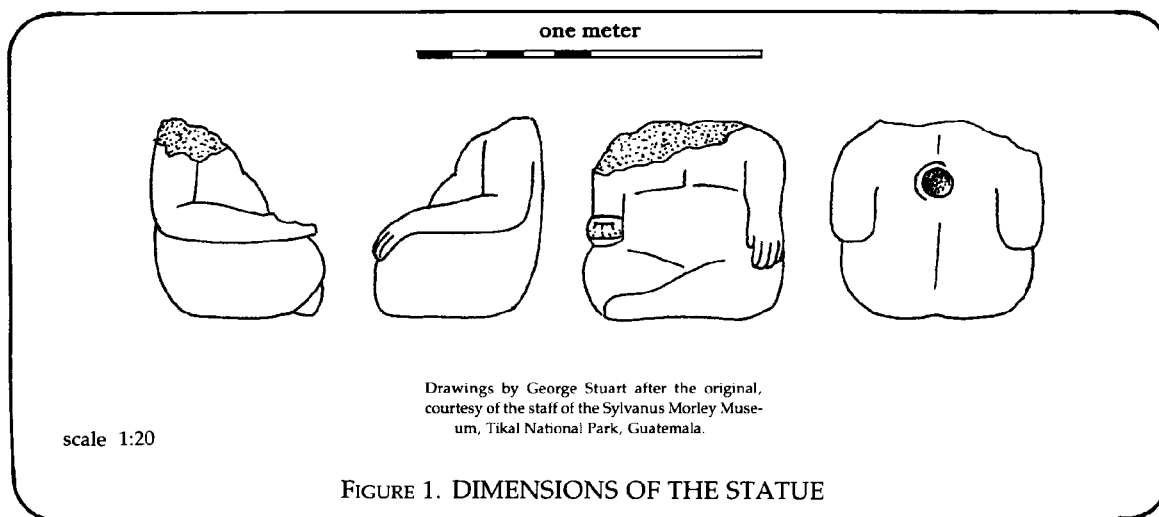


A New Early Classic Text from Tikal

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EXCAVATION OF STRUCTURE 3D-43 of Group H in the northern section of Tikal under the direction of archaeologist Jorge Mario de León of the *Proyecto Nacional Tikal*, resulted in the discovery of a magnificent sculpture now on exhibit at the museum in Tikal National Park (Fig. 1). Publication of the results of that investigation by the Institute of Anthropology and History of Guatemala will provide the appropriately detailed treatment of the archaeological context of the sculpture. In the meantime, a brief description of the piece, including a drawing and analysis of the hieroglyphic text on its back, is presented here.

The sculpture, in the full round, is that of a somewhat corpulent male seated cross-legged in a Buddha-like position, with hands resting near the knees, left palm down, right palm up (Fig. 2). It is close to life size and, unfortunately, headless. The material from which the statue is made is a dense fine-grained stone, reddish in color, and this, along with the general character of the piece, renders it unique by comparison to other Tikal monuments. A text, deeply incised so as to maintain the calligraphic character of the hieroglyphs, occupies virtually the entire back of the figure (Figs. 3 & 4), and each of the upper arms of the figure bears a glyphic cartouche (Fig. 4b,c). The decapitation of the piece, whether deliberate or accidental, resulted in the loss of the upper portion of the text on the back and most of the cartouche on the right arm.

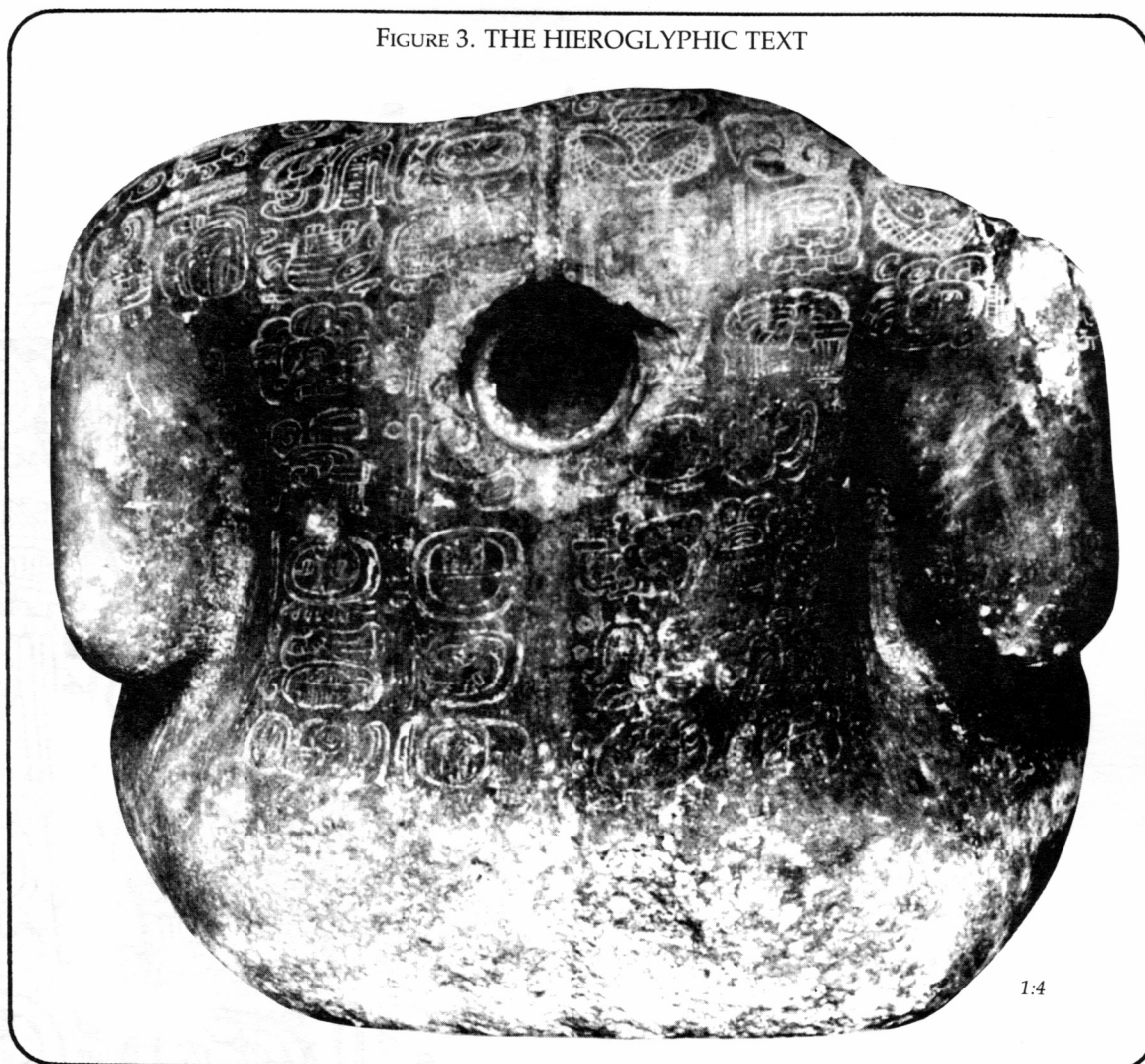


Photographs by George Stuart, courtesy of the staff of the Sylvanus Morley Museum, Tikal National Park, Guatemala.



FIGURE 2. THE HEADLESS STATUE OF TIKAL

FIGURE 3. THE HIEROGLYPHIC TEXT



In addition, a circular depression in the center of the back, clearly added at some time after the text was carved, and for an unknown purpose, has destroyed part of the inscription.

THE HIEROGLYPHS ON THE STATUE

The complete cartouche on the left arm of the sculpture (Fig. 4b) contains the name glyph of "Jaguar Paw" in its full form as discussed by David Stuart (1987), and resembles the nominal glyph at position A2 on Tikal Stela 39, the important Early Classic monument recovered from Structure 5D-86-7 of the Mundo Perdido complex by Marco Antonio Bailey. The cartouche on the right arm (Fig. 4c) is largely destroyed; the remaining portion may be the sign T150 as a prefix. That same sign is prefixed to the bearded bird glyph on Stela 39, at B8, and also appears at position C6 on the so-called "Marcador" discovered in the North Plaza of Group 6C-XVI (Fialko 1986: *lamina* 2). Maricela Ayala (1987:621) associates Stela 39 with "Jaguar Paw III," while Laporte and Fialko (in press) link the Marcador with "Smoking Frog" and his ancestor "Two Coyote." Tikal Stela 39 is associated with the completion of the 17th katun, or 8.17.0.0.0 1 Ahau

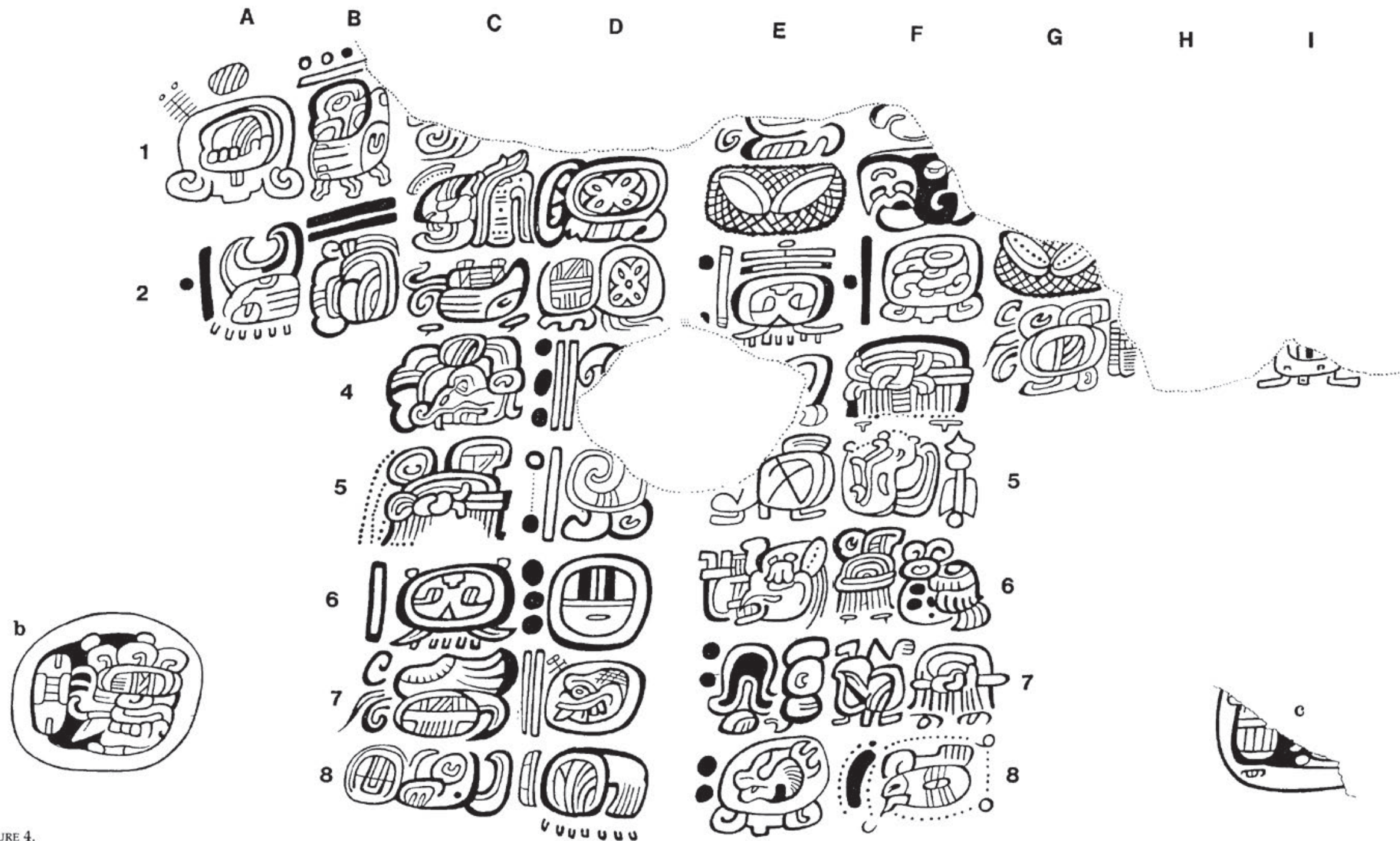


FIGURE 4.
THE HIEROGLYPHIC TEXT
Drawing by Rene Ozaeta, Rafael Pinelo, and
Rolando Caal, courtesy of the author.

8 Ch'en; the Marcador sculpture bears two dates—8.17.1.4.12 11 Eb 15 Mac, and 8.16.5.1.9 12 Muluc 12 Kankin. These dates, as well as those of Tikal Stelae 4, 18, and 31; Uaxactun Stelae 4, 5, 18, and 19; and Uolantun Stela 1, are related to events at those sites connected with the accessions of "Jaguar Paw", "Smoking Frog", and "Curved Nose" at Tikal (Mathews 1986; Fahsen 1986).

The text on the back of the statue begins with the date 1 Eb, 6C, and 10 Yax expressed with four glyphs at A1-B2, which corresponds to the Long Count date 8.18.10.8.12. At least two other dates and possibly a third appear in the main part of the text. The Distance Number (hereafter DN) 3.5.7 at D5-6 must be subtracted from the first date. The chronological sequence, then, is as follows:

Date A (A1-B2):	(8.18.10. 8.12) 1 Eb 10 Yax
Subtract DN (D5-D6):	<u>3. 5. 7</u>
	(8.18. 7. 3. 5) 10 Chicchan (18 Tzec)

Date A (A1-B2):	(8.18.10. 8.12) 1 Eb 10 Yax
Subtract DN (E3):	<u>7.11</u>
	(8.18.10. 1. 1) 6 Imix (19 Uo)
Add (DN):	<u>(9)</u>
Date D (E8):	(8.18.10. 1.10) 2 Oc ???

The last date is difficult to prove since there is neither a Distance Number nor a month glyph to complete the Calendar Round.

Two additional numerical notations may confuse the inscription's chronology somewhat. The first, at D4, shows two bars and three dots, but the main sign which follows is damaged. The second notation, at E7, shows two dots followed by a shell element and what appears to be an earflare.

The main part of the inscription (C1-F8) was probably composed of 32 glyphs with the possibility of an additional four on the right shoulder. Four glyphs of the upper main text and at least two of the lateral right text were destroyed. The large hole in the center of the statue's back obliterated two other glyphs. This makes it difficult to ascertain the remaining dates, and to decipher the inscription's full message. However, it is evident that it marks the closure of "Curved Nose's" reign. This is based on the chronology presented in Stela 31 featuring a "pyramid event" which I have labeled elsewhere as that ruler's heir designation at 8.16.19.15.15; his accession, recorded in 8.17.2.16.17; a "house event" at 8.17.18.17.2, and the final mention of his name celebrating the completion of the 18th katun. This would mean that "Curved Nose's" active political life spanned at least 20 years. It is also known that by 8.18.10.0.0 another individual, "Frog-Sky *Mak'ina*," was in power. The dates on the statue are close to or within these two Period Ending celebrations.

The first two glyphs of the main text are obliterated, and the only visible element in glyph block C1 is a prefix, probably the Early Classic version of T125/126. The first complete compound (C2) is a rare form of the general verb T11.788 with a T213 postfix, followed by a "computer printout" such as those emanating from the back of scribes on some "codex-style" ceramic

vases. I believe this to mean something akin to “this is written.” The inscription continues at D2 with the T1.544:88 compound, phonetically U-KIN-(na), or “his sun,” which may pertain to the nominal glyph at C4. Two hieroglyphs intervene at C3 and D3, also preceding the nominal. The first, a smoking torch resting on a hand, has a counterpart in the mural of Uaxactun Structure B-XIII, Room 7 (Smith 1950: Fig. 46, lower center). The second is a sky-sun compound which, with the glyph at D2, may form a pairing such as those on Stela 31, where contrasting sets (for example, “sky” and “earth”) are expressed before or immediately after nominals. Glyph C4 is clearly “Curved Nose” of Tikal with the Emblem Glyph following at C5, and a partially effaced glyph (13-x) at D4. The Distance Number 3.5.7 follows at positions D5, C6, and D6. At C7, the combination T125.77:88 appears, immediately preceding the 10 Chicchan at D7. This recalls the situation on Balakbal Stela 5, where (at C3) a similar compound *follows* a Calendar Round date, suggesting to me that it may be the Early Classic version of an Anterior Date Indicator, or a verbal expression, possibly “death.”

A seating expression follows at C8. Possibly it signifies the “seating of a tun.” Or it may function as an Anterior Date Indicator reinforcing the ADI mentioned above, thus referring to the seating of an individual, since the first glyph entered is either T548 or T679. If it were the second possibility, this event occurred at 8.18.7.3.5 10 Chicchan 18 Tzec, or about three and a half years before the first date.

Unfortunately, the two glyphs at E1 and F1 are missing. The possibility of a nominal expression in those positions is strongly suggested by the glyphs E2 and F2 (repeated at G3 and, possibly, H3). In the likelihood that this is a name, it could be that of a new individual in the dynastic sequence of Tikal. Yet, in the mural of Uaxactun Structure B-XIII, the T743 glyphs appear several times as a name (Smith 1950: Fig. 46, lower left).

Deciphering the remainder of the text becomes increasingly complicated due to the lost glyphs at E1, F1 and E4, the last of which is followed by a Tikal Emblem Glyph (at F4). The expressions following the 6 Imix date may name real persons or tutelar deities with the *ma cuch* title, and at least three more Tikal Emblem Glyphs. At this point, I refer the reader to the work of Laporte and Fialko (in press) on the Mundo Perdido group at Tikal. The glyph at E6, for example, appears in the Marcador text, and on Stela 31, along with the glyph at F6, as part of the bracelet held by “Stormy Sky.” These glyphs denote an obvious connection, strongly suggesting one of a familial nature. The unusual compound at F5 consists of an upturned zoomorphic head with T181 as a postfix, followed by an arrow-like sign. I speculate that this is the name of an individual whom I have previously called “Frog-Sky Mak’ina” (Fahsen: 1986). An unusual dotted glyph with a perforator in hand over a possible TI88 follows at F8 to close the main text.

The final date is problematic because it is accompanied by neither a Distance Number nor a month glyph. The only logical alternative is to count forward nine days from the previous 6 Imix to arrive at the suppressed (8.18.10.1.10) 2 Oc date, 142 days after the first date at A1-B2, or two years and several months from the earlier date of (8.18.7.3.5) 10 Chicchan (18 Tzec), as noted in the table, above. This leads me to believe that this text deals with the death of “Curved Nose,” the events immediately following, and the commemoration by “Frog-Sky Mak’ina” of his accession and the accompanying rites of succession, stating his tutelar and spiritual protectors. The T604-743 compound, if nominal, remains a mystery awaiting further investigation.

Even more mysterious is the relationship between the “Jaguar Paw” glyph on the left shoulder of the statue and the text on its back. Briefly, it seems that if this glyph names the individual subject of the statue, then he was the last “Jaguar Paw” to rule in Tikal. His reign was followed by “Smoking Frog” and the lineage of “Curved Nose.” Yet, that the text would be carved on the statue of an earlier ruler proven to be of a different lineage—not a direct ancestor of the ruler at 8.18.7.3.5—is a problem requiring additional research and a closer examination of the archaeological context of the statue. Similarly, this might provide the answer as to

whether the figure represents the final "Jaguar Paw" or the later "Jaguar Paw Skull" who ruled around 9.3.0.0.0. The nominal glyph for this last personage includes the inverted jawbone variant of T109 which, according to Stuart (1987), is consistently a part of the name of the older individual.

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