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The Celestial God of Number 13¹

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Rare indeed is this beautifully carved jade sculpture, the Maya God of Number 13 (Figure 1). The seven-centimeters-high anthropomorphic representation is the only piece of carved jade sculpture depicting this god that I have ever seen. I am calling this god the Celestial God of Number 13 to distinguish it from the other representations of the God of Number 13 that do not have the crossed bands in the mouth, but may have all—or some—of the other diagnostics of this particular deity. I will discuss the other representations of this god—the Water Lily God form with the tied bow around the water lily pad on the forehead, the *uinal* (Maya month) headdress form, the *tun* (year) form, and the hieroglyphic forms—and their relationships to one another.

In order to clarify the role of the gods in the Maya world, especially during the Classic period (AD 300–900) and the Post Classic as well (AD 900 up until the time of the Spanish Conquest), I would like to point out the enormous pantheon of Maya gods. The people living in what are now the Mexican states of Chiapas and Tabasco, all of Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, the Yucatan peninsula, and part of Honduras, regulated their daily lives by appeasing the gods. Their most important deity was Itzamna (*itzam* meaning “lizard”), and they believed that the world was supported on



Figure 1. Headband ornament, God of Number 13. Maya, central Peten, Guatemala, AD 600-900. Light green jade and red cinnabar. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

the back of this saurian creature. Actually, there were four Itzamnas, one assigned to each of the world directions. The Itzamnas were usually represented as two-headed reptilian creatures, often with the head of a serpent as the front head and the head of a god at the rear (Figure 2).

Four Bacabs, anthropomorphic beings with human bodies and reptilian faces, held up the sky, which was represented by a narrow band of celestial symbols—a “skyband”—separated by vertical bars.

¹ This article originally appeared in *Triptych* September/October 1990 © Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. It is reprinted here in its original form.

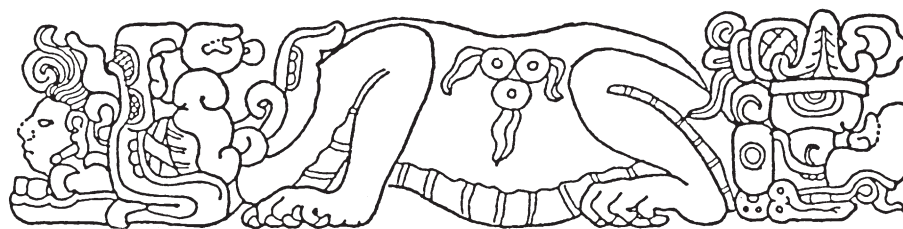


Figure 2. Itzamna. Two-headed reptilian creature upon which the world rested.

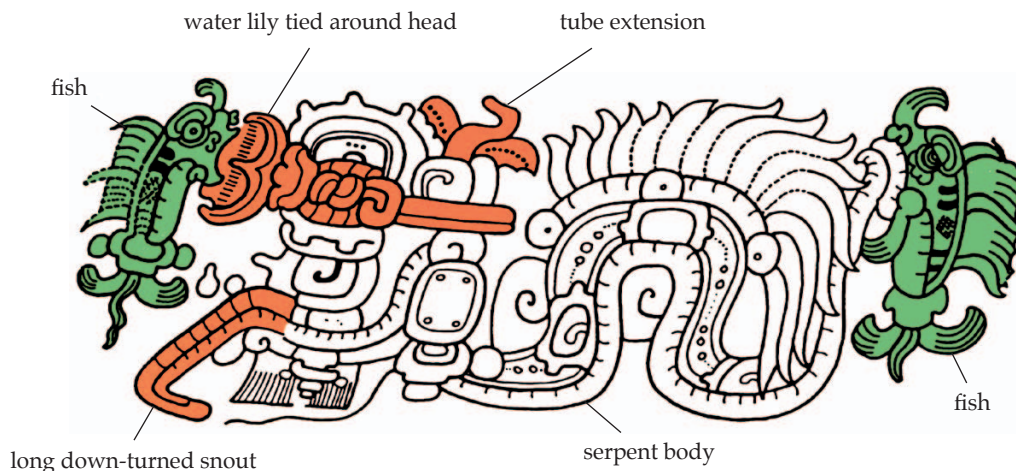


Figure 3. God of Number 13 with water lily headband.

An example of the skyband being held up by four Bacabs can be noted on the reconstruction drawing of the roof comb of the Temple of the Sun, Palenque.²

Other Maya gods were the Sun God; the Moon Goddess; Chac, the rain god; the corn god; the death god; the Palenque Triad who were the offspring of the ancestral Goddess; and a myriad of gods who were the patrons of every conceivable subject.³ These gods did not take on only one aspect. They could become benevolent gods or evil gods. They had the aspects of youth and of old age, as well as many other opposite characteristics.

There were gods of days, months, years, and other periods of time, and of numbers as well, such as the God of Number 13. From Diego de Landa and other colonial books we know that the number permutation series in the 260-day calendar never went above 13, a very propitious number for the Maya.⁴ Kelley (1976:96) sees the deity of 13 as a reptilian monster who sometimes has the *uinal* glyph in his head.⁵ Thirteen in Maya arithmetic is a combination of two bars, each standing for 5, and three dots, each standing for 1; or a deity with a long snout (lip? nose?). In portraiture, Thompson (1960:131-137) sees 13 taking two forms: the blending of the profile of the God of Number 3 with the bared jawbone, which is the insignia of the death god (deity of number 10); or a fantastic head with a long pendulous nose (snout, lip, beak?). The museum's example (Figure 1) would fall into the latter category. In all Mayan languages, 13 is composed of the word for 3 followed by the morpheme for ten (Macri 1985).

As we will see, the God of Number 13 often wears a tied water lily pad and blossom around the forehead (Figures 3–4). One personification of the water lily god is shown on the lower border of Pier F of House D of the Palace, Palenque.⁶ Here, the god is associated with the watery underworld and the plants growing in it. Water lily flowers are represented by the *imix* glyph (the first day of the Maya almanac, often represented by a water lily blossom), thus signaling all of the manifestations of

an aquatic realm and the underworld, as well as its earth functions.⁷ Schele (in Schele and Miller 1986:46) sees the Water Lily Monster as the “symbol of standing bodies of water, such as the ocean, lakes, swamps, and agricultural

² Palenque is the name of what many refer to as the most beautiful of all the ancient Maya sites that were at their prime from about AD 300-900. Palenque is located in what is now the state of Chiapas, Mexico, at the base of a rainforest mountain range. The author has spent 20 years recording every piece of art in the city and is the author of *The Sculpture of Palenque*, Vols. I, II, and III; Vol. IV is at press and there will be five volumes in all.

The Temple of the Sun has the best preserved roof comb at Palenque. There is ample evidence of the skyband bordering the roofcomb and continuing on the cross bars. Arms of bacabs are *in situ* holding up the skybands as indicated in the reconstruction drawing in Robertson 1979.

³ The Ancestral Goddess of Maya mythology was born in mythical times in 3121 BC. The Great Father, known of as GI 1st was born in 3122 BC. The triplet children of the Ancestral Goddess, Hunahpu (GI), Xbalanque (GIII), and Smoking Mirror, God K (GII) were born in 2697 BC of cosmo-mythological times. The Mother Goddess was 424 years old at the time of birth.

⁴ A friar from Spain, Diego de Landa came to Yucatan in 1549 and later became the first bishop of Yucatan. Trying to rid the Maya of their pagan religion, he ordered all of the Maya books burned, thus destroying incredible evidence about their language. He was recalled to Spain and jailed; upon his release, he returned to Yucatan and spent the rest of his life writing about the people, their way of life, and their language, in his *Relación de las Cosas de Yucatan*.

⁵ A glyph (hieroglyph) may be made up of numerous combinations of individual elements which are placed at specific places about the main sign: prefixes which are placed before it, suffixes below it, and superfixes above it. There may be several glyphs making up one glyph block, designating names of persons, places, relationships, action, events, periods of time, and many other pieces of information.

⁶ The bases of the piers of House D all have watery underworld connotations. The personified Water Lily God is shown on Pier F (see Robertson 1985:Figs. 221-223).

⁷ The water lily form of the *imix* glyph can be seen on Pier F of House D (see Robertson 1985:Fig. 233).

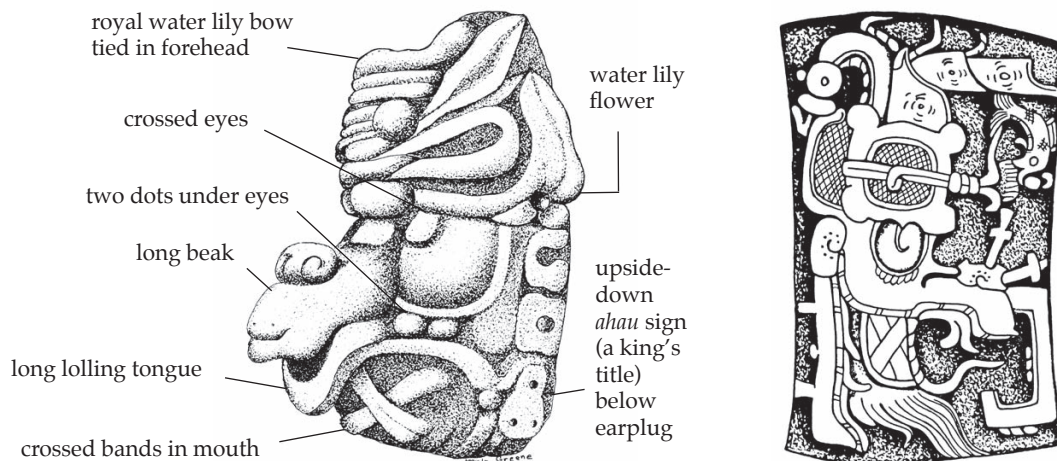


Figure 4. Celestial God of Number 13: (left) Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco jade (drawing by Merle Greene Robertson); (right) Chochola-style bowl (from Parsons 1980:Fig. 314).

canals," the latter being the habitat of water lilies. It is this water lily pad that is tied around the head of our God of Number 13 and is one of its most significant diagnostics. The Maya Lacandon Indians believed that gods descended from the mating of the red and white plumeria flowers (Thompson 1970:202), while others, in referring to Lacandon Maya mythology, say that Kococh was the remote creator, and that he created the water lily flower from which are descended the other gods (Bruce 1967). In any case, the water lily has played an important role in Maya religion and mythology.

It has been suggested that the God of Number 13 is also represented by *xoc*, a mythical fish, again a creature of watery depths, but at the same time it is noted that the head of the god is that of a serpent or creature capable of transmuting itself into a dragon (Thompson 1960:136). Serpents or saurian creatures were the forms upon which the world rested, between the underworld and the heavens. The God of Number 13, then, has affiliations with both the world of the living and the world of the dead, as well as association with rain, large bodies of standing water, running water, and, by extension, blood (sacrifice).

The crossed bands of the sky sign are a celestial symbol and have been related to a Yucatec word meaning "crossed in the middle," as well as something transverse (Kelley 1976:152-155). They appear sometimes on monuments, as on the serpent segment. The museum's piece is the only instance of portable sculpture I know of where crossed bands are shown in the mouth of the god.

In some glyphic representations of 13, Martha Macri sees the head variant as a muan bird, the Yucatecan screech owl, as did Schellhas (1904:41) and Berlin (1944). It is the number followed by the sky sign. This translates as "full moon, moon in opposition," which literally would be "13 sky." The name of the muan

bird is almost exactly the same as the Yucatecan phrase for "full moon." Macri has discovered that the Maya apparently meant that the head variant of 13 signified the full moon. The half moon, or first quarter, occurs seven days before the full moon. Counting back seven days from 13, we arrive at six. The head variant for six has an axe in its eye which may have been motivated by two factors: there is a word for "chop, break," which is similar to the word for six; and the sixth day of the lunar cycle, counting from the first day of visibility, is the first quarter, the half moon.

Macri (1985) suggests that "before the ritual calendar existed, before there were 20 day names, some groups of Maya speakers considered the 13 days beginning with the new crescent and ending with the full moon to have been specially significant. With time, each of the numbers came to have an individual identity"; and "by the time of the Conquest they were all referred to as gods. The cycle of 13 has had an existence quite apart from its meaning as a lunar cycle, but the glyph for muan bird and the colonial Yucatec phrase for full moon indicate that the original significance may not have been entirely forgotten."

We now see that the diagnostics of the God of Number 13 include

- a long, down-turned snout
- the water lily pad tied around the head
- fish in association
- one or two tubes issuing from the head
- long tongue or sometimes a stingray spine in the mouth
- crossed eyes
- dots under the eyes
- upside-down *ahau* element under the earpiece
- crossed bands in the mouth

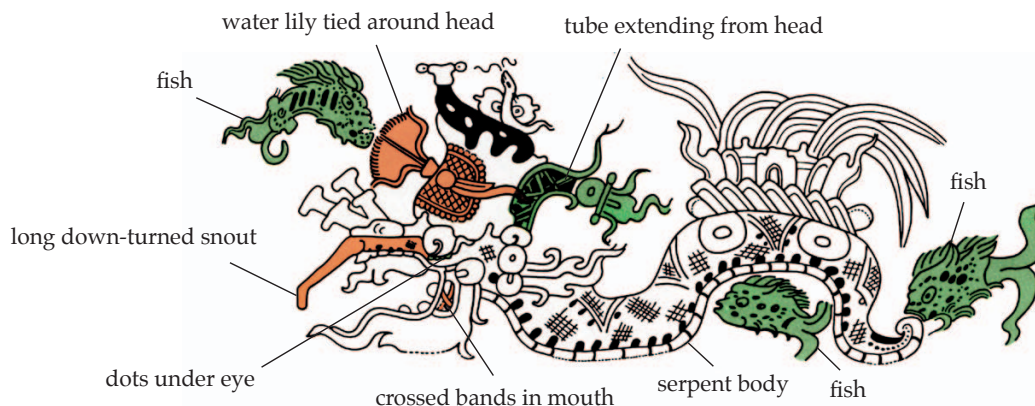


Figure 5. All diagnostics are present on this Celestial God of Number 13.

It is not necessary that the god of Number 13 have all of these characteristics but it must have at least the tied water lily pad around the forehead, the long snout, and the tubes coming from the head. It is the crossed bands that determine the celestial aspect of the de Young Museum piece (Figure 4).

Representations of this god appear on ceramic vases, a bone carving, in the codices, on at least one building as part of its stucco decoration, on headdresses of figures represented on stelae,⁸ in graffito on the floor of a Maya structure, and on the museum's jade sculpture.

An excellent example of the Celestial God of Number 13 appears on a Chochola-style, Late Classic carved incised bowl (Parsons 1980:203, Fig. 314). Two Gods of Number 13, one being our celestial version, face each other on this polished black-brown earthenware pot. Both exhibit the long down-turned snout, the tied water lily bow headpiece, the tube in the head, crossed eyes, and long tongue. The one illustrated here (Figure 4, right) also has the crossed bands in the mouth and the fish association.

A line drawing from a polychrome Maya vase shows a beautiful example of the Celestial God of Number 13 (Figure 5). All of the diagnostics are present, including the crossed bands in the mouth. The body of the creature is a serpent. Little fish nibble at its body and at the water lily in the headdress (see Hellmuth 1987: Fig. 322).⁹ A decorative tube issues from the head. This example also represents the personification of the *tun* in Maya Long Count dates.

Other manifestations of the God of Number 13 are shown on Stelae 4 and 7 from Machaquila, Guatemala (see Graham 1967:Figs. 51, 57). Stela 4 is a good example

of the way Maya sculptors worked the personified God of Number 13 into the headdresses of stela figures (Figure 6). The tied water lily pad and blossom form the headdress, while the identity of the god is taken by the person on the stela. In other words, the person being honored has taken the identity of the god by having

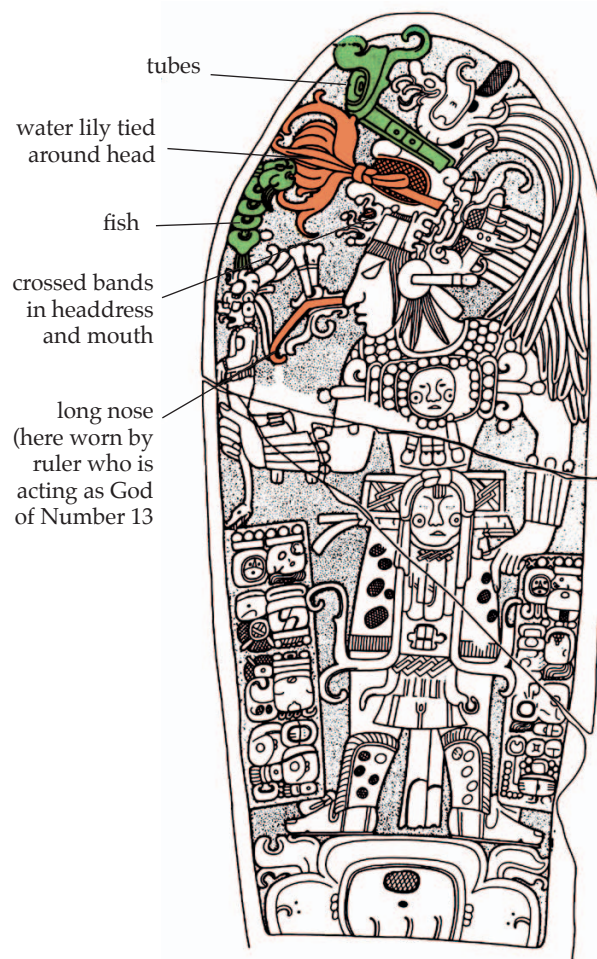


Figure 6. On Machaquila Stela 4, the human figure is represented as the God of Number 13. Drawing from Ian Graham (1967:Fig. 51)

⁸ A stela (plural stelae) is a free standing, large, monolithic stone slab that the Maya erected in front of buildings in many of their cities. Some are plain, but most are carved on one or all four sides with portraits of elite persons and hieroglyphic inscriptions announcing dates, events, and periods of time.

⁹ Hellmuth (1997:161) notes the figures on this Merrin Gallery bowl as being the deity of number 13, god of the day Muluc, "water."

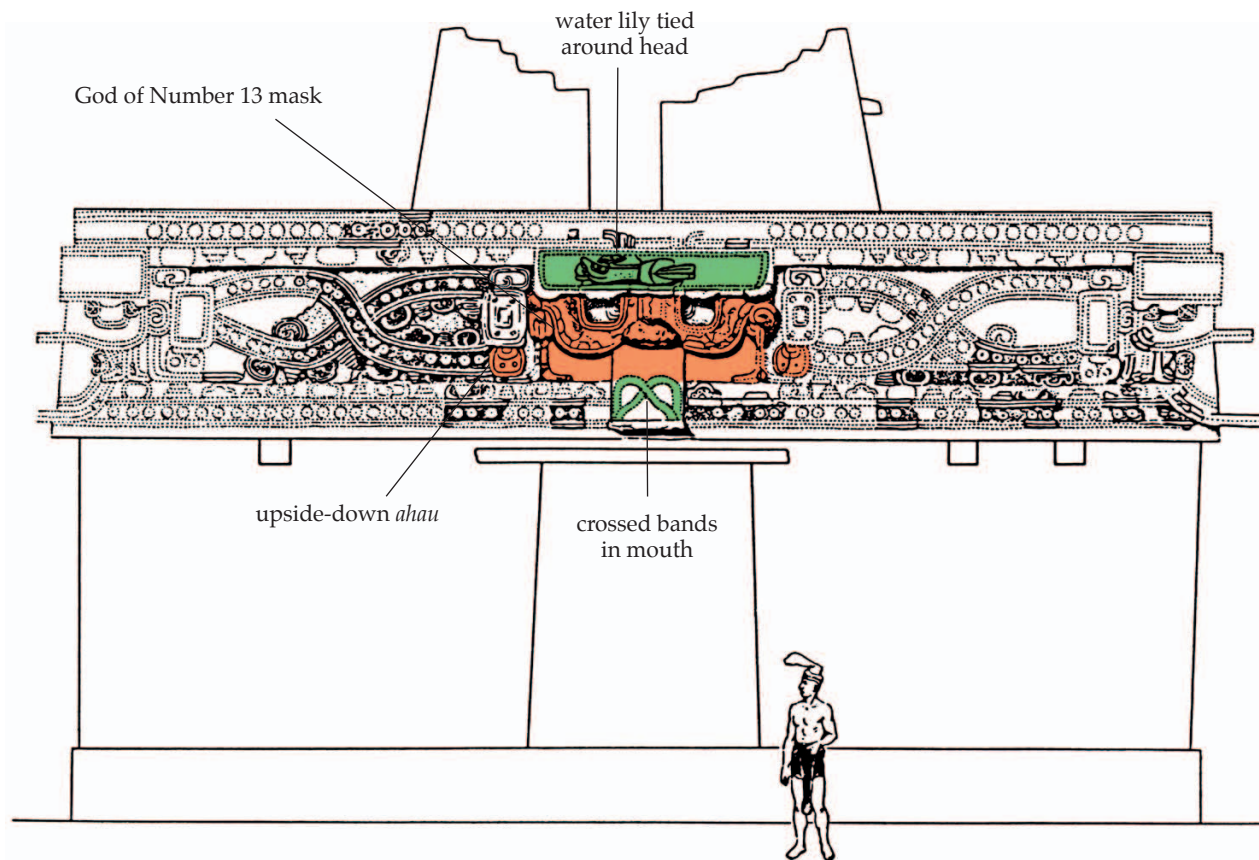


Figure 7. House of the Dolls, Dzibilchaltun, Yucatan. The Celestial God of Number 13 is in the decorative stucco façade. Drawing from Coggins (1983:Fig. 8).

the long snout worn as an extension of his human nose. In this instance, a little jester god appears at the front of the headband while a shell dragon perches atop the tube extension on top of the water lily pad. A little fish with a rattlesnake tail nibbles at the *imix* blossom. Water symbols abound.

One of the most beautiful, and by far the largest representation of the Celestial God of Number 13 appears on the stucco decoration of the upper zone of the south facade of Structure 1-sub of the Temple of the Dolls, Dzibilchaltun, Yucatan, Mexico (Coggins 1983:8-14; Taube 1986). Taube first called my attention to this mask, one of four which once adorned the four sides of this temple. The best remains are on the south facade, where portions of the tied water lily headband, as well as the squared cartouches framing the crossed eyes of the god, remained visible at the time of uncovering. Upside-down *ahau* elements extend from the rectangular earpieces and remnants of the crossed bands in the mouth are shown on a drawing made at the time of excavation by the staff artist (Figure 7). Coggins remarks, in discussing the stucco decoration on this building, that no remnants of these bands remain visible, but that the artist must have had some way of determining that they were there when the building was excavated.¹⁰ The

crossed bands were in position on the mask on the north elevation, which is supporting evidence for the crossed bands on the south and probably on all four sides of the structure. Jade symbols appear regularly within the band, and five-stack water symbols are along the edges, reinforcing the watery underworld symbolism of the upper zone.

On the floor of this same structure at Dzibilchaltun, there is a 38 cm graffito of the Celestial God of Number 13 (Andrews 1980:101).¹¹ This depiction, obviously done

¹⁰ The author has found that it is often possible to determine where the elements of stucco had been by examining the first coats of stucco that were applied. The edges of these coats often remain after the piece has been destroyed.

¹¹ Graffiti are fairly common in Maya buildings. These informal incised cartoons were probably done by neophytes who wiled away their time incising images on plaster walls and on the floors of temples. There is no plan as to how they are presented, and they may face in any direction. Some are indeed beautiful and depict ritualistic scenes, sacrifices, and portraits of persons, as well as diagrams of a patolli board, a game played much in the same manner as parcheesi. We know that the graffiti on Maya temples were done by the ancient Maya themselves and not by early explorers or present-day people because they appear all over on walls of buildings that were buried for centuries, even on those that the Maya buried and built over.

by a neophyte, is clearly a depiction of this god with the water lily tied bow on the forehead, the tube extension from the head, the long down-turned snout, and the crossed bands in the mouth. This leads me to believe that the god with the crossed bands in the mouth was well known by everyone at the time.

As in all the pantheon of Maya gods, the God of Number 13 has many manifestations. This is not at all unusual. One god's duties and diagnostics overlap onto a god of another form. We have seen how this one god is, at the same time, many gods who take on the manifestations of the day Muluc, the day Imix and its water lily attributes, the *uinal* (month) sign, *tun* (year) sign, the earth and the sky and the watery underworld, as well as the moon. However, with all of the different manifestations and aspects of the God of Number 13, there are very few examples that carry the celestial aspect shown by the crossed bands in the mouth. The Celestial God of the Number 13, as I suggest calling the one in the collection of the de Young Museum, is the finest representation of the god that I have seen anywhere.

[The following credit appeared with the original article:]



MERLE GREENE ROBERTSON (above), Adjunct Curator of Pre-Columbian Art at The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, is a distinguished scholar of Mesoamerican art and art history and the director of the Pre-Columbian Art Research Institute in San Francisco and in Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico. She is a Research Associate of the Middle American Research Institute, Tulane University; the California Academy of Sciences; and the Archaeological Research Facility, UC Berkeley; she has published widely on Palenque, Tikal, and other significant Pre-Columbian sites. Working for the museums in an advisory capacity, Dr. Robertson assists with the Pre-Columbian collections, exhibitions, and scholarly programs of the Africa, Oceania, and the Americas Department.

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A Celebration of the Life of Merle Greene Robertson¹

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I first met Merle in Merida in the early 1960s when I was a teenager. After that she became an important presence in the lives of my family members, first in Merida, where my stepmother Joann's home became Merle's pied-à-terre in Yucatan, and then in New Orleans, after we moved to Tulane in 1975. I suspect that most of you in this room have felt the same presence over many years.

So much has been said and written about Merle's life and achievements, including, of course, her fascinating and beautifully illustrated 2006 autobiography, that it's hard to know where to begin a few words about her.



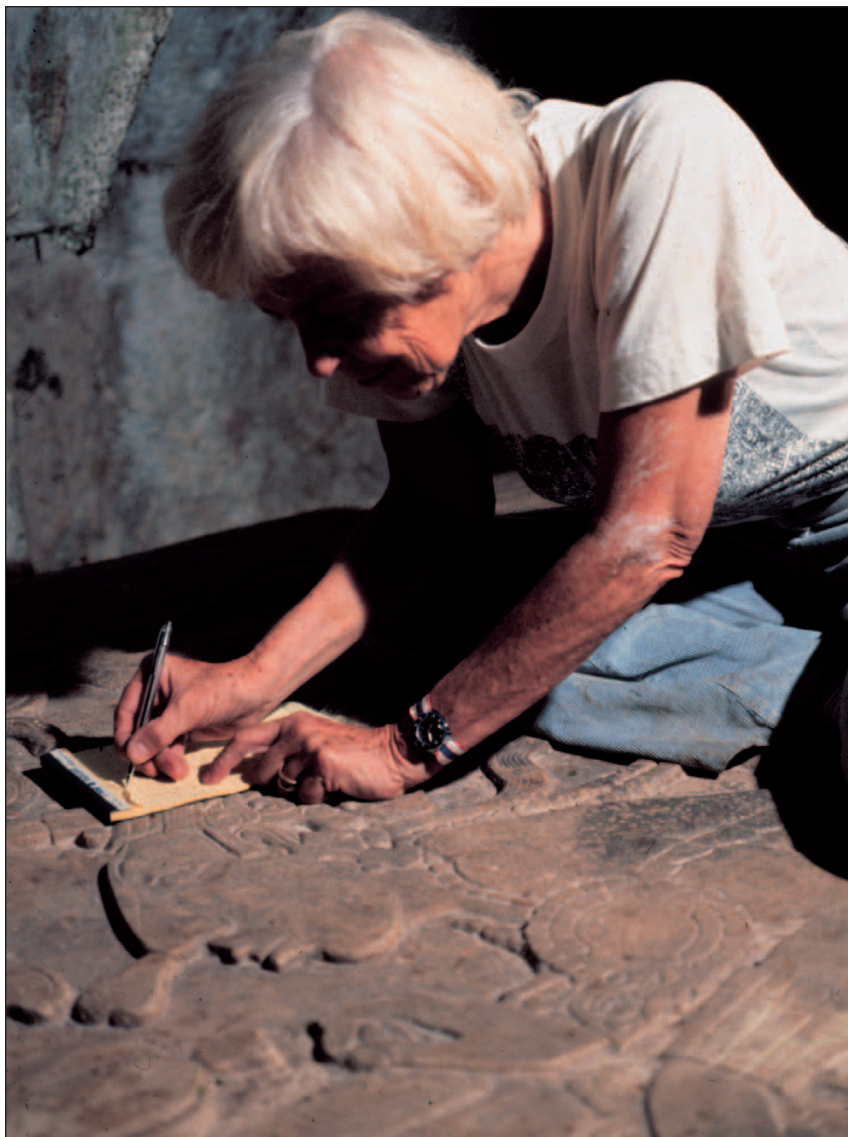
When I cast my mind back through her career, I see that one of the amazing things about Merle is the vast number of people with whom she formed friendships, often lasting beyond a half century. I'm sure this was easy for her, because she was an unfailingly and sincerely friendly and kind person, concerned with her friends and their lives. I don't think I have ever heard Merle say anything unpleasantly critical about another human being. Among her many acquaintances there may be someone who did not admire her, but I wouldn't put any money on it.

One of her great strengths was the ability to lead by example and by infectious enthusiasm. This was in addition to being a superb administrator of many projects that brought young scholars into the field, a responsibility that Bob shared when they married. Some of Merle's protégés, and an even larger number of younger colleagues just entering the field, went on to become professional Mayanists of one sort or another, but others were simply enriched by the experience. She has been a strong and positive influence in the academic lives of many, to an extent unusual for someone who is not a college professor with a ready supply of students.

One of my first archaeological field experiences in the Maya area was in 1965 on the first year of the Harvard Seibal project. It was a wonderful experience, my first in the Peten. But it was tacitly understood that the Harvard project did not take women. I mention this because four years earlier, when Merle joined the Tikal project as staff member 71, that project, too, was almost exclusively male.

Nowadays, when probably most young archaeologists and art historians are female, as are most other young scholars in the social sciences and humanities, we may forget that Merle was helping open up a new field for women. Tania Proskouriakoff and Edith Ricketson preceded her, but they were among the few. Her warmth surely helped make this possible—she was

¹ This appreciation was presented at a celebration of the life of Merle Greene Robertson at the University Club, San Francisco, California, June 26, 2011.



a woman pioneer who avoided belligerence as she trod where women had been unwelcome.

By the time Merle saw her first Maya site, she had raised a family and was a highly skilled artist, photographer, and teacher—and she was forty-seven. But the Maya bug bit her that first summer at Tikal, and then Alfred Kidder of the Carnegie Institution told her she ought to do some rubbings of monuments at other sites after she finished at Tikal. She immediately plunged headlong into a new, completely different, and highly demanding career for the next half century, becoming one of the great Mayanists of the twentieth century. Everyone here knows roughly what she has done, but she undertook the most extensive project of rubbings in world archaeology, recording about 2000 monuments in 4000 rubbings from nearly 100 archaeological sites. Most of these she published in several books and in digital media. In the 1980s she undertook a study of the sculptural art of the Maya site of Palenque, published in four magnificent volumes that are one of the masterpieces of New World archaeology. During the years she

lived at Palenque she also organized an annual international Maya round table conference, editing and publishing ten volumes of its proceedings. In the '90s she ran a project that recorded much of the stone carvings at Chichen Itza, and afterwards she returned to Palenque to excavate some of the most important buildings at that site.

Her last projects, of course, were started when she was no longer a spring chicken. But she never let age slow her down. In 1987, when she was in her mid-seventies (which seemed really, really old to me at the time), my wife and I traveled with her to a conference in Granada, and then the three of us drove slowly north through Spain for a week or so. After we toured Toledo, we had to head back to Madrid to catch a plane, but Merle decided to stay and spend a few days painting by herself. We were concerned that she'd be alone, and sort of tried to dissuade her from staying, because she had a habit of breaking bones at the drop of a hat. But she very, very politely told us we need not be worried, and of course she was right.

A few years ago Merle decided to find a home for her life's work, and she gave most of her rubbings, vast photographic collections, drawings, field research notebooks, and relevant personal and professional papers to the Latin American Library at Tulane. With Merle's help, the entire collection has been cataloged and is available to scholars online through her collection website. Merle wanted her work to be permanently available to students, and now it is. Merle's life, her art, and her studies of much that otherwise would have been lost, have been made accessible to scholars and to the world.

We've all thought about change and how it happens. Is it inevitable, or does it happen mostly because of the thoughts and ambitions of great men and women? Perhaps both, but when we look at the life of a remarkable artist, scholar, and tireless worker like Merle Greene Robertson, it's clear that we must honor the influence one person can have.

A Notational Explanation for Maya Calendar Round Dates Such as 11 Eb 16 Mac

VICTORIA R. BRICKER

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In a recent article in the *PARI Journal*, Alexandre Tokovinine (2010) has drawn attention to several unusual Calendar Rounds in Early Classic Maya inscriptions referring to individuals associated with Teotihuacan. I agree that these dates should be regarded as notational variations, rather than errors, because they are highly patterned. I offer here an explanation for these dates that involves a shift from elapsed to current time in numbering the days in the months of the *haab*, without a concomitant change in the Maya year bearers. This modification of the Maya Calendar-Round notation in inscriptions associated with Teotihuacan suggests that the annual calendar of Teotihuacan used current time, a practice that is well documented for Central Mexico in later times.

The notational variation at issue can be illustrated with one of the unusual Calendar Rounds discussed by Tokovinine: 11 Eb 16 Mac. In the traditional notation for the Classic period, the tzolk'in day 11 Eb can only be paired with month coefficients 0, 5, 10, and 15. Therefore, the Calendar Round should be 11 Eb 15 Mac (not 16 Mac). The significance of this change can best be seen by comparing the Calendar Rounds that begin the month in the two systems. The month in question would have begun on 9 Caban 0 Mac in the traditional system. In the new notation, the first day of the month was 9 Caban 1 Mac. The change in the month coefficient from "0" to "1" implies a shift from elapsed to current time in numbering the days of the month, as explained below.

In the traditional notation, the month coefficient was "0" (phrased as the "seating" of the month) because the day in question had not been completed. Morley (1915:46) pointed out long ago that we use a similar system for numbering the hours of the day:

... in describing the time of day, that is, in counting hours, minutes, and seconds, we speak in terms of elapsed time. When we say it is 1 o'clock, in reality the first hour has passed and the second hour after noon is about to commence. When we say it is 2 o'clock, in reality the second hour after noon is finished and the third hour about to commence. In other words, we count the time of day by referring to passed periods not current periods.

Morley (1915:46) went on to contrast our method for numbering the hours of the day with the one we use for days, years, and centuries,

which are referred to as current periods of time. It is the 1st day of January immediately after midnight December 31. ... In this category should be included also the days of the week and the months, since the names of these periods also refer to present time. In other words when we speak of our days, months, years, and centuries, we do not have in mind, and do not refer to completed periods of time, but on the contrary to current periods.

If the notation 9 Caban 1 Mac referred to the first day of Mac, then it would have been an example of Morley's second method for counting time. In this case, both the day in the tzolk'in (9 Caban) and the day in the month (1 Mac) would have referred to current time, whereas in the traditional notation, the day in the tzolk'in (also 9 Caban) referred to current time, but the day in the month (0 Mac) referred to elapsed time. The effect of this shift in month coefficients was to move from elapsed to current time in numbering the days of the month while at the same time retaining Ik, Manik, Eb, and Caban as year-bearer (and "month-bearer") days.

Several characteristics of the 11 Eb 16 Mac Calendar Round link it to Teotihuacan and other Central Mexican sites of the same time period. The first is the one mentioned by Tokovinine (2010:20), namely that it appears "in inscriptions dealing with or commissioned by individuals with some connection to Teotihuacan." The second is the reversed order of this Calendar Round at La Sufricaya—as 16 Mac 11 Eb, with the reference to the *haab* preceding rather than following the reference to the tzolk'in (Tokovinine 2010:18, Fig. 2a) (Figure 1). Although this order is rare, it is not unprecedented in the Maya area. For example, it also appears on the Hauberg stela (Schele 1985:136-137) (Figure 2). See Martin (2000:52-54) for additional examples and discussion. Outside the Maya area, it can be found on Stela 1 at La Mojarra (Winfield Capitaine 1988:14-15).

Tokovinine (2010:20) points out that there are no Calendar-Round inscriptions at Teotihuacan. However, there are examples of *tonalpoahualli* dates associated with



Figure 1. 16 Mac 11 Eb (E3-E4) at La Sufricaya (drawing by Alexandre Tokovinine).

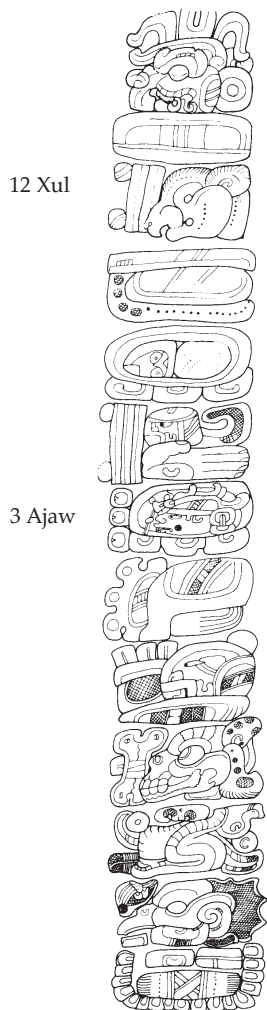


Figure 2. Inscription of the Hauberg Stela, where the month sign Xul precedes the tzolk'in Ajaw (drawing by Linda Schele).

“trapeze-and-ray” year signs at Teotihuacan and other Early Classic sites in Central Mexico, such as Tenango, Texmilincan, and Xochicalco (Caso 1967a:Figure 4a-c, 1967b:Figures 18-19, 1967c:Plate 2). In later inscriptions containing this year sign, the reference to the year always preceded the reference to the day in that year. It is in this sense that the 16 Mac 11 Eb Calendar Round at La Sufricaya mimics a Central Mexican calendrical pattern of placing the reference to the year before the reference to the day.

The third link between the 11 Eb 16 Mac Calendar Round and Teotihuacan and other Early Classic sites in Central Mexico was the retention of the Ik-Manik-Eb-Caban year bearers after the shift from elapsed time to current time. Three of these year bearers—Ik (Wind), Manik (Deer), and Caban (Movement)—are associated with year signs at these sites. It may be that the traditional Maya year bearers were preserved in Calendar Rounds such as 11 Eb 16 Mac because they were the same ones in use at Teotihuacan and other Central Mexican sites at the time. Caso (1967c:182) has interpreted the presence of other year-bearer days at the sites of Teotihuacan, Texmilincan, and Xochicalco as evidence of a shift to the House-Rabbit-Reed-Flint system (= Akbal-Lamat-Ben-Edznab in the Maya tzolk'in) that was common in Central Mexico in later times.

The connection with Teotihuacan at sites like La Sufricaya, Copan, and Palenque seems to have had no lasting influence on Maya notions of time. The traditional system continued, and it was not until centuries later that the lowland Maya shifted completely to a notation employing current time for numbering the days of the month and a new set of year bearers, Kan-Muluc-Ix-Cauac, the one in use in northern Yucatan when the Spaniards arrived.

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Morley's Diary, 1932

Editor's note

A leading archaeologist of his time, Sylvanus Griswold Morley was an Associate of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, the foremost organization excavating archaeological sites in Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras in the early part of the twentieth century. This diary continues his account of the Carnegie Institution's expedition to Calakmul begun on April 3, 1932. Morley's professional companions were his wife Frances, Karl Ruppert, John Bolles, and Gustav Strömsvik. Reference is made (in Morley's idiosyncratic Spanish) to biologist Cyrus L. Lundell, who conducted the first scientific investigations at Calakmul and brought the site to the attention of the Carnegie Institution.

April 28 - Thursday

About two we reached San Dimas. The moon had just come up and the Casa Principal loomed large on the top of the hill.

No mules were changed here but Roman waited for about half an hour for one of the "Montaña" clerks to rouse himself, dress, and pack. This sportsman was going to Champoton with us and on our platform. The first platform with Karl, Gustav and John had gone on ahead.

We got under way on the last lap of the platform journey about half after two, and sleeping fitfully reached Kanasayab the end of the Decanville tram line at 4:00 o'clock or just 11 hours and 30 minutes after leaving La Gloria.

The moon (about half full) was up fairly high by that time, and we could see by its light that the place had seen better days. I raised a man in a shack beside the track and asked him whether a boat was waiting for us and he replied, "Si, si, Señor," which was about the pleasantest that phrase has ever sounded in my ears.

I walked down to the river bank – Kanasayab is at the head of motor boat navigation on the Champoton River – and hailed the captain of a small motor-boat without a top and asked him if he was waiting for Dr. Morley. Again "Si, si, Señor", and again equally welcome.

I told him that he could begin moving the baggage down and with two assistants this operation got under way. He said "Somos buenos soldados", which I took to mean that they were there with the brawn for the job.

I had no inclination to tip our plataformeros. By their refusal to leave at 8 or 9 or even 10 yesterday morning they have cost us another day's delay since it seems almost certain that we cannot reach Campeche in time to make the train up to Merida. So I did not tip them. Moreover Don Refugio Campos had said the journey from La Gloria to Kanasayab should take ten hours and they had taken 11½. I was in no humor to gratificar them, nor did I.

We got off from Kanasayab at 4:30. The river is small, narrow and the banks low. We slept and talked and

luxuriated in the comparative peace of this small motor-boat, our poor beaten bodies only too thankful to rest.

It took us the better part of 3 hours to reach Champoton. We ate a few educators, some dates, washed, brushed teeth in boiled water and generally abluted ourselves before landing. I should note the name of the boat which carried us from Kanasayab to Champoton was "El Trouvador".

The principal part of the town lies south of the river and as we drew along side the shore we saw a larger canoa with sails and auxiliary motor "The Champoton" about ready to leave.

This I had heard from Don Refugio in La Gloria yesterday belonged to a Don Nicolas Gonzalez. Indeed the operator at Yahaltun had talked with Don Nicolas and had arranged either for the "Champoton" or the "Gilda", which was also in, to take us on to Campeche.

I got off the "Trouvador" somewhat stiffly, it is to be admitted, and inquired for Don Nicolas. He was not at the water-side but the Captain of the "Champoton" told of a small boy who conducted me to his office.

We met on the street however, and he said he had been holding the "Champoton" in readiness for us since four this morning and that the "Trouvador" had been waiting at Kanasayab since midnight.

I told him that as soon as we had a bite of breakfast and I had sent a telegram we wanted to proceed to Campeche immediately. He said, "Cuando se guste". Again we were moving more rapidly.

I returned to the water-side, told the crowd the news and instructed the Captain of the "Champoton" to shift our luggage from the "Trouvador" to his own boat and that we would be leaving within an hour.

I gathered my flock of chickens together and we went to a nearby restaurant, where we had fried eggs, chocolate, tortillas, pan dulce, and some warm beer.

While breakfast was being prepared I sent a telegram to Harry at Chichen Itzá advising him of our arrival from the interior and that we would be in Chichen Itzá Saturday.

After breakfast Frances and I took a turn around the town. We visited an old church on the outskirts. It was pretty bare inside, and the altar was modern. The sacristy which was reached by a door to the left of the altar was locked. Later we walked around the outside and I boosted Frances up so she could look in a high window. She reported the sacristy equally barren as far as she could see.

From here we went back to the boat. A man stopped us on the way and asked if we were Americans and on being told we were asked us to come to his home and translate for him a letter he had received from the U. S.

This proved to be a communication from a medical supply house that the only type of belt they could supply for a fallen stomach was one that had a solid rather than an inflated pad. I read his letter to him in Spanish and we left for the telegraph office where I sent a telegram to Brydon

at Campeche telling him we would be in about two.

We got back to the water-front at 9 and found everything in readiness for departure.

Bidding Don Nicolas goodbye we pushed out into the stream and soon crossed the bar of the Champoton River and turned northward.

As soon as we got outside an awning was hoisted over the front part of the boat where we were and also a sail raised.

Including the seven of us and Demetrio, the crew, and perhaps a dozen more passengers there must have been 25 or 30 people on board. In addition a black goat road up forward in the prow, disdainfully presenting his rear elevation to the rest of the boat.

Demetrio's monkey should not be forgotten nor a fool rooster, who crowed at irregular intervals all the way to Campeche in broad daylight!

At first a fair breeze helped us but this later died down and it was broiling hot.

To wile away the time we played auction: Frances and John against Gustav and myself. Poor Karl is still too weak to take much interest in anything but sleeping and resting.

We passed point after point and two villages: Sihoo Playa and Sebo Playa, the latter being about half way.

About 1:30, perhaps about the time the train was leaving for Merida, we sighted the long new wharf at Lerma and then Lerma itself. We reached Campeche at 2:30 or just 5½ hours for the 14 leagues from Champoton to Campeche.

We did not see Brydon among the people on the shore, but I did recognize Pizarillo, the man who always handles our baggage at Campeche.

We had decided to pack the blankets, pillows, etc. which had been kept out of the kayaks to make traveling on the platforms more comfortable, at the wharf and then send all of our impedimenta direct to the station where it was to be despatched to Dzitas by express.

As soon as we got out, a Mr. Diego, Brydon's secretary, met us and said Mrs. Brydon was expecting us and that Brydon himself was in Merida. Gustav and John were going to the Hotel Cuanhtemoc with Tarsisio and Arturo but Frances, Karl, and I were going to stop at the Brydons. I asked Mr. Diego to send Mrs. Brydon word that we would be up in about half an hour.

The kayacks were packed with our bedding, and all baggage sent by Pizarillo to the station to be expressed. John, Gustav, and the two Celestials went to the hotel and Frances, Karl and I to the Brydon's in an auto.

Mrs. Brydon and her nice daughters – but really fine, well-mannered girls – met us at the zaguan and we were at once in a home.

Our first needs were on the side of cleanliness rather than hunger. Karl and I took a shower bath at the same time – and what luxury! Our poor flea-bitten carcasses fairly purred under the treatment. Karl's left side was

literally an ugly inflamed red from these hellish pests, and a few maverick garrapatas were also plucked off.

Afterwards while Frances bathed I shaved and felt ever so much better; weak and washed out perhaps, but comfortable and lazy. We heard of the hoax of the poor Lindberghs. It seemed that depravity could sink no lower.

After these operations it must have been nearly 4. We had iced tea with crackers and sweet cakes and it was like manna.

At 4:30 Felipon, my old Campeche-Etzna-Tixmucuy chauffeur of 5 years ago was waiting at the door and we went back to town.

My first concern was to send two long telegrams, one to Ted, the other to Marquina, announcing the results of the Calakmul Expedition.

I had asked Mr. Diego, if he would type these for me and we went first to the offices of the Mexican Exploitation Company, where I composed the following telegrams. The Spanish part was sent to Marquina (Director of Prehispanic Monuments, Ministry of Public Education) but to Ted I sent an English prefix:

"Reached civilization this morning stop Calakmul exceeded wildest expectations having many more sculptured monuments any other city Maya area many dated and a few of high esthetic merit stop all well except Karl who had a sharp attack of malaria last day stop will write from Chichen Itzá stop, following message being sent to Mexican Government tonight quote Diciembre veinti nueve ultimo C. L. Lundell joven botanico norte-Americano descubrio sur Estado Campeche una ciudad de grande extensión del Imperio Viejo de los antiguos Mayas Señor Lundell hizo una mapa provisional y descubrio sesentidos monumentos exculturados Señor Lundell con generosidad notable puso todas sus notas y su mapa a disposición de la Carnegie Institución de Washington, la cual ha estado haciendo excavaciones en Chichen Itzá, por los ultimos ocho años. Abril tres salio de Chichen Itzá un grupo de la Directiva del Proyecto Chichen Itzá de dicha Institución para explorar la ciudad de Calakmul y hoy regreso a Campeche despues una permanencia de una quincena en esta ruinas Como resultado esta expedición ha comprobado que Calakmul es una de las principales ciudades del Imperio Viejo Maya. Tiene el tremendo total de ciento tres monolitos escultrados con figuras y géroglificas. Tiene cuentiuna Series Iniciales de las cuales la expedición pudo descifrar las fechas de casi la mitad. Dicha expedición hizo mapa tecnico endonde estan localizados todos monolitos, edificios, etcetera. Hizo estudios arquitectonicos, ceramicos, y epigraficos. Expedición llegó Campeche hoy regresará Chichen Itzá mañana unquote affectionately".

I realized that the sending of these two messages would cost more than I had in cash. So getting some "efectivo" from Mr. Diego from his office we went to the Telegraph Office.