



The Ahau Chronicles



Volume 16

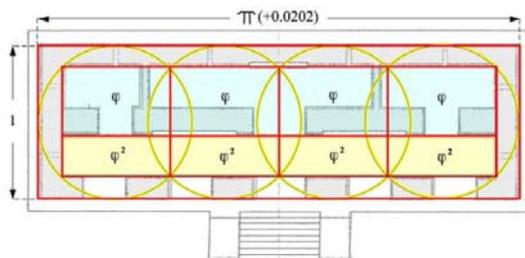
November 4, 2010

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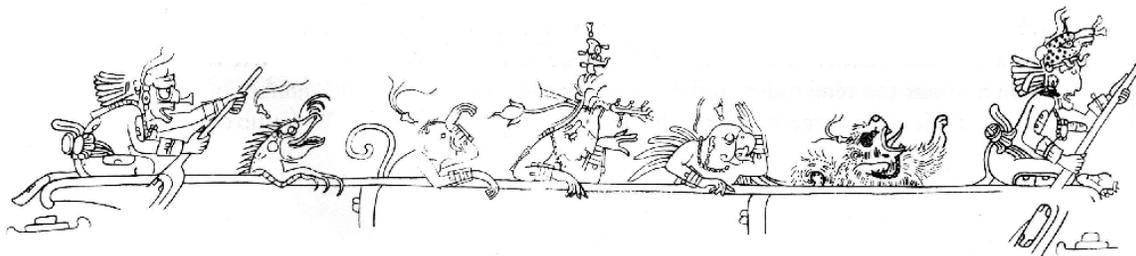
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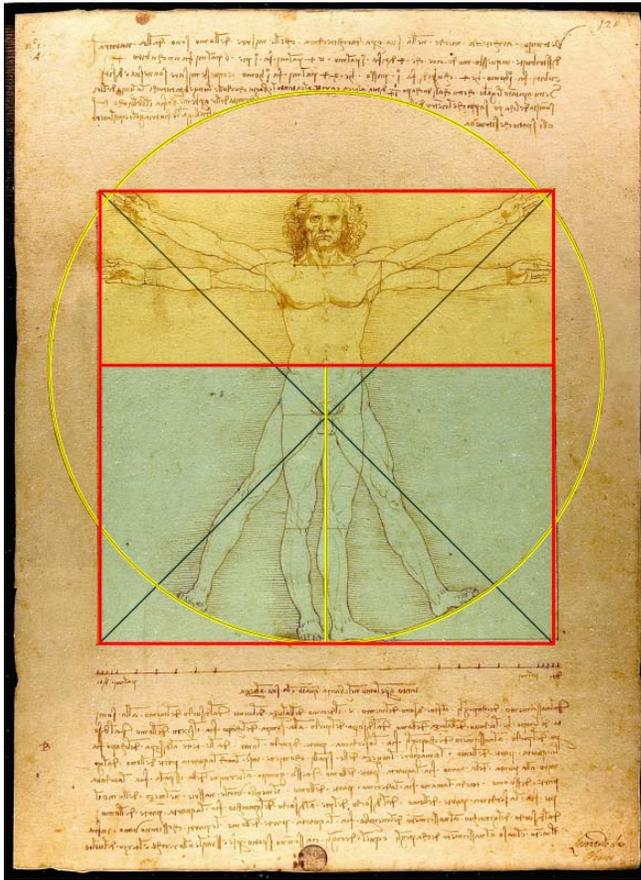


Long Count: 12.19.17.15.0 Sacred Geometry at Palenque

On October 15, the publication date of our last newsletter, I received an email from Ed Barnhart, Director of The Maya Exploration Center in Austin, Texas and a contributor to the **Apocalypse Island** movie. Ed was announcing the long-awaited publication of his friend and collaborator Christopher Powell's PhD dissertation entitled: **"The Shapes of Sacred Space: A Proposed System of Geometry Used to Lay Out and Design Maya Art and Architecture and Some Implications Concerning Maya Cosmology"**. The entire paper including extensive diagrams can be downloaded at: http://mayaexploration.org/pdf/PowellDissertation2010_MayaGeometry.pdf

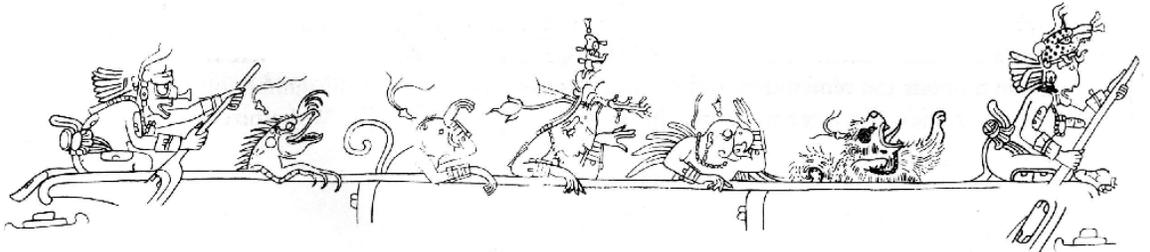
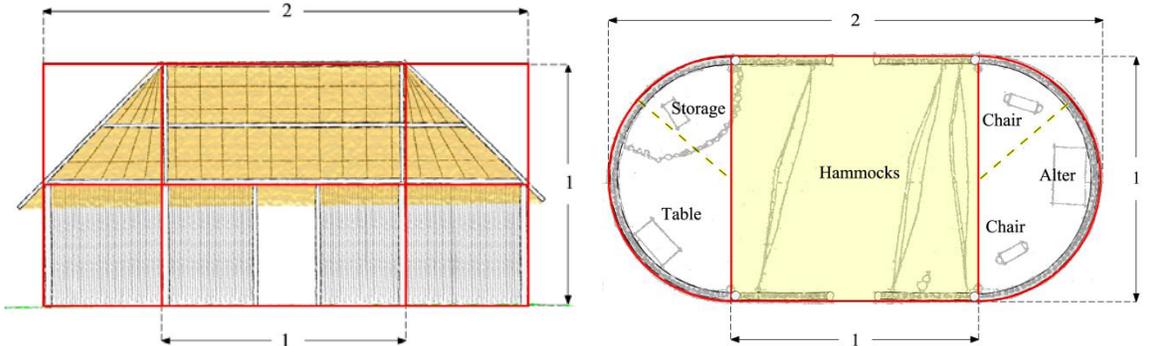
I first met Chris in 1997 when he was Field Director on the Cross Group Project at Palenque, Mexico. This was my third year visiting Palenque and I had just returned from South America after having discovered the 2012 Eclipse Monument (although at this time I was still unaware of the 2012 eclipse connection). I knew I had a significant piece of the puzzle that these people were working on and pestered Chris to have a meeting with me. We finally met on the porch of the archaeologists' residence in town in late June and I had launched into a lengthy dialogue concerning the Maya worldview and the inscriptions at Palenque, slowly testing the waters with Chris to discern how he might react to such a ground-breaking revelation. But, before I could go any further, we were interrupted by the renowned Mayanist Peter Mathews, who walked up the path to the house with a black eye the size of a saucer and a bandage over his nose. His team of archaeologists had been attacked by irate villagers at the ancient site of El Cayo and after the villagers had robbed them and broken Peter's nose with the butt of a rifle, the team fled into the jungle and spent three days making their way to safety, during which time they made headlines around the world with their real-life Indiana Jones adventure.



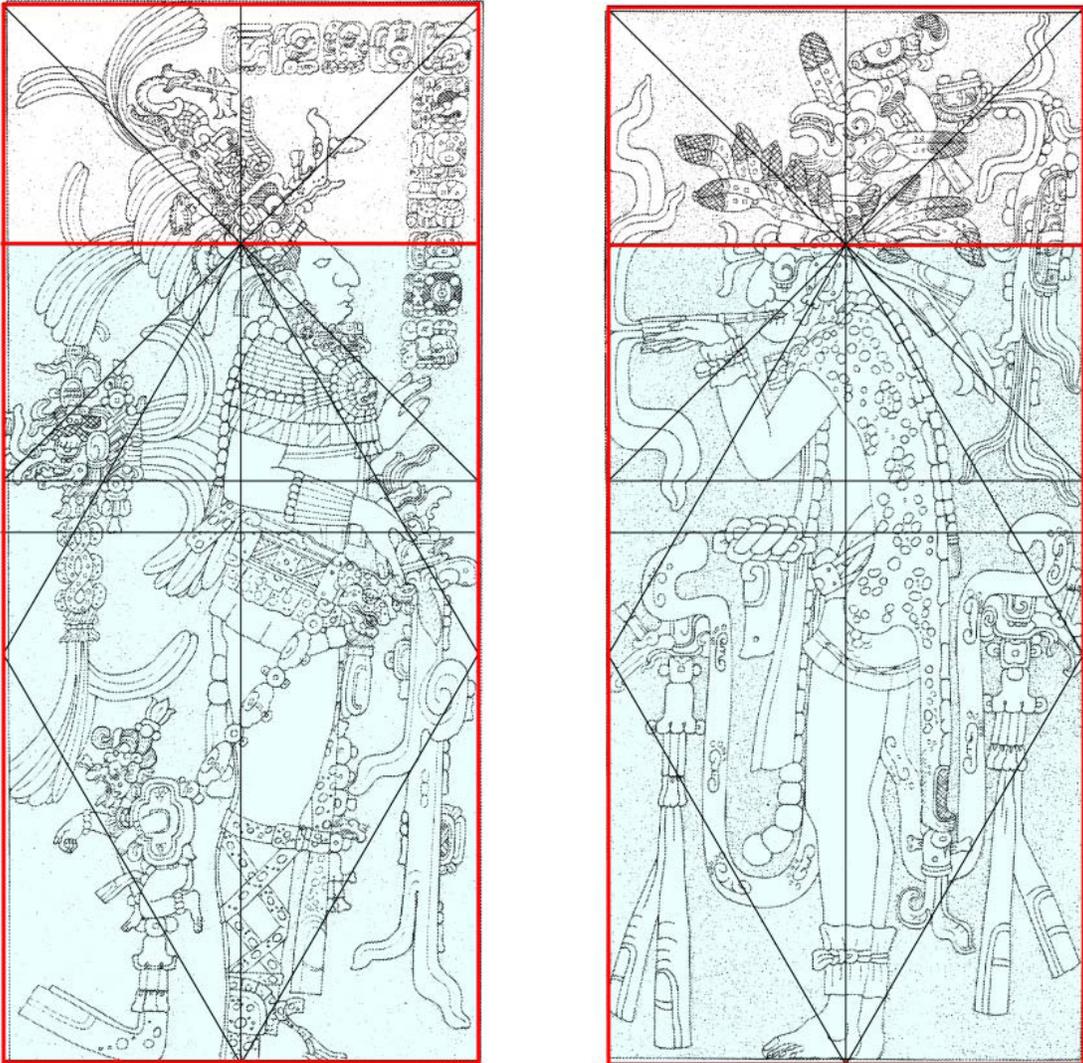


The next time I saw Chris was in 2002 at the 20th annual Maya Weekend sponsored by the Penn Museum in Philadelphia. He had just finished giving a rousing talk to an enraptured audience that I sensed would burst into applause at any second. He had been detailing the productive results of his work on the sacred geometry of the Maya and how it represented a natural system of measure that was still in use in Mesoamerica today. Recognizing a resonance with my own investigations, I asked him afterward if he had seen DaVinci's "Vitruvian Man" showing the geometry of the human body. He confessed that it was going to be one of his next slides before he had to stop for running over his allotted time.

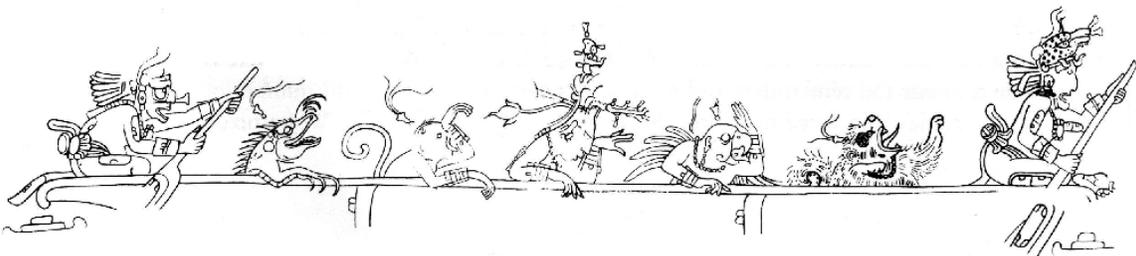
The above diagram is shown as it appears in Chris' dissertation along with the annotations he has made. DaVinci showed how the proportions of the human body are such that we will fit perfectly inside a circle inscribed around us with its center at our belly button. A perfect square will define the horizontal and vertical extremes of our bodies. It is named after the ancient Roman architect Vitruvius who argued that the human body was the template for the Classical orders of architecture. Chris has demonstrated how the proportions of nature are incorporated into the architecture of both the ancient and modern Maya, including in the layout of their simple houses.

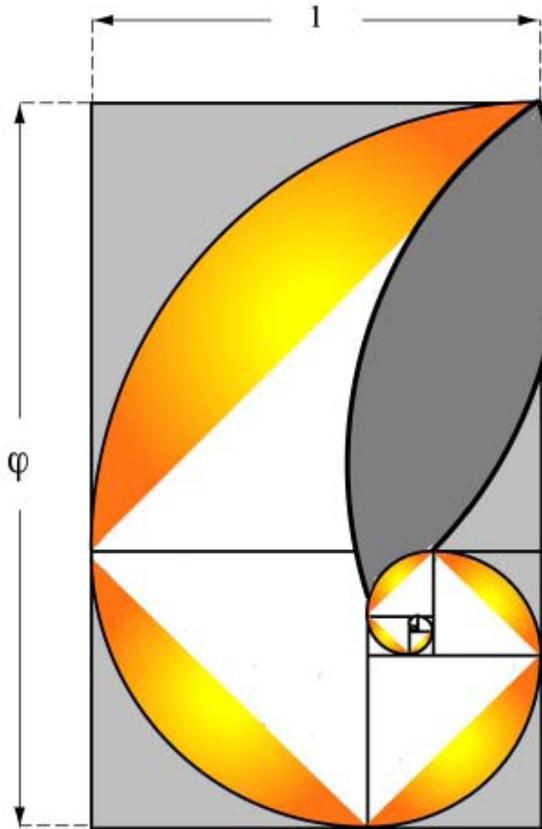


During my own research at Palenque I had been repeatedly struck by how comfortable even the most monumental architecture felt, that it was on a “human scale” no matter how large. Hours of study spent gazing at the enigmatic inscriptions also led me to believe that there was information encoded in the posture, position, and gestures of the human figures. This intuition is reinforced by the evidence presented by Chris, such as the East and West Jambes of the Temple of The Cross showing Chan Bahlum on the left and a mythic figure known as “The Smoker” on the right.

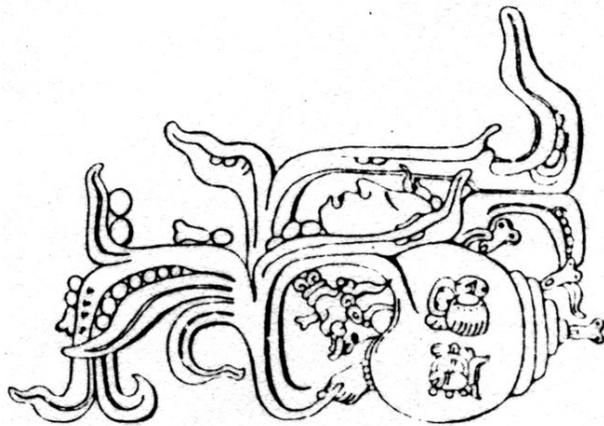


The complicated mathematics involved is explained by Chris with these jambs “...inscribed by virtually perfect root five rectangles that are subdivided at the brows of the standing figures by root three rectangles (shaded blue) and root four rectangles (in white), as per Formula Square Root of Five-4.” Chris states that “All of the Maya geometry described in this dissertation consist of various combinations of only five rectangles: the square, the root two, the root three, the phi and the Pythagorean 3,4,5 rectangles.”

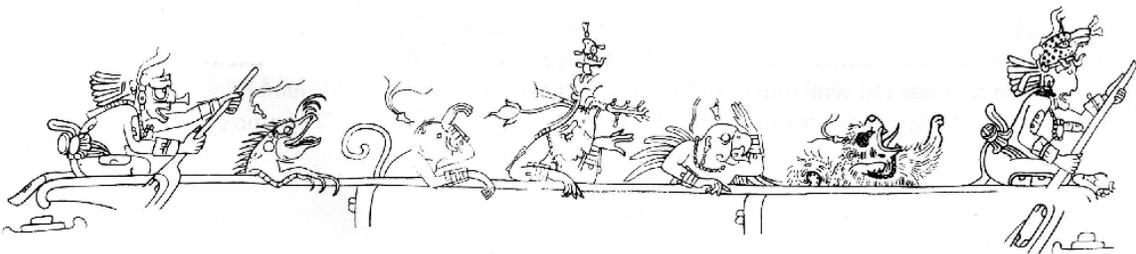




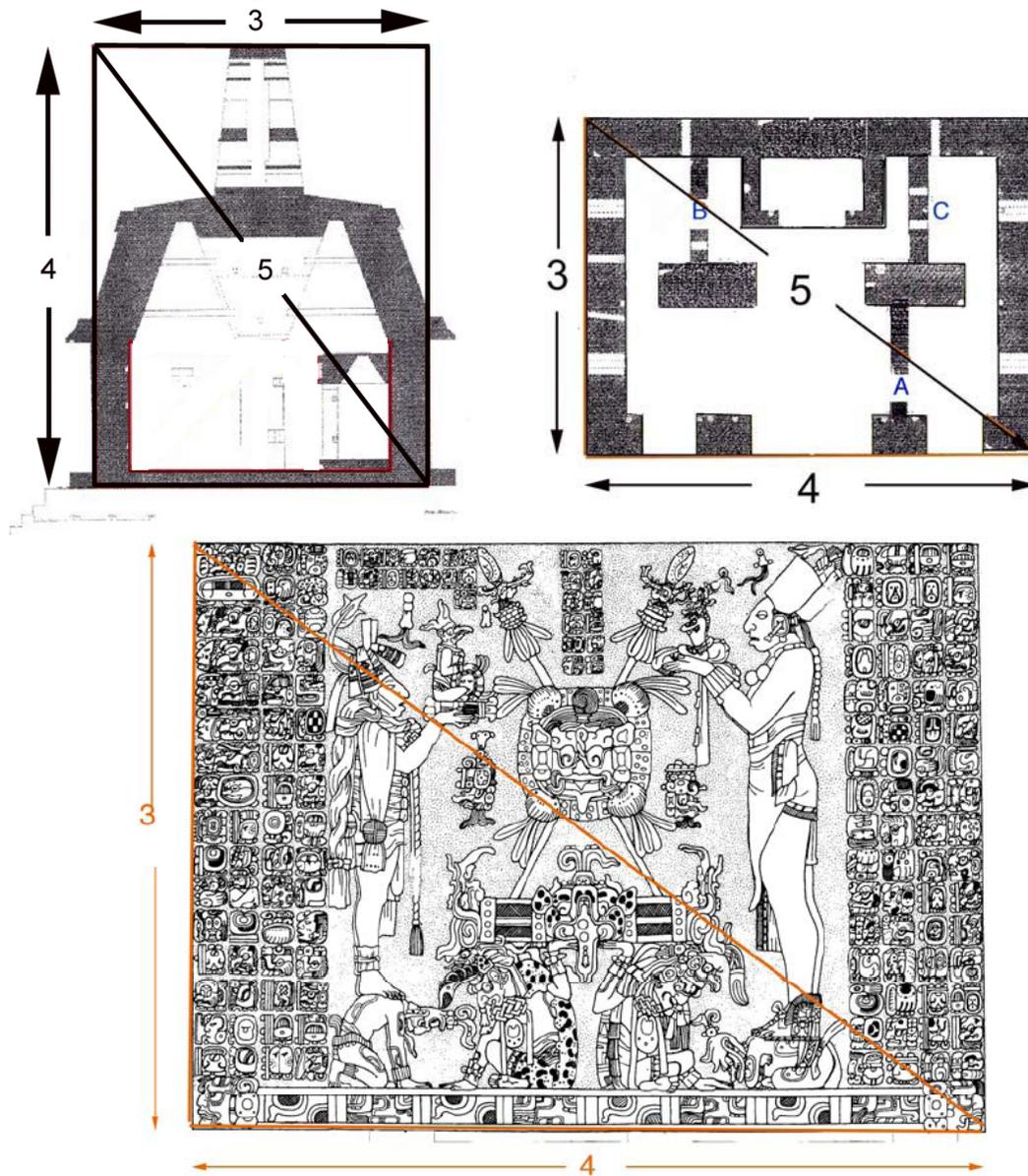
I had been struck early on with the natural beauty of the snail and would only later learn about how the spiral nautilus is a perfect representation of the Fibonacci sequence: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21... where each number is the sum of the previous two. The Golden Spiral of the snail at left is created from boxes ascending in size by this sequence. It also illustrates the Golden Ratio where the square at the top, if removed, would leave the remaining rectangle with identical proportions as the original. The height of the rectangle represents the irrational number known as "phi" which has a value of 1.6180339887.... The snail shell is represented in the inscriptions at Palenque and the island monument.



After intensive study amongst the temples at Palenque and alongside the island monument on Robinson Crusoe Island I began to comprehend the Mayan worldview as an ordered interpretation of natural phenomenon animated by the movement of our consciousness through time. The perception laid before me was a profound cosmology that was writ large across the face of the earth. As I became more proficient in reading the symbolic language of the ancient Maya certain inescapable conclusions emerged and I was forced to confront the consequences of these mind-boggling revelations.



In an earlier paper entitled “**Astronomical Observations from the Temple of the Sun**” Ed and Chris wrote about the geometry of my favorite temple of Chan Bahlum. They showed the Pythagorean proportions used in the building as well as the inscription.



The upcoming series of newsletters will detail the elaborate iconography of Palenque which has been coupled with incredibly accurate astronomical predictions to create a unified program linked to the final katun of the Mayan calendar. Using simple geometry and the symbols of the natural world we will build on the material presented in previous newsletters to amass a series of interpretations that clearly indicate a link to Old World cultures and a coherent message meant to reveal itself at the end of 2012. Remember, “*apocalypse*” comes from the Greek word meaning “*revelation*”.

