

Archaeological Illustration in the Americas

*Highlights from the
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Dumbarton Oaks | October 2009

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N. Guérard le fils fecit

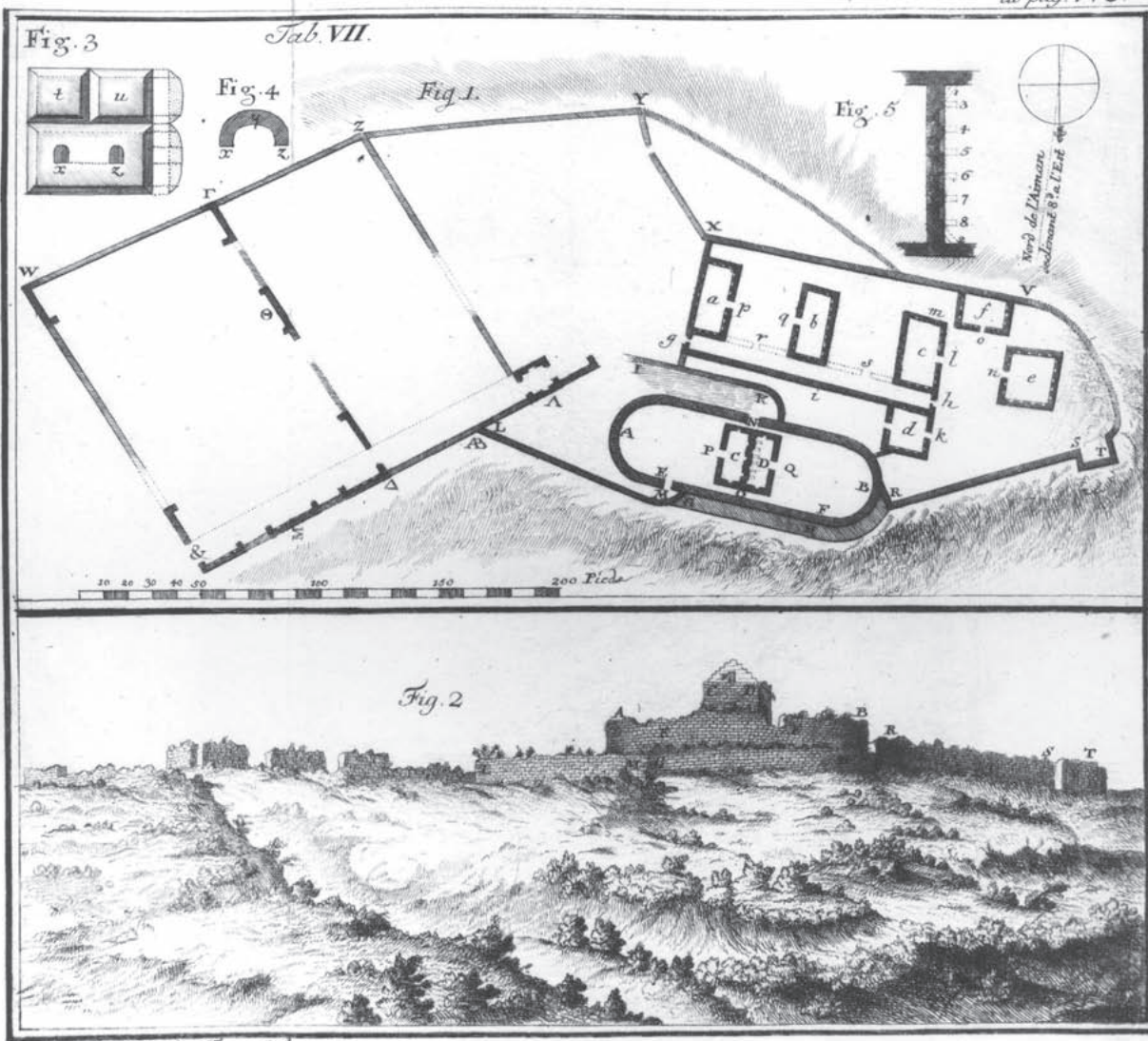
A. Incas, ou Roy du Perou. B. Coia ou Reine. ces deux figures ont été dessinées d'après un tableau fait par les indiens du Cusco
 C. indien du Perou D. indienne portant la mantilla E. leurs maisons
 F. moitié du plan de la Bicharra ou fourneau abruler de l'herbe Icho G. profil de Bicharra
 H. différentes formes de vases trouvés dans les tombeaux des anciens indiens

Amédée François Frézier

1682–1773

Amédée François Frézier, *A Voyage to the South-Sea, and along the Coasts of Chili and Peru, in the Years 1712, 1713, and 1714: Particularly Describing the Genius and Constitution of the Inhabitants, as well Indians as Spaniards; Their Customs and Manners; their Natural History, Mines, Commodities, Traffick with Europe, &c.* London: Jonah Bowyer, 1717.

Antiquities and other “curiosities” were depicted in the travel accounts of Europeans visiting the Americas in the early eighteenth century. Although they were often produced for larger scientific expeditions, these accounts occasionally documented Pre-Columbian buildings and objects. *A Voyage to the South-Sea* includes thirty-seven copperplate engravings of the coast of Peru, showing its harbors, cities, botanical specimens, and local traditions, such as sea-lion–skin boats. The best-known image in the volume is of an Inca royal family (at left), with Pre-Columbian ceramics in the foreground. Although the vessel shapes were not faithfully represented, the images were clearly based on archaeological specimens.



Charles-Marie de La Condamine

1701–1774

Charles-Marie de La Condamine, *Journal du voyage fait par ordre du roi, a l'équateur, servant d'introduction historique a la Mesure des trois premiers degrés du méridien*. Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1751, with preparatory drawing for a vignette.

Charles-Marie de La Condamine was a French mathematician, cartographer, and scientist, and one of the leaders (with Louis Godin) of the French Geodesic Mission to the Viceroyalty of Peru in 1735–1746. The goal of the expedition was to determine the shape of the globe by measuring the arc of the meridian at the equator, and it was the first official European voyage to venture beyond the coastal region to the interior of South America. While archaeology was not emphasized in the *Journal du voyage*, La Condamine recorded some of the remains they encountered in a journal article (*Mémoire sur quelques anciens monumens de Pérou, du tems des Incas*) published separately in Berlin in 1745. Keenly aware of the deceptive nature of human perception, La Condamine relied on mathematical instruments for recording the world. His plan of the Inca structure at Ingapirca (at left) is the first measured archeological illustration produced in the Andean region, and his report shows an attention to detail and accuracy that eluded many of his contemporaries.

Jorge Juan

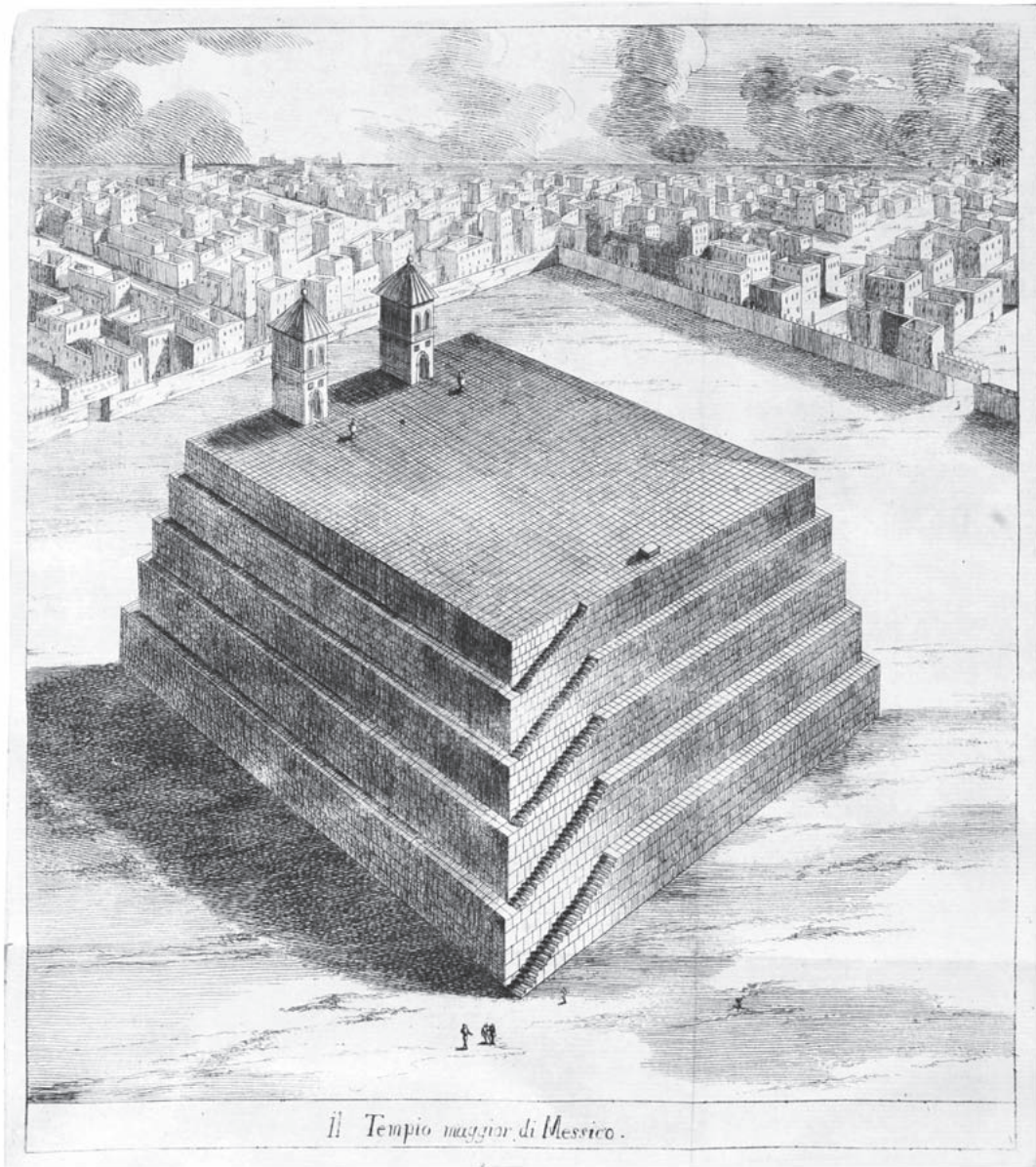
1713–1773

Antonio de Ulloa

1716–1795

Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa, *Relación histórica del viage a la América meridional, hecho de orden de S. Mag. para medir algunos grados de meridiano terrestre, y venir por ellos en conocimiento de la verdadera figura, y magnitud de la tierra, con otras varias observaciones astronómicas, y físicas*. Madrid: Antonio Marin, 1748.

Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa were officers in the Spanish Royal Navy assigned to accompany the French Geodesic Mission to the Viceroyalty of Peru. Juan and Ulloa published their own account of the expedition a few years after La Condamine. Their *Relación histórica del viage a la América meridional* was touted in Spain as a triumph of Spanish empiricism and scholarship, and their description of the peoples, customs, and geography of the Andes circulated widely in Europe. Four archaeological illustrations show buildings and burial sites of Pre-Hispanic Andean peoples, including a view of the site of Pambamarca (Ecuador; at left). Wide of the mark in terms of fidelity to the remains—especially in comparison with La Condamine—the illustrations were enjoyed by a wide European readership eager for a glimpse of the Andes.



Il Tempio maggior di Messico.

Francesco Saverio Clavigero

1731–1787

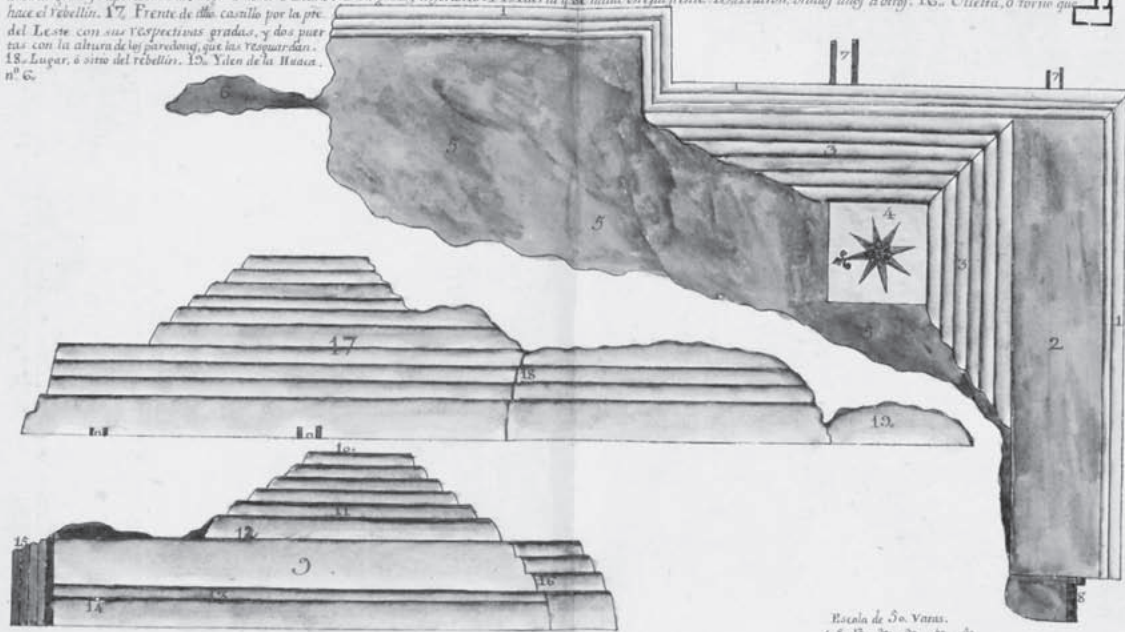
Francesco Saverio Clavigero, *Storia antica del Messico: Cavata da' migliori storici spagnuoli, e da' manoscritti, e dalle pitture antiche degl' Indiani . . . e dissertazioni sulla terra, sugli animale, e sugli abitatori del Messico*. 4 vols. Cesena: G. Biasini, 1780–1781.

Born in Veracruz, Mexico, Francesco Saverio Clavigero joined the order of the Society of Jesus in Puebla. He completed his studies in Mexico City, where he had access to the notable library of the Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo and its rich holdings of Indian sources. Exiled to Italy with the other Jesuits in 1767, he wrote his history of Mexico in Bologna. Clavigero's book remained an authoritative study of ancient Mexico for many years, and his defense of ancient American culture contrasted with earlier writers, such as Georges Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon. The illustrations accompanying his work, however, were largely based on textual descriptions, so the twin temples of the Aztec Templo Mayor (at left) would in some ways seem to be more at home in Tuscany than Tenochtitlan.

PLANO que demuestra los fragmentos de un edificio de adobe nombrado el Castillo del tpo de los Reyes Chinos sito a una leg.^a de distancia de la Ciudad de Trujillo en la parte del Este.

EXPLICACION

1. Firruco de sus gradas inferiores. 2. Primer estrada, ó Mesa donde se encuentran solo sepirosos llenos de huesos. 3. Firruco de las gradas Superior. 4. Ultima estrada, ó Mesa. 5. Lugar por donde se encuentra dho. Castillo arruinado. 6. Huaca arruinada. 7. Pavimentos que resguardan las entradas de las puertas que se hallan a la superficie de la Tierra. 8. Pilares de adobe q^e entre muchos otros q^e se reconocen arruinados, se conservan en entera. 9. Frente, ó vista de dho. Castillo por la parte del Sur. 10. Su ultima mesa. 11. Sus gradas Superior. 12. Seg^{da} Mesa ó Plano. 13. gradas inferiores. 14. Puerta q^e se halla en esta frente. 15. Pilares, unos a otros. 16. Vuelta, ó torno que hace el rebellin. 17. Frente de dho. castillo por la parte del Este con sus respectivas gradas, y dos puertas con la altura de los pilares que las resguardan. 18. Lugar, ó sitio del rebellin. 19. Yden de la Huaca n^o 6.

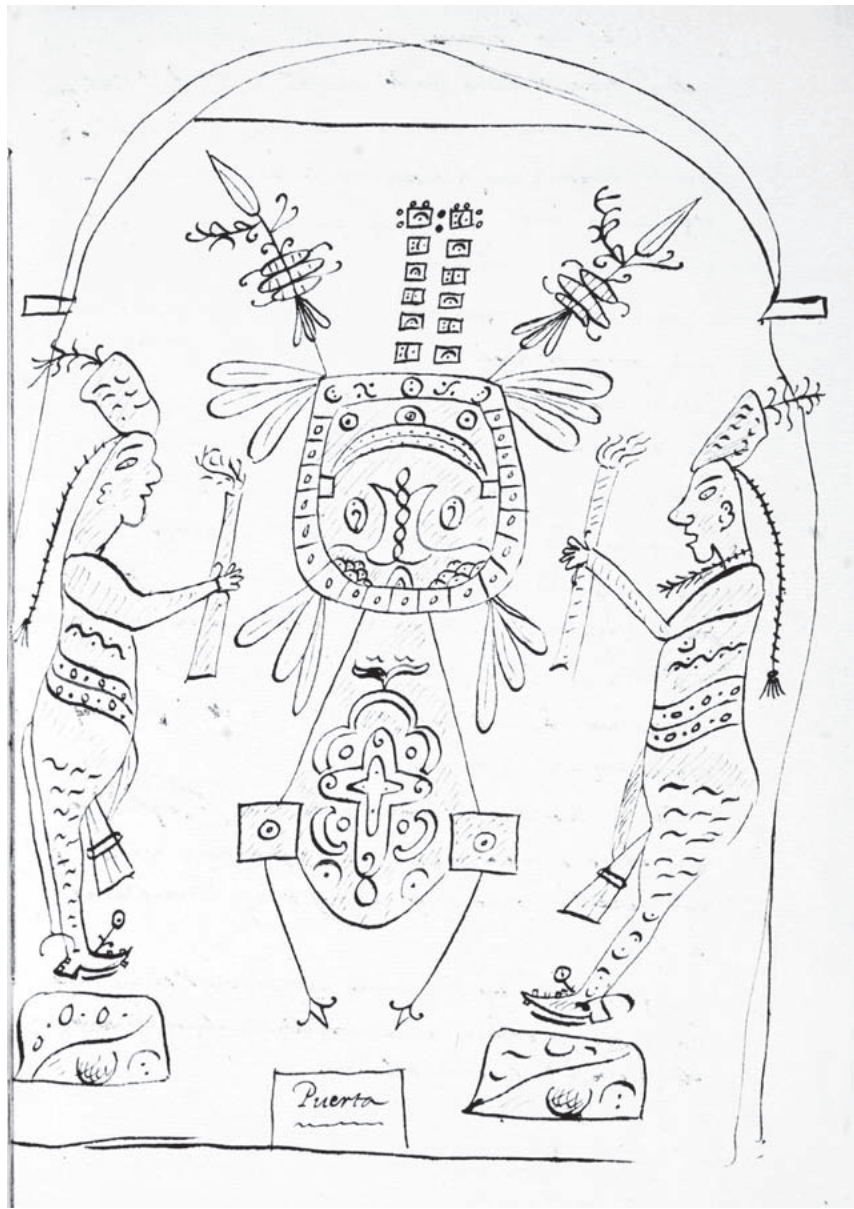


Baltasar Jaime Martínez Compañón y Bujanda

1735–1797

Baltasar Jaime Martínez Compañón y Bujanda, *Trujillo del Perú*. 9 vols. 1780s. Facsimile, Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica, 1978–1994.

Born in the Basque region of Spain, Baltasar Jaime Martínez Compañón y Bujanda became the bishop of the Intendancy of Trujillo, Peru, in the 1780s. While in Trujillo, he directed the production of nine volumes of watercolors depicting the natural and cultural histories of the region. These volumes are a remarkable legacy documenting life on the north coast of Peru and sketching out a utopian ideal from the era of the Enlightenment. Volume nine, dedicated to archaeology, includes some of the most detailed and sophisticated illustrations of antiquities and archaeological sites known from the Americas. Measured plans and elevations of Pre-Hispanic architecture, as well as detailed renderings of burials and their contents, are startling for their time, both for their quantity and quality—the plans were the most accurate ones available for many sites until the 1970s. Among the many Pre-Columbian structures he depicted is an adobe platform mound now known as the Huaca del Sol (at left), in the Moche Valley on Peru’s north coast.



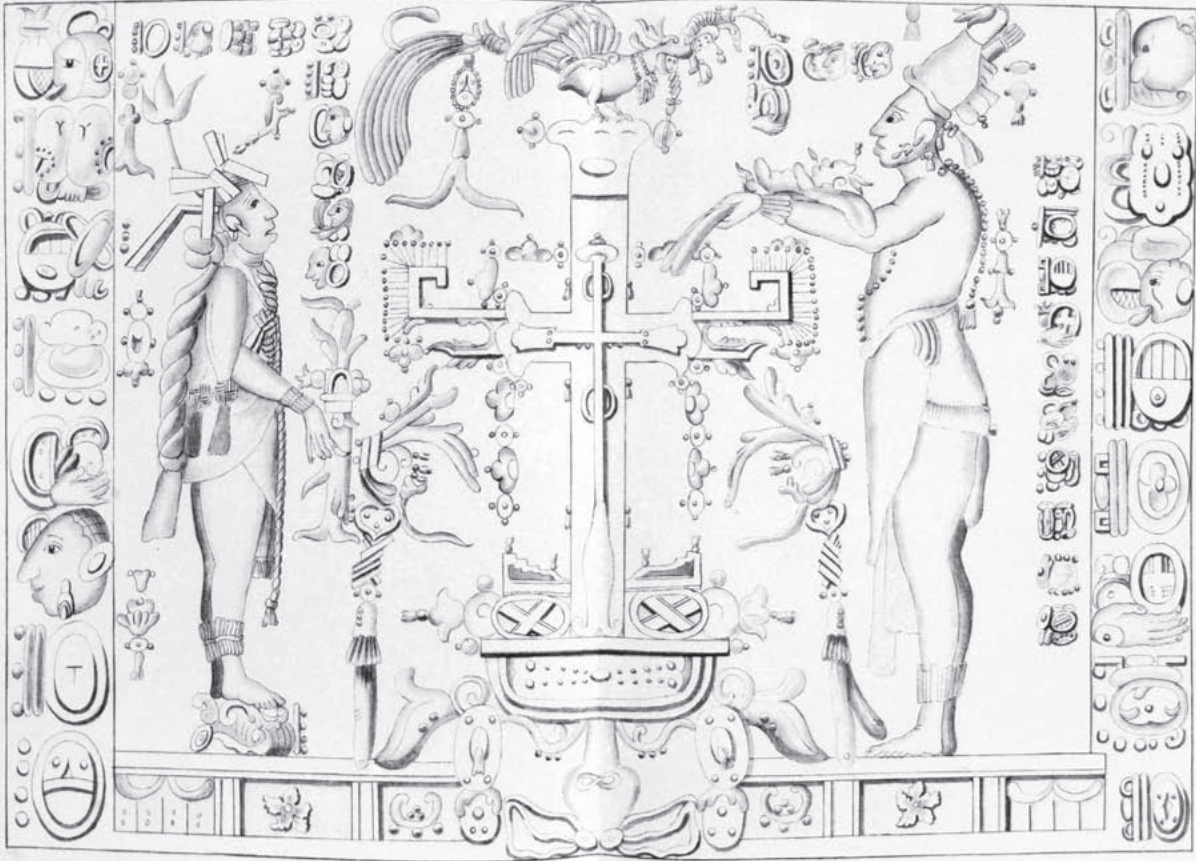
José Antonio Calderón

b. 1750 or 1751

José Antonio Calderón, *Descripción del terreno y población antigua nuevamente descubierta en las inmediaciones del pueblo de Palenque*. 1785. Facsimile, Madrid: Testimonio, 1993.

In November 1784, Charles III of Spain sent José Antonio Calderón, the deputy mayor of the small colonial settlement of Santo Domingo de Palenque, on a mission to investigate reports of a mysterious “lost city” in the Chiapas highlands of what is now Mexico. After his three-day expedition, Calderón submitted his report to Josef Estachería, the captain general of the Royal Audiencia of Guatemala. The report contained a short description of the palace and more than 200 other structures of this spectacular site, now known as Palenque. He included four pen sketches: two of relief carvings, one of the palace tower, and one showing the central scene of the tablet of the Temple of the Sun (at left). Although his drawings are those of an untrained draftsman, they effectively convey his attempts to understand this foreign imagery. Calderón’s brief report prompted further expeditions—with better artists—to Palenque in the following years.

Fig 29

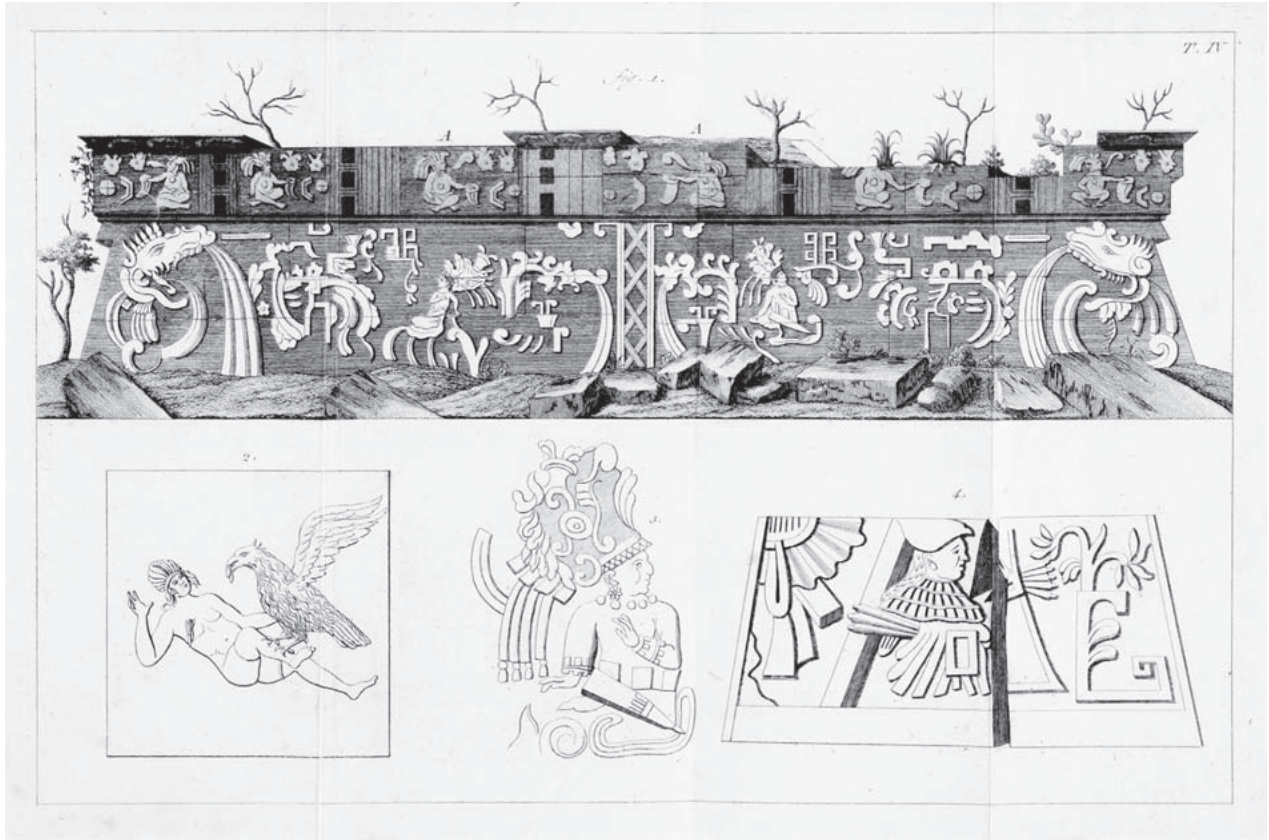


Ricardo Almendariz

fl. ca. 1787

Ricardo Almendariz, *Estampas de Palenque*. 1787. Facsimile, Madrid: Testimonio, 1993.

In May 1787, while serving as a captain under the military governor of Guatemala, Antonio del Río conducted some of the first excavations at the Maya site of Palenque. Del Río was accompanied by the artist Ricardo Almendariz (also known as Ignacio Armendariz), who was charged with creating an illustrated record of the site both for local colonial administrators and Charles III, the Spanish monarch with a passion for antiquity stemming from his time in Naples. During their three-week stay, Almendariz made thirty drawings depicting stucco reliefs and carved tablets from the palace, the Temple of the Inscriptions, and the Cross Group. Overwhelmed by the intricacies of the glyphic inscriptions on the Temple of the Cross panel (at left) and failing to comprehend their significance, Almendariz condensed the dozens of glyphs on either side of the figures into two columns of eight, with enlarged characters designed to be representative of the group. Although Almendariz's illustrations were certainly the most detailed and faithful depictions of Palenque to date, his drawings betray a lack of understanding of the imagery and a tendency to follow familiar European visual tropes.



Pedro Marquez

1741–1820

Pedro Marquez, *Due antichi monumenti di architettura messicana, illustrati*.
Rome: il Salomoni, 1804.

While living in exile in Italy, the creole Jesuit priest Pedro Marquez wrote one of the first works devoted to Mexican archaeology to be published in Europe. In *Due antichi monumenti di architettura messicana*, Marquez intended not only to publicize recent excavations of Pre-Columbian sites, but also to challenge common Western assumptions about the indigenous populations of the Americas. The introduction outlines a history of Mexico, and includes a refutation of reports of rampant human sacrifice among the Aztecs. The main body of his work provides a summary of the findings of the distinguished Mexican scholar José Antonio Alzate y Ramírez, whose 1791 account of Xochicalco was one of the first systematic descriptions of an archaeological site in Mexico. The engravings in the Marquez book are based on Alzate y Ramírez's publication, including the depiction at left of the Pyramid of the Plumed Serpent at Xochicalco.



Antonio del Río

1745–1789

Antonio del Río, *Description of the Ruins of an Ancient City: Discovered near Palenque, in the Kingdom of Guatemala . . .*. Translated by Paul Felix Cabrera. London: H. Berthoud, and Suttaby, Evance and Fox, 1822.

The report written by Captain Antonio del Río on his expedition to Palenque was the first detailed, thorough description of the site. He submitted his account, accompanied by Almendariz's illustrations, to Josef Estachería in June 1787. A partial copy of the report circulated informally, but Del Río's description of the site was not printed for another thirty-five years, when Henry Berthoud published the report as *Description of the Ruins of an Ancient City* in London in 1822. Of the thirty drawings made by Almendariz, seventeen were included in Berthoud's publication, accompanied by an essay by the Guatemalan doctor Pablo Felix Cabrera on the history of the Americas. Almendariz's drawings were prepared for publication by the French artist Jean-Frederick Waldeck, sparking Waldeck's own interest in visiting the site. At left is Waldeck's engraving of Almendariz's drawing of the Beau Relief.

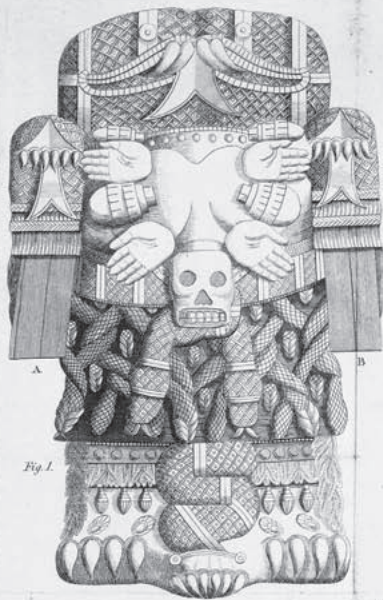


Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

Altura 3. varas 1/2.
 Su mayor ancho por la frente 2. varas.
 Su ancho por el costado 1. vara 1/2.



Fig. 4.

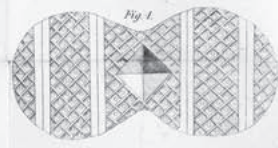


Fig. 5.

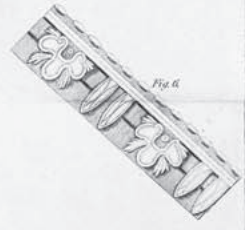


Fig. 6.

Antonio de León y Gama

1735–1802

Antonio de León y Gama, *Descripción histórica y cronológica de las dos piedras, que con ocasión del nuevo empedrado que se está formando en la plaza principal de México, se hallaron en ella el año de 1790. Explícate el sistema de los calendarios de los Indios . . . Noticia . . . á que se añaden otras curiosas . . . sobre la mitología de los mexicanos, sobre su astronomía, y sobre los ritos y ceremonias . . . en tiempo de su gentilidad . . .* 2nd ed. Mexico City: Alejandro Valdés, 1832.

One of the great early figures in the history of Mexican archaeology, Antonio de León y Gama produced some of the first modern illustrations of Aztec monuments. His detailed and careful studies of archaeological remains contributed to a growing sense of Mexican national identity in the late eighteenth century. He is best known for *Descripción histórica y cronológica de las dos piedras*, a report on the 1790 discovery of the Coatlicue statue (at left) and the Sun Stone buried under Mexico City's Zócalo. León y Gama's emphasis on the need to "preserve the remains of the antiquity of our patria" shows the key role Pre-Columbian ancestry and the achievements of indigenous cultures played in the formation of a modern Mexican identity.



Dessiné par Vieillard à Rome, d'après une esquisse de M. de Humboldt.

Gravé par Bonquet à Paris.

Alexander von Humboldt

1769–1859

Alexander von Humboldt, *Vues des cordillères, et monumens des peuples indigènes de l'Amérique*. 2 vols. Paris: F. Schoell, 1810.

Although not primarily interested in Pre-Columbian ruins, the great naturalist and explorer Alexander von Humboldt described and illustrated a number of ancient American cities and monuments. Most of his images were drawn from other sources, however, and some lack the rigor in empirical observation that is apparent in his text. The *Vues des cordillères* includes engravings of sites in Mexico he never visited, such as Mitla and Xochicalco. But Humboldt made extensive use of local scholarly studies, including the important work of José Antonio Alzate y Ramírez (1737–1799). In South America, he was impressed by the remains of Inca architecture and engineering, and devoted nine illustrations of Andean antiquities to such subjects, including the site of Ingapirca (at left).



20 Toises 20 Toises

Plan de
l'île



Yucatan
Mexicain

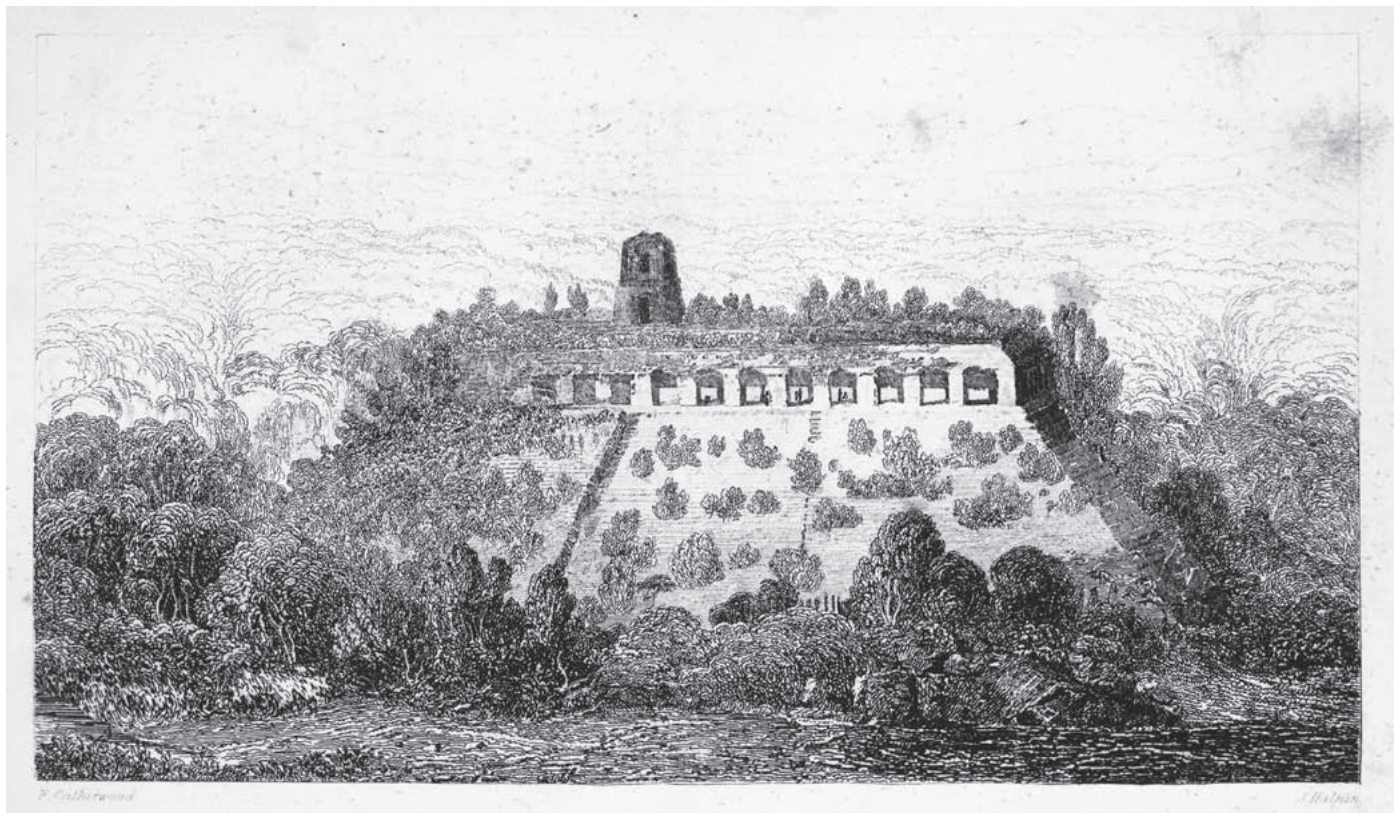
20 Toises 20 Toises

Guillermo Dupaix

1850–1817

Guillermo Dupaix, *Antiquités mexicaines: Relation des trois expéditions du capitaine Dupaix, ordonnées en 1805, 1806, et 1807, pour la recherche des antiquités du pays, notamment celles de Mitla et de Palenque; Accompagnée des dessins de Castañeda . . .* Paris: Bureau des antiquités mexicaines, J. Didot, 1834.

Between 1805 and 1809, Captain Guillermo Dupaix led three missions to study Pre-Columbian ruins in Mexico's central highlands, Oaxaca, and Chiapas. The last of the Spanish crown's surveys of Mesoamerica, the goal of the expeditions was to provide Charles IV with greater information on the natural and historical resources of New Spain. Dupaix hired José Luciano Castañeda, a professor of drawing and architecture in Mexico City, as the expeditions' artist. The surveys were the most extensive studies of Pre-Columbian remains to date, and Castañeda's numerous illustrations (some twenty-seven from Palenque alone) supplement Dupaix's textual descriptions. Although Dupaix showed a concern for accuracy in his reports, he also believed that citizens of Atlantis had constructed the monuments found at Monte Alban, El Tajín, and Palenque. Castañeda, as well, was not immune from ideas prevailing in Europe about contact between Mexico and the Mediterranean. His depictions of "tumuli" in Oaxaca (at left) and other structures owe much to European depictions of antiquity.



John Lloyd Stephens

1805–1852

Frederick Catherwood

1799–1854

John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan*. 2 vols. London: John Murray, 1841.

Still one of the great bestsellers in the field of Pre-Columbian studies, John Lloyd Stephen's account of his travels and studies in the region that is now Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico was of great importance for the study of the ancient Americas. It has been republished dozens of times since its first appearance in 1841. Stephens was one of the first authors to assert that the great Maya centers were built not by the Lost Tribes of Israel or shipwrecked Greeks, but by the ancestors of the current populations of the area. The first edition of this immensely popular book was illustrated with black-and-white plates, maps, and plans by the artist Frederick Catherwood. Finding earlier representations lacking, Stephens and Catherwood sought to create accurate and complete illustrations, and spent ten months among the Maya documenting the remains of ancient centers. The numerous fine engravings, such as the view of the palace at Palenque (at left), were certainly part of the book's appeal. Ruins were first "scrubbed and cleaned" and, then, drawn in the field by Catherwood using a camera lucida.



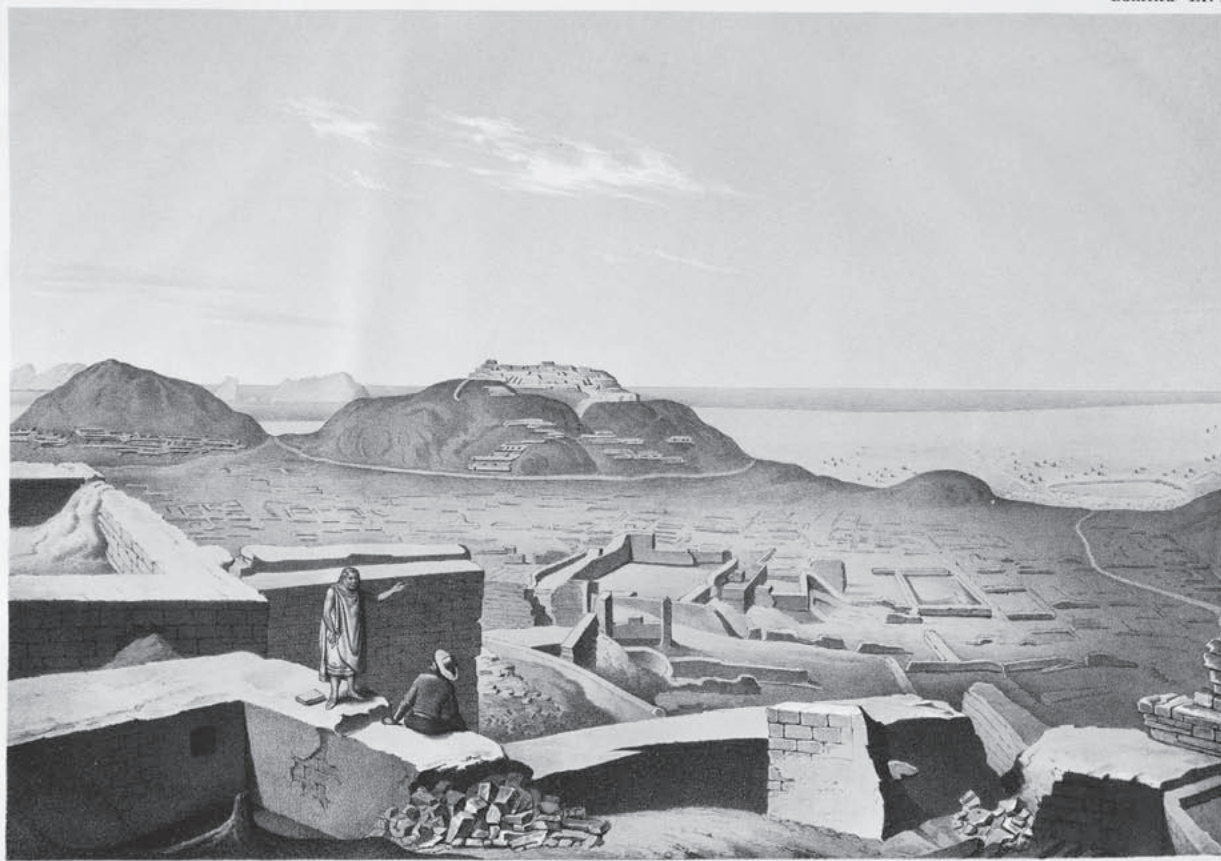
Façade principale du palais des Nonnes, à Chichen-Itza. — Dessin de Guiaud d'après une photographie de M. Charrey.

Désiré Charnay

1828–1915

Désiré Charnay, *The Ancient Cities of the New World: Being Voyages and Explorations in Mexico and Central America from 1857–1882*. Translated by J. Gonino and Helen S. Conant. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1887, and “Mexico,” originally published in *Le tour du monde*. Paris: L. Hachette, 1862.

The French explorer and archaeologist Désiré Charnay is notable in the field of Pre-Columbian studies for his pioneering use of photography to document ruins in Mexico and Central America. From 1857 through 1861, he traveled through Mexico on a commission from the French Ministry of Education, and published a report of his journey, *Cités et ruines américaines*, in 1863. The volume contained forty-seven photographic prints illustrating ancient architecture and sculpture, a remarkable feat for the time considering the challenges of using the cumbersome wet collodion process in the inhospitable climate of tropical Mexico. Charnay produced a less expensive edition of *Cités et ruines américaines* for broader circulation, and published it in English as *The Ancient Cities of the New World*. The image at left, from the journal *Le tour du monde*, shows a building known as the Nunnery at Chichen Itza.



Mariano Eduardo de Rivero y Ustáriz

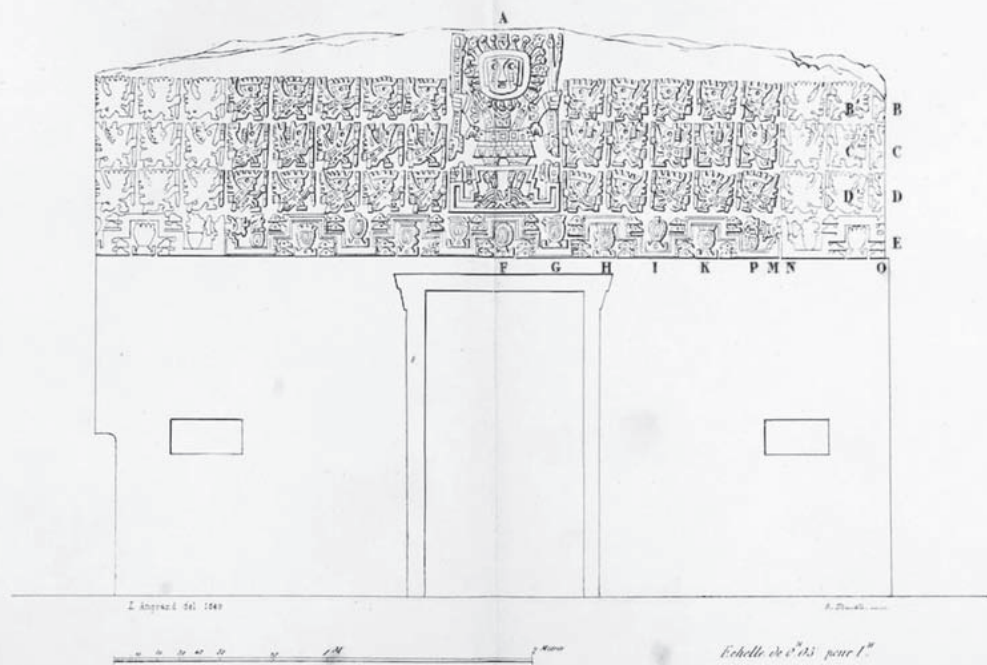
1798–1857

Johann Jakob von Tschudi

1818–1889

Mariano Eduardo de Rivero y Ustáriz and Johann Jakob von Tschudi,
Antigüedades peruanas. Vienna: Imperial de la Corte y del Estado, 1851.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, publications dedicated entirely to antiquities were becoming more common. Mariano Eduardo de Rivero y Ustáriz, a geologist, and Johann Jakob von Tschudi, a naturalist, collaborated on *Antigüedades peruanas*, a compendium of knowledge of the ancient Andes. The volume of illustrations of *Antigüedades peruanas*, known as the atlas, included fifty-eight chromolithographs depicting mummies, ceramics, and monuments. While the illustrations of objects are sufficiently faithful to their subjects to allow identification of cultural affiliations (e.g., Moche, Chimú), they often lacked an indication of scale and original context. A number of the illustrations were based on drawings created by distinguished artists of the time, including Francisco Laso and Johann Moritz Rugendas. At left is a view of the noted oracle site of Pachacamac, located south of the modern Peruvian capital of Lima.



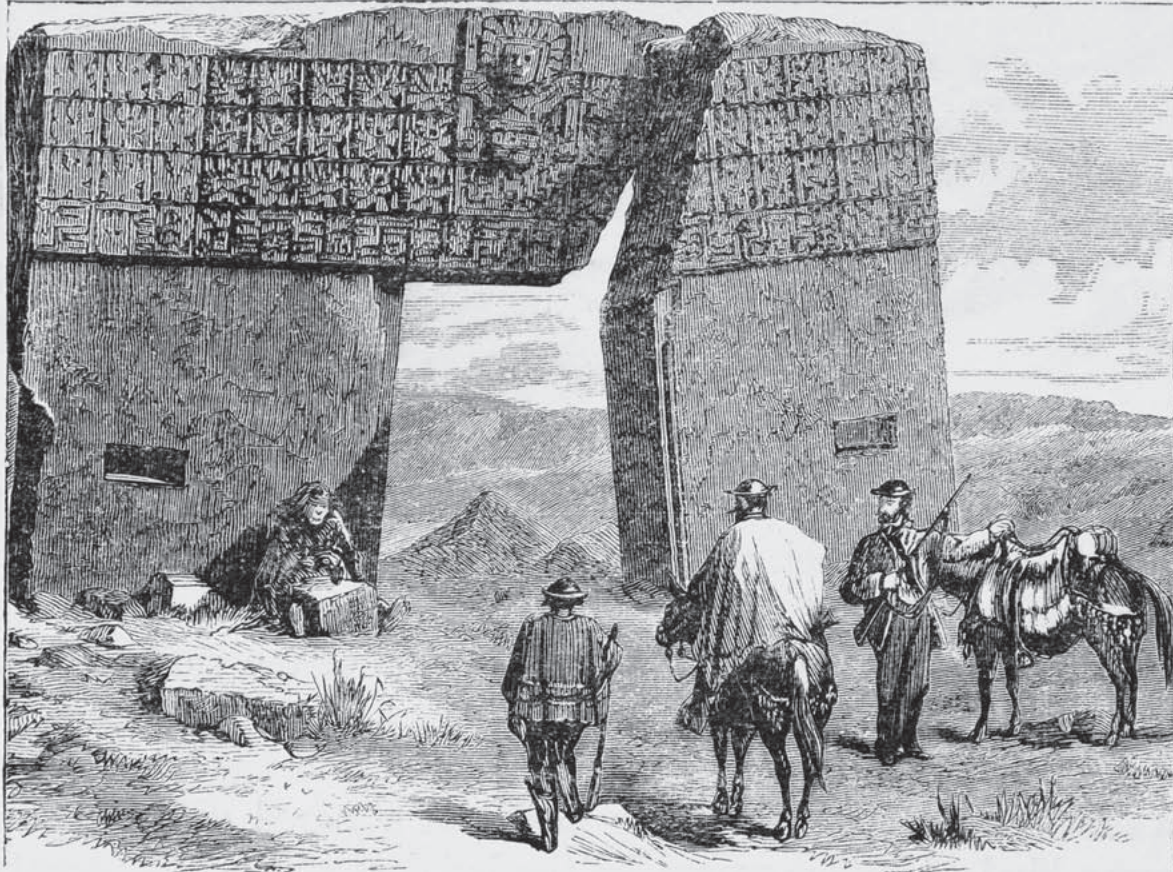
GRANDE PORTE MONOLITHE (A) DU TEMPLE DE TIAGUANACO

Léonce Angrand

1808–1886

Léonce Angrand, *Antiquités américaines: Extrait de la Revue Générale de l'Architecture et des travaux publics*. Paris: J. Clayes, 1866.

The French diplomat Léonce Angrand traveled to the Andes in the late 1840s. Although he was involved chiefly in international trade, he spent a great deal of time studying the ancient monuments of Peru and Bolivia. Angrand's travelogues were more anthropological than those of his predecessors, particularly in his interest in documenting the daily lives of the indigenous peoples he encountered. Angrand's illustrations were methodical and precise, and he took particular interest in architecture. He was one of the first to prepare a measured drawing of the Gateway of the Sun at Tiwanaku (Bolivia; at left), and his detailed sketches of an Inca sculpture known as the stone of Saihuite, in the Apurímac canyon (Peru), are exquisite studies of the intricacies of this complex monument.



Ephraim George Squier

1821–1888

Ephraim George Squier, *Peru: Incidents of Travel and Exploration in the Land of the Incas*. London: Macmillan, 1877.

Inspired in part by the work of John Lloyd Stephens, Ephraim George Squier had studied archaeological sites in the Mississippi Valley and Central America before he turned his attention to the Andes. Initially sent to Peru by the U.S. government to resolve conflicts over the guano industry, he stayed in Peru another six months to document the major archaeological sites known at the time. Declaring the historical accounts of the sixteenth century unreliable, he sought to study first-hand the remains of Inca and pre-Inca cultures. The engravings in *Peru: Incidents of Travel* were based on some of the earliest archaeological photographs from the Andes. Squier did not have final control over the engravings, however, and an exaggeration of scale is apparent in some illustrations, such as this one of the Gateway of the Sun at Tiwanaku (Bolivia).



Tomb of the Dead

Exc. Hill, Stone, Berlin

Wilhelm Reiss

1838–1908

Alphons Stübel

1835–1904

Wilhelm Reiss and Alphons Stübel, *The Necropolis of Ancon in Perú: A Contribution to Our Knowledge of the Culture and Industries of the Empire of the Incas, Being the Result of Excavations Made on the Spot*. Translated by A. H. Keane. 3 vols. Berlin: A. Asher, 1880–1887.

These two German volcanologists originally journeyed to South America for geological research, traveling extensively in highland Colombia and Ecuador. They intended to continue their research in highland Peru, but ill health and political problems prompted a return to the coast. For three months, the two conducted excavations at a Pre-Hispanic cemetery near the seaside resort of Ancón. The extreme desert conditions of the Peruvian coast favored excellent preservation of normally fugitive organic material such as textiles, and the chromolithographs in their three-volume publication exquisitely detailed the spectacular mummy bundles they encountered. The first volume was dedicated to the mummies themselves, with a special emphasis on their archaeological context (at left). Volume two illustrated the textiles they excavated, and volume three covered slings, jewelry, basketry, spindles, and ceramics, as well as botanical and faunal remains. The focus of the publication was the illustration of their finds, but each plate was nonetheless accompanied by detailed descriptions, measurements, and other supporting observations.



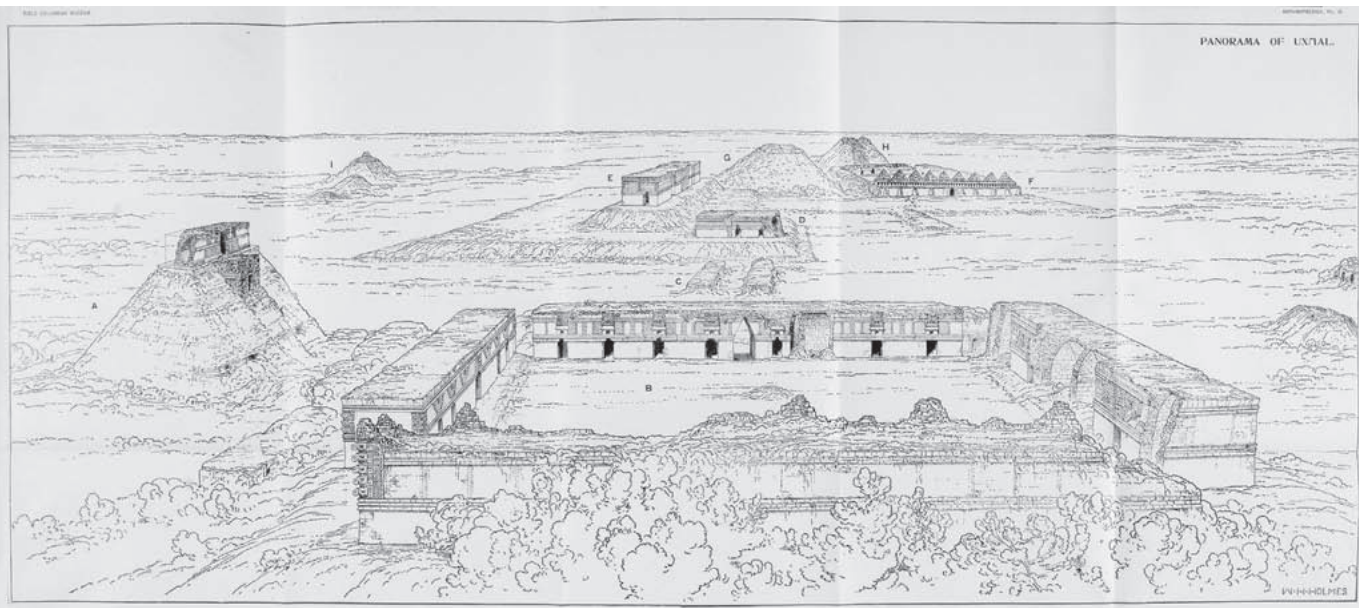
Alfred Percival Maudslay

1850–1931

Alfred Percival Maudslay, *Archaeology: Biologia Centrali-Americana; or, Contributions to the Knowledge of the Fauna and Flora of Mexico and Central America*. Edited by F. Ducane Godman and Osbert Salvin. 4 vols. London: R. H. Porter and Dulau, 1889–1902.

After his retirement from the Colonial Service, the British diplomat Alfred Maudslay spent some twenty years creating an extraordinary series of volumes on the archaeology of Mexico and Central America. Intended as an appendix to a larger work on the fauna of the region, *Archaeology* ultimately filled four of the five volumes of the set. Working with a large team, he cleared numerous sites—some of which had not previously been recorded—and documented them meticulously. Maudslay pioneered the use of dry plate photography in the Maya region, and the photographs in the double-folio volumes were complemented by the fine drawings of Annie Hunter. His detailed studies of Quirigua, Tikal, Yaxchilan, Copan, Palenque, and other sites marked a significant advance in the field of Maya studies. At left is a view of the Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque, with the palace on the left.

PANORAMA OF UXTAL.



William Henry Holmes

1846–1933

William Henry Holmes, *Archaeological Studies among the Ancient Cities of Mexico*. Chicago: Field Columbian Museum, 1895–1897.

An artist who later became a distinguished museum curator and director, William Henry Holmes spent his career studying Amerindian art and culture. One of his major publications, *Archaeological Studies among the Ancient Cities of Mexico*, was a rich and comprehensive source, which was profusely illustrated with line drawings of objects and detailed site plans. Of particular note, however, were his delicate panoramic drawings of sites, such as the one of the Maya site of Uxmal (at left). Originally trained in geological and paleontological illustration, he applied his experience with geological surveys to archaeological sites in an innovative and illuminating way. Later in his career, Holmes became a curator at the Field Columbian Museum, chief of the Bureau of American Ethnology, and director of an early incarnation of the National Gallery of Art.



Teobert Maler

1842–1917

Teobert Maler, *Researches in the Central Portion of the Usumatsintla Valley: Report of Explorations for the Museum, 1898–1900*. Memoirs of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University 2, no. 1–2. Cambridge, Mass., The Peabody Museum, 1901–1903.

After traveling to Mexico as a soldier in Emperor Maximilian's army, Austrian architect Teobert Maler took up an interest in photography and antiquities. In July 1877, Maler visited Palenque and spent a week recording his observations. He devoted considerable efforts to photographing the structures and artifacts, thereby contributing to the comprehensive documentation of this site. He later traveled extensively throughout the region, and occasionally spent months documenting the architecture and sculpture of a single site. The publication of his work was apparently a fraught process for both Maler and his publishers, but the end result proved to be an invaluable resource for scholars. His crisp photographs of glyphs, for example, have been helpful in deciphering texts on monuments that have suffered from the elements over the past century. The photograph at left shows Altar 3 from the Maya site of Piedras Negras (Guatemala).



Miguel Covarrubias

1904–1957

Miguel Covarrubias, *Indian Art of Mexico and Central America*. 1st ed. New York, Knopf, 1957.

The world of twentieth-century archaeological illustration includes increasingly graphic conceptualizations of archaeological data. Whereas illustrations of earlier centuries focused on topographic views, illustrations in the past seventy-five years have deemphasized on-site ocular perception in favor of a conceptualized presentation of a broad range of data and models not explicitly visible in the landscape. The Mexican artist Miguel Covarrubias was a keen observer of Pre-Columbian art, and his careful study of ancient sculpture led him to present a novel interpretation of the Pre-Hispanic past. He proposed that the recently identified Olmec culture was the “mother culture” of later Mesoamerican civilizations, including the Maya—a controversial position in the 1950s. He developed an iconographic kinship chart illustrating the descent of the Olmec “were-jaguar” motif through time (at left).

