

Temple of the Night Sun

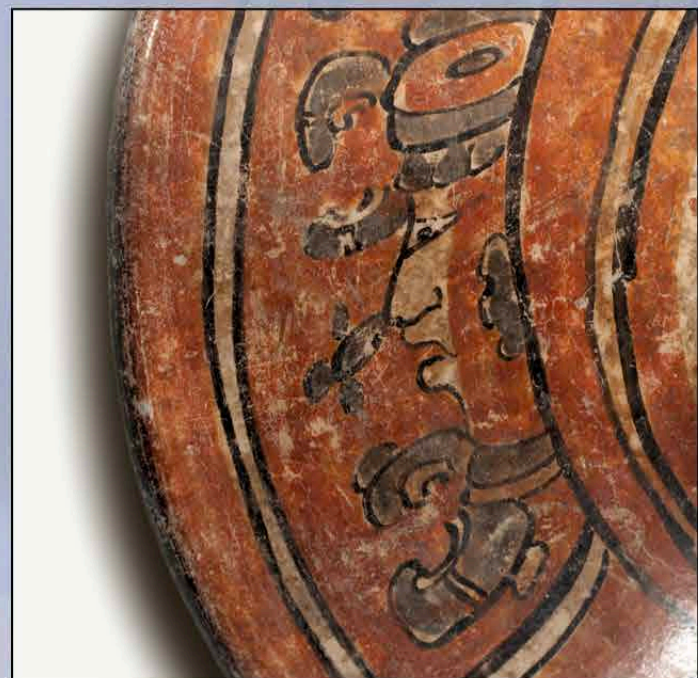
A Royal Tomb at El Diablo, Guatemala

Stephen Houston,
Sarah Newman,
Edwin Román,
and Thomas Garrison

With contributions by
Nicholas Carter, Alyce de Carteret, Andrew Scherer, and Karl Taube



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For our own founders, with love...

Andrew Craig Houston (SH)

Kathleen Elizabeth Newman and Donald
Arthur Newman (SN)

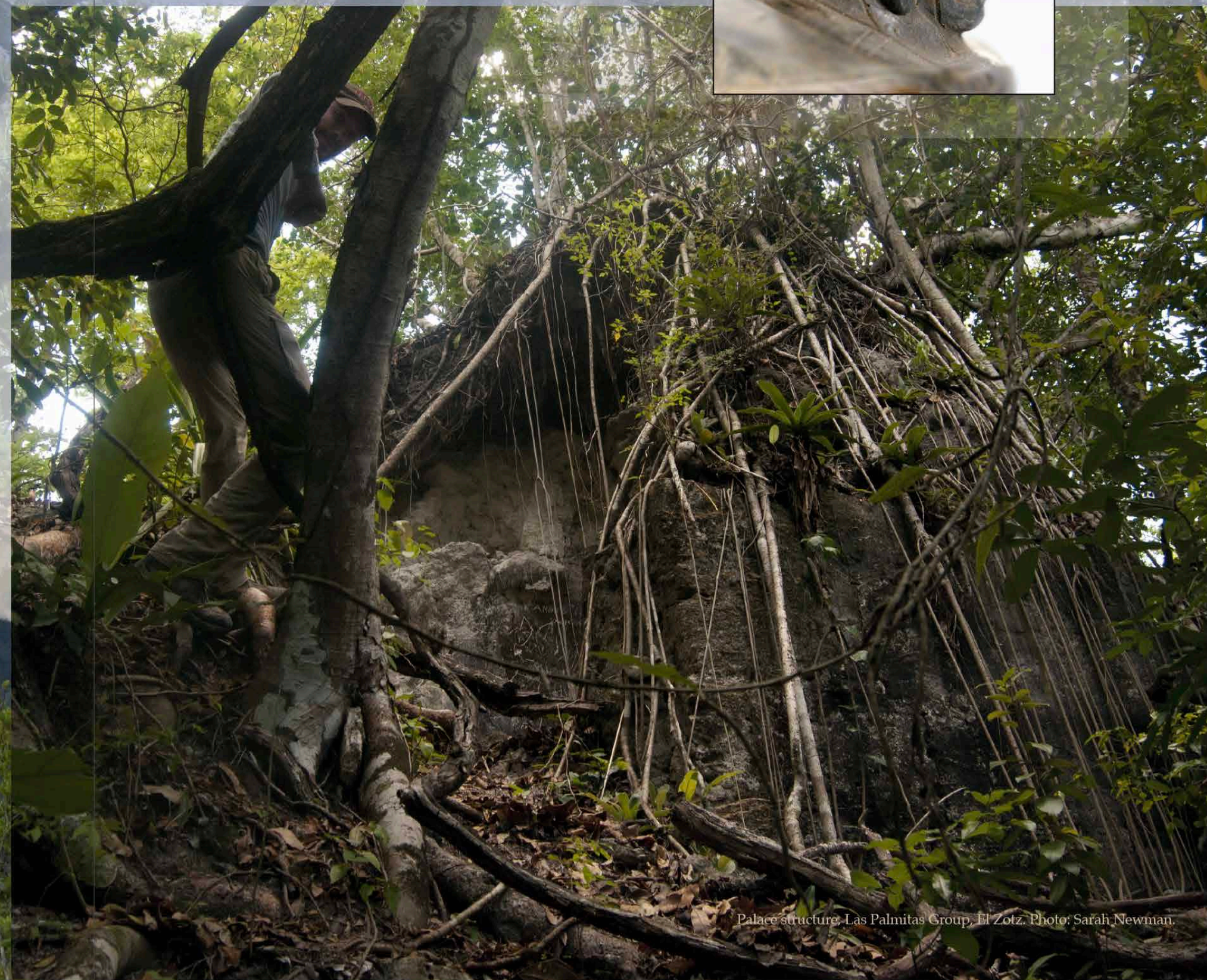
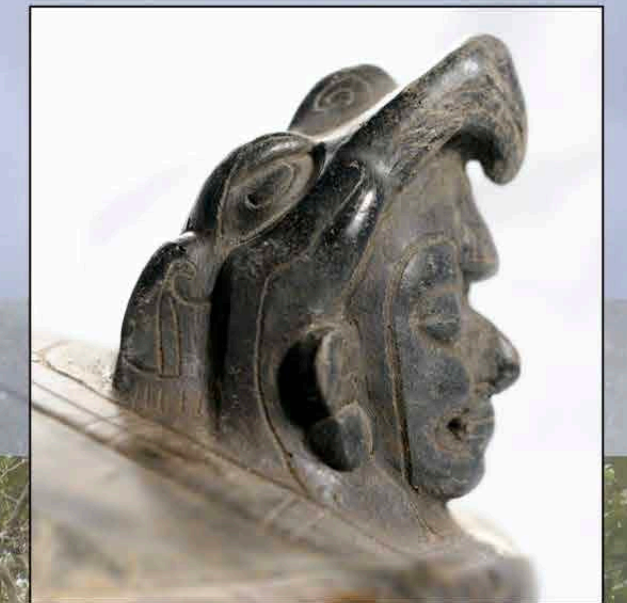
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Acknowledgements

When first found, Burial 9 prompted elation. Royal tombs offer a rare glimpse into the symbolic and tangible investments of past rulers. But a moment's thought led to another emotion: a candid concern that the discovery would tax our prior skills and available funds. By definition, finds like Burial 9 are rare. Much is at stake. Despite decades as an archaeologist, Houston had never dug a tomb like this. His younger colleagues might not dig one like it again. A vault whose floor was covered by artifacts and wall collapse—how was it to be entered? A deposit with fragile objects—how were they to be recorded, extracted, conserved, transported, stored, and analyzed? And a dig without security, in a remote area threatened by rains—how was the tomb to be excavated responsibly yet with relative dispatch? Burial 9 tested us to the limit. This book results from our attempt to grapple with its many logistical and interpretive challenges.

The experience was well worth it, an enormous privilege for all concerned. The Instituto de Antropología e Historia de Guatemala (IDAEH) showed great generosity in allowing our project to work in the Buenavista Valley, at El Zotz and its outlying palace of El Diablo. Dr. Héctor Escobedo Ayala, then Vice-Minister (and later Minister) of Culture and Sports, proved a steadfast friend to our work and to Maya archaeology in general. His office organized a press conference a few weeks after our departure from the field in 2010, allowing us to report on our findings to the widest audience. Dr. Escobedo was supported by: Jerónimo Lancerio (former Minister); Lic. Juan Carlos Pérez Calderón, at that time Director of the Patrimonio Cultural y Natural de Guatemala, a position later filled by our colleague Mtro. Eric Ponciano; Licda. Mónica Urquizú, Technical Sub-director of the Patrimonio; Licda. Griselda Pérez, then head of the Departamento de Monumentos Prehispánicos y Coloniales (DEMOPRE), as well as official Inspector of our project, along with Lic. Daniel Aquino and Pedro Pablo Burgos. More

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