than those at Tulum.

The Tulum buildings he grouped into four major constructional periods on the basis of four architectural features: thickness of walls (the thinner, the more recent), location of the sunken panels over the doorways (in the later buildings they do not touch the lower moldings), vaulted or flat ceilings (the middle phases had flat ceil-

ings while the earlier and later phases used vaulted ceilings), and molding type (double molding occurring in the earliest and later phases and both two-and-three-member moldings which occurred in the middle constructional periods) (1924:70-71).

Lothrop placed the interior structure of Temple XVI in the earliest group which has thick walls, a panel which touches the lower molding, a vaulted ceiling and a two-member molding. Temple V and the Castillo substructure were grouped in the second phase with medium walls, panels touching the molding, flat ceilings (here he was mistaken because Temple V has a vaulted ceiling), and a double molding. The third group, described by Lothrop, does not include any of the structures considered in this paper. However, the fourth and last constructional phase which he proposed included the Castillo superstructure and accompanying stairway which formed the corridor from a large room in the original structure, and both the superstructure and outer shell of the lower structure of Temple XVI (Lothrop 1924:172).

What does this grouping reveal about the paintings in these structures? It is important to bear in mind that, simply because a painting is on a particular wall, it does not necessarily follow that it was placed there at the time the wall was constructed. This makes the question of dating a little tricky because, although sometimes stylistic features can solve the question, at other times no firm an-

swers can be derived from the painting. Considering the Castillo substructure first, it is obvious that Layers 1, 2 and 3 of the Corridor were constructed in that order. I am tempted to consider Layer 1 as pre-Columbian "doodling" because of the lack of sophistication of the style compared to the other two layers which could not have been far removed in time. I believe that the later two layers of painting in the corridor date from before the construction of the superstructure. The colorful paintings were much more logical along the back wall of a room lit by sunlight than along a dark narrow passage where the viewer could not even step back far enough to see the painting adequately. On the basis of style and context which link them with the corridor painting the fragments in Room I were also pre-addition. Although from an aesthetic point of view I would place them at a different stage from the corridor painting, the thicker lines of the fragments make sense if these figures, indirectly lit on sides of the room, were to appear as balanced parts of the more brightly lit painting on the back wall (Miller, personal communication).

Temple V, which Lothrop places in the same constructional group as the Castillo substructure, I do not believe was painted until a later time. There are very great stylistic dissimilarities and little iconographical relationships between Corridor and Temple V murals, while the latter share features with later paintings. The interior and exterior paintings of Temple V could have been executed at

different times since the styles and contents are not identical, yet I feel that the similarities are strong enough that they were not very far removed temporally.

The last constructional phase which includes the Castillo and Temple XVI additions shows a series of relationships. First, the painting on the Castillo columns exhibits iconographic similarities with the painting in the interior of Temple V, and, second, the columns show both stylistic and iconographic similarities with the paintings on the exterior of Temple V and the interior of Temple XVI. The relationship of both the interior and exterior Temple V murals to the painting on the columns tends both to suggest a closer relationship between the Temple V murals and to reinforce the hypothesis that the Temple V murals were produced later than the temple itself.

The murals in Temple XVI, although painted on the exterior walls of the earlier structure, seem rather to date after the addition of the superstructure and the outer shell. There are several reasons to believe the later execution. First, the painting on the north wall in the south corridor overlaps ever so slightly onto the east added wall. Second, the paintings extend the length of the south and west corridors which were well lit after the addition while only a small section at the west end of the darker north corridor is painted. Next, the column added in the doorway to the inner room of the lower structure to help support the addition above was painted as part of the mural.



Also, the similarity of style and content with the later paintings were executed at a much later time than the pre-Castillo substructure construction of the original Temple XVI (based on Lothrop's architectural data).

How and where do the Tancah murals fit with those of Tulum? On the basis of ceramic evidence Sanders (1960) suggested that the occupation at Tulum was entirely post-Classic, while at Tancah the data pointed to both Classic and post-Classic use. At Tulum he found a single ceramic complex representing a single chronological period (1960:183), and he suggests that this site was occupied for not more than two centuries (1960:188). At Tancah on the other hand he found a long ceramic record divided into three chronological assemblages. The first two are from an earlier intensive occupation while the third, similar to the single ceramic complex at Tulum, appeared as a post-abandonment phase (1960:169).

Although Structures 12 and 44 date from the Late Classic Period, the paintings within them do not. The style of the mural in Structure 12, which is similar to that in the Castillo Corridor Layers 2 and 3, suggests that it dates from the post-Classic reoccupation. If the reoccupation was by an incoming group, as the highland center-type planning and the architectural orientation of nearby Tulum indicate for that site (Sanders 1960:212), then the theme of conquest and supplication would be logical in the historical context. My sense of aesthetics would place the Tancah

Structure 12 mural as earlier than the Tulum Corridor painting, but this is a subjective judgment. The Structure 44 figures I suggest are post-Classic merely on the basis of their similarity to the figures in the surviving post-classic codices.

PART 3: COMPARISONS WITH  
OUTSIDE MATERIALS

In this section I want to mention some of the studies which have compared Tulum painting to other painted material and to suggest further sources which could be compared in greater depth to both Tulum and Tancah. Robertson, in an examination of style of the murals in Temple XVI (1968), searches for an antecedent for the painting. He comments that the Tulum figures are fundamentally similar to those at Santa Rita and, when the paintings from these two sites are compared to the earlier Chichen Itza murals, the Tulum and Santa Rita renderings show a finer quality, but lack their freedom of expression. The Chichen Itza paintings, while still possessing an inherent two dimensionality, show a three dimensional concept. Although Robertson speaks of these murals as landscapes he says: "Rather it is a collection of signs standing for objects distributed on a two dimensional surface" (1968:80). Humans and animals, however, are placed against more natural backgrounds than the abstract space of the Tulum registers. He dismisses Chichen Itza as an antecedent, as well as Classic Maya painting which is too successful at "conveying the image of human form--what people look like rather than the conventionalized impersonal sign standing for a person" (1968:82).

Robertson's and Stuart's mentions of Tulum painting were both limited to references to those in Temple XVI because of the reproduction of Lothrop's sketch of the in-

terior west passage painting of this temple (Lothrop 1924: plate 7). It would be interesting to compare the painting in the other areas of Tulum and Tancah with the same varied material.

Sanders, on the basis of his ceramic comparisons believes that the Quintana Roo sites are closely tied to Mayapan (1960:229). This conclusion, together with Proskouriakoff's description of Mayapan painting, "a rigid and forthright style, concerned more with express symbolism than with nuances of form . . . the pose of the human figure is usually static and nearly symmetrical" (cited in Stuart 1971:16-17), which suggests strong similarities with Tulum styles, begs for a comparison of Mayapan and Tulum painting.

Another area for further study would be the post-Classic codices, especially as they relate to the figures in Tancah Structure 44 and the Temple V painting. The Codex Paris has already been linked to the Santa Rita murals through a rare glyph (mentioned in Robertson 1968:85). Miller (1972:329-330) related some of the motifs in the Codex Paris to the Mural in the interior of Temple V. Quirarte suggests that the themes of the Tulum murals are mythological and could be related to the codices (1964: 363). The figures in Structure 44 have been described above as in Codex Style.

Robertson finds that the predecessor of the Tulum style in the Mixtec codices Land, Bodley and Nuttall which,

although more elegant and detailed than the larger mural paintings, show the same two dimensionality of unitary figures with large heads, stiff planted feet and legs and elaborate detail. For him the Mixtec figures seem to be extensions of signs that stand for people, in distinct contrast to the portraiture of Classic Maya representation. Robertson feels that a copy of a manuscript by a Maya artist working within a different style would differ more from the Mixtec tradition than the works at Tulum and Santa Rita. The murals, he says, are too "Mixtec" to have been painted by someone trained in either Classic Maya or "Toltec-Maya" traditions. Robertson's best explanation is that the paintings were executed by artists so well schooled in the Mixtec style that models were unnecessary and that Maya iconography seeped in (1968:88).

In his consideration of the Santa Rita murals, of which he views Tulum as an early manifestation, Stuart (1971) finds Mixtec, Toltec and Maya traditions. He argues that there must have been a continued stream of contact occurring among these areas especially in the Postclassic.

## PART 4: SUMMARY

The mural paintings at Tulum and Tancah all date from the Postclassic Period even though the structures housing the Tancah paintings were constructed during the Classic Period. Analyzing the various paintings in terms of style, content and aesthetics and using the resulting relationships in conjunction with other archaeological data, a relative chronology of execution has been proposed. Through comparison with outside material of both the style and content in these murals, more can be learned concerning the culture history of the people producing the paintings. This paper has attempted to show possibilities for the use of pre-Columbian murals in archaeological analysis as well as to present the series of paintings as works of art.

Cultures vary in many significant ways, but it is primarily art that imbues each with its peculiar character and individuality (Proskouriakoff 1955:41).

## AFTERWORD

In 1843, Stephens and Catherwood found the breed of mosquitoes at Tulum almost as overwhelming a presence as the ruins of the site. "A savage notice to quit was continually buzzing in our ears, and all that we cared for was to get away" (1843:400). The present generation of insects remains as powerful as ever, but the magnetism of the ruins has increased in intrigue, mystery and exotic beauty.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Benson, Elizabeth P.  
1973 Gestures and Offerings. Paper presented to the Primera Mesa Redonda de Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico. December. Mimeographed.
- Caso, Alfonso  
1972 Painting in Mesoamerica. In: Prehispanic Mexican Art. Paul Westheim et. al. G. D. Putnam's Sons, New York.
- Catherwood, Frederick  
1844 Views of Ancient Monuments in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatan. London.
- Coe, Michael D.  
1965 Artifacts of the Maya Lowlands. In: Handbook of Middle American Indians (R. Wauchope, ed.), Vol. 3, Article 23. University of Texas Press, Austin.  
1973 The Maya Scribe and His World. The Grolier Club, New York.
- Covarrubias, Miguel  
1957 Indian Art of Mexico and Central America. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York.
- Fernández, Miguel Angel  
1938 Las Ruinas de Tulum, I. In: Anales de Museo Nacional de México, Epoca V, tomo 3, pp. 109-116. México, D.F.  
1941 El Templo No. 5 de Tulum, Quintana Roo. In: Los Mayas Antiguos (Lizardi Ramos, ed.) pp. 115-180. El Colegio de México, Fondo de Cultura Economica, México, D.F.  
1945 Las Ruinas de Tulum II. In: Anales del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Vol. I (1939-40), pp. 95-106. México, D.F.
- Fernández, Miguel Angel, Cesár Lizardi Ramos and Romulo Rozo  
1938 Las Pinturas de la Galeria Sur del Templo de los Frescos, Tulum. In: Anales del Museo Nacional de México, Epoca V, tomo 3, pp. 117-132. México, D.F.



- Gann, Thomas  
1900 Mounds in Northern Honduras. In: Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Annual Report, No. 19, Part 2, pp. 661-692. Washington, D. C.
- Gendrop, Paul  
1971 Murales Prehispánicos. Artes de México, No. 144, Año XVIII. México, D.F.
- Kubler, George  
1962 The Art and Architecture of Ancient America. Penguin Books, Inc., Baltimore.  
1969 Studies in Classic Maya Iconography. Memoirs of the Connecticut Academy of Arts & Sciences, Vol. XVIII. New Haven.
- Lothrop, S. K.  
1924 Tulum, An Archaeological Study of the East Coast of Yucatan. Carnegie Institution of Washington Publication No. 335. Washington, D. C.
- Marquina, Ignacia  
1964 Arquitectura Prehispánica. Memorias del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, I. México, D.F.
- Marte, Samuel and Gertrude Prokosch Kurath  
1964 Dances of Anahuac. Aldine Publishing Co., Chicago.
- Miller, Arthur G.  
1972 The Iconography of the Painting in the Temple of the Diving God, Tulum, Quintana Roo, A Tentative Hypothesis. In: Religion en Mesoamerica. Sociedad Mexicana de Antropología, XII Mesa Redonda, pp. 329-333. México, D.F.  
1973 The Mural Painting of Teotihuacan. Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D. C.
- Nesbit, E.  
1948 Five Children and It. Random House, Inc., New York.
- Pollock, H. E. D.  
1965 Architecture of the Maya Lowlands. In: Handbook of Middle American Indians (R. Wauchope, ed.), Vol. 2, Article 15. University of Texas Press, Austin.

- Proskouriakoff, Tatiana  
 1950 A Study of Classic Maya Sculpture. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication No. 593. Washington, D. C.
- 1955 Artistic Aspects of the Bonampak Paintings. In: Bonampak, Chiapas, Mexico (Ruppert, Thompson and Proskouriakoff), pp. 41-46. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication No. 602. Washington, D. C.
- Quirarte Jiménez, Jacinto  
 1964 La Pintura Mural Maya. Doctoral thesis. Facultad de Filosofía y Letras. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. México, D.F.
- Robertson, Donald  
 1970 The Tulum Murals: The International Style of the Late Post Classic. In: Verhandlungen des XXXVIII Internationalen Amerikanisten Kongresses, Stuttgart-München. Band II, pp. 77-88. München.
- Ruppert, Karl, J. Eric S. Thompson and Tatiana Proskouriakoff  
 1955 Bonampak, Chiapas, Mexico. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication No. 602. Washington, D. C.
- Sanders, William T.  
 1960 Prehistoric Ceramics and Settlement Patterns in Quintana Roo, Mexico. In: Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication No. 606, pp. 115-264. Washington, D. C.
- Stephens, John L.  
 1843 Incidents of Travel in Yucatan, 2 vols. New York.
- Stuart, George E.  
 1971 Implications of Style and Content in the Santa Rita Murals. Chapel Hill. Mimeographed.
- Thompson, J. Eric S.  
 1970 Maya History and Religion. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.  
 1972 A Commentary on the Dresden Codex: A Maya Hieroglyphic Book. American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.
- Tulum Official Guide  
 1961 Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia. México, D.F.

- Villacorta, J. Antonio and Carlos A. Villacorta  
1930 Codices Mayas. Tipografia Nacional,  
Guatemala.
- Westheim, Paul et. al.  
1972 Prehispanic Mexican Art. Lancelot C.  
Sheppard, trans. Putnam, New York.
- Willard, Theodore A.  
1933 The Codex Perez: An Ancient Maya Hiero-  
glyphic Book. The Arthur H. Clark Co.,  
Glendale, California.
- Willey, Gordon R.  
1966 An Introduction to American Archeology,  
Vol. I. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs,  
New Jersey.
- Worringer, Wilhelm  
1955 Abstraction and Empathy: A Contribution to  
the Psychology of Style. Michael Bullock,  
trans. International Universities Press,  
New York.