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Pre-Columbian Art Research Institute

August 1993 1100 Sacramento St. San Francisco, CA 94108 Newsletter Number 17

LOOTING OF AGUATECA

By Michael Guillen

I have recently had the opportunity to familiarize myself with the Vanderbilt University archaeological project being conducted in the Petexbatun region of Guatemala at the sites of Dos Pilas, Aguateca, Arroyo de Piedra, Tamarindito, Punta de Chimino and Quim Chi Hilan.

Evidence from Aguateca supports the notion that warfare was a significant factor in the Classic Maya collapse (recently highlighted in the February 1993 National Geographic). Takeshi Inomata, the archaeologist in charge of the site, has uncovered a noble residential compound which the occupants had to evacuate suddenly due to a raid on their city.

Since homes were left exactly as they were being used we have an opportunity to glimpse into actual Maya households. True treasure has been sifted from these transects, including a belt of oliva shells exquisitely carved into skulls and resembling those worn by rulers on the monumental stelae. Also uncovered was a human skull reshaped into a bowl whose curved exterior has been eloquently incised with hieroglyphs denoting political charter.

But along with such tremendous gains in understanding of the Maya culture, I sadly report that on January 10, 1993, a portion of the glyphic text on Aguateca Stela 1, perhaps the clearest text on site, was sawed off with power saws. Its whereabouts are currently unknown.

Merle did a rubbing of this stela, along with the others at Aguateca, Dos Pilas and Tamarindito in 1970, and the stela was intact at that time. This stela is among those on the Pre-Columbian Art Research Institute's CD ROM set of Rubbings of Maya Sculpture. When she was working at the Petexbatun sites, Dos Pilas Stela 17 was looted. The prisoner base and the glyphs on the sides were sawed off. This was just part of the looting she ran into. See American Antiquity 37.2, 1972. Monument Thievery in Mesoamerica by Merle Greene Robertson.

THE KATUN MESA REDONDA

Jan McHargue

UC Berkeley

The festive opening night of the Katun anniversary (20 years) Mesa Redonda de Palenque featured local young women dressed in regional costume, carrying the flags of fifteen countries of the



Aguateca Stela 1, looted in 1993.
From CD-ROM Volume VII, Maya Lowlands Part II.

participants. A panel of distinguished guests delivered gracious talks, including Lic. Elmar Setzer, the Governor of the State of Chiapas; Dra. Beatriz de la Fuente of the Instituto de Investigaciones Esteticas who gave the key speech of the evening; the new director of the INAH, Lic. Ma. Teresa Franco, and Dr. Santiago Onate Laborde, Procurador Federal de Proteccion del Ambiente, Mexico the representative for Lic. Carlos Salinas de Gortari, President of Mexico, who was given the Ecology Award by the participants

of the Mesa Redonda de Palenque and the Pre-Columbian Art Research Institute. Oñate was given a standing ovation when he announced that a dam will not be built on the Usumacinta River. Dr. Munro Edmonson of Tulane University was master of ceremonies.

Also announced that evening by The Friends of the Site Museum and the Archaeological Zone of Palenque was that the new library at the site museum complex will carry the name: *Merle Greene Robertson*. This is a wonderful honor for Merle who has contributed so much to the people of Palenque and to our knowledge of the ancient Palenqueños.

The meetings were led by Peter Mathews and Linda Schele (Peter Schele and Linda Mathews?) with a great deal of humor and a firm hand. One theme of the meetings was Maya astronomy and the role of the stars in ancient Maya mythology. The July/August 1993 *Archaeology* magazine has three excellent articles on just this subject. If you missed the Mesa Redonda you might like to read about this topic.

Reports were presented on the ambitious program of excavation and reconstruction that is ongoing at the Cross Group at Palenque, and Groups Four and Five under the direction of Arnaldo González. Although a few of our group were able to visit this area of the site, access is severely restricted and photographs are not allowed. A published report of these excavations, including photographs of the burial found under the Temple of the Cross, can be found in a new INAH publication that I discovered during this trip, called *Arqueología Mexicana*. Call me at (510) 527-7259 for information about how to subscribe.

One of the things that makes the Mesa Redonda so interesting is the diversity of people and papers presented. Attendees included students, art historians, archaeologists, astronomers, underwater archaeologists, anthropologists, linguists, epigraphers, artists, astronomers, businesspersons representatives from most major newspapers in Mexico and some in the US, Time-Life, a reporter from Stockholm, Sweden, and many other interested and interesting people, including a man tattooed with Maya designs on both arms. And, I bet you didn't know we had among us the original "Aqua Velva Man."

One particularly memorable afternoon of meetings was capped off by honoring ePIGgrapher Peter Mathews with a special presentation: three squealing pink baby pigs delivered by disco girls dancing to the strains of "I'm too Sexy for My Shirt", amidst strobing colored lights and atmospheric hissing fog. Did I mention that the meetings were held in the Plaza Hotel's disco/night club? Blessedly air-conditioned!

In terms of real entertainment, we had the pleasure of two performances by the Indians from Sna Jtz'ibajom in San Cristóbal de las Casas, brought to us by Robert Laughlin. We saw a presentation of the story about a woman whose husband trades places with a vulture, and a spectacular conquest period

piece complete with elaborate Maya costumes and scenes based on the Yaxchilan lintels. I understand that this company occasionally tours in the United States and Canada, so watch for them or arrange for them to perform in your area.

We also had three evenings of organized dining pleasure: a buffet at Los Tucanes, a pleasant open-air restaurant on the outskirts of town; a barbecue at the Plaza Hotel; and the final banquet at La Selva. Because it was announced that this was the last Mesa Redonda de Palenque, the final banquet had an element of sadness about it when Merle and friends (Beatriz de la Fuente, Ed Kurjack, Alfred Bush, Linda Schele and Peter Mathews, among others) reminisced about all of the years spent working and playing at Palenque.

We shouldn't be too sad though, because Merle announced that this probably won't be the last Mesa Redonda! The Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Historia would like to take up the tradition, perhaps holding the next meetings in Merida. Although it seems the end of the Palenque Mesa Redonda tradition, we have new meetings to look forward to.

Finally, I would like to mention that there is a fantastic new Palenque museum below the site (on the highway). The landscaped and spacious museum complex includes exhibits of archaeological material from Palenque, a display of regional ethnographic material, a gift shop, restaurant, library and administrative offices. Also, not to be missed (but not easy to find!) is a beautiful "new" pathway flanking the river, complete with a footbridge and easy access to swimming, which links the site and the museum complex.

The bustling town of Palenque has grown and changed even in the four years since the 1989 Mesa Redonda, and includes many tour agencies that can help make it easier for you to visit Yaxchilan, Bonampak and other remote sites. With friends and memories calling us, there are many reasons to go back to Palenque!

DENNIS TEDLOCK: *Breath on the Mirror*

Reviewed by Michael Guillen

I attended two readings by Dennis Tedlock on July 19 in San Francisco and July 22 in Berkeley, as part of a series of bookstore appearances sponsored by Harpers San Francisco in connection with the recent publication of Tedlock's new book *Breath On The Mirror*.

Tedlock began the readings by anchoring his audiences in the Maya *tzolkin* (a sacred 260-day calendar round). July 19 was the Quiche day 7 Snake, a day of enemies. The following day, July 20, would be 8 Death, Tedlock projected, but quickly added that this was not to be construed as a day of ill omen. In fact, Death in the Maya calendar is akin to Death in the Tarot, and refers to unexpected happening, possibly something good, not necessarily physical *per se*. July 22 was 10 *K'anil* (10 Yellowness or Ripeness), a day for bringing things to fruition, for wrapping things up.

In contrast to popular belief, the Maya do not conceive of time as circular but more like varying, overlapping rhythms of music. Their time doesn't stack neatly, and is more like sequential designs on an unfolding bolt of fabric. Not only that, but Time—all that has gone on before—is an increasing burden for the Maya, which needs to be carried. For example, they feel compelled to remember their ancestors by name. Compare this to the notorious short attention span of average Americans. In fact, the Quiche perceive America as a place of a thousand forgotten ghosts with no names.

Tedlock referred to "The Story of Evenadam." According to the Quiche version, Adam and Eve were created by a god and a goddess named Jesus and Mary. This is intriguing because it replicates the counsel of gods in the creation story of THE POPOL VUH. The Quiche don't like to single out a male god being responsible for creation, but favor dialogue between gods, and, in this case, between genders. Jesus fashioned Adam, but it was Mary who recognized that Adam was sad. She talked Jesus into making Adam a companion.

The "wrinkle" the Quiche add to the rib story is their specific mention that Eve is born from Adam's left side. Among the Quiche, the left side of the human body is female and the right side is male. Any Quiche who hears the episode in the POPOL VUH where Blood Maiden is impregnated when the severed skull of Hunhunahpu spits into her proffered right hand knows right away that she will give birth to a male child, although it is not so simple to determine that her offspring will be twins.

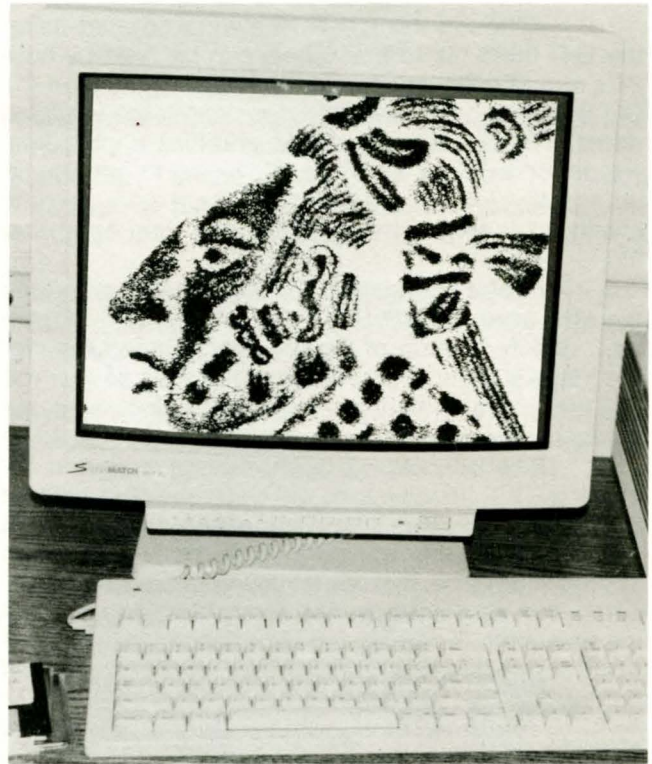
The book is delightful, and I am sure you will want a copy for your library.

CD-ROMs on MAYA SCULPTURE

These are now available at a special price of \$500 for the set of 10 disks, until a distributor has been selected.

Merle Greene Robertson's Rubbings of Maya Sculpture is a set of ten CD ROM disks containing images of over 1200 rubbings of Classic Maya monuments from nearly 90 different sites. Each image is stored first, as a 300 dpi TIFF file (accessible by Macintosh and PC compatible software), and second, as a 75 dpi PICT file (for use with the HyperCard stack *Iconographic Database*).

The Maya Archival Database Project has produced a database of iconographic elements found on the images. For Macintosh users the file is available on the HyperCard stack *Iconographic Database*. This stack allows the viewer to see a low resolution copy of the rubbing which has been inverted to show a positive image, along with iconographic information. Instructions for use is included in a manual. You will all be amazed in what you can see on the monitor of your Mac.



CD-ROM set for Macintosh

The CD ROM set includes: 10 CD ROMs (9 are available now, and Vol. IV will be sent to purchasers early in 1994), PARI Monograph 6 containing the titles and lists of images, a 3.5" high density diskette containing the HyperCard stack *Iconographic Database v1.0*, and *Iconographic Database Manual, Macintosh Version*.

System Requirements

Viewing PICT images (low resolution)

A Macintosh computer which supports 8-bit gray-scale or color, with 5 or more MB of RAM

A hard drive with at least 2MB of free space.

Macintosh System 7.0.1 or greater.

Any Macintosh-compatible CD-ROM player with driver software.

Hypercard 2.0 or greater.

A 13-inch or larger gray-scale or color monitor.

Viewing TIFF images (Hi resolution)

Any program that will edit TIFF images (we recommend Digital Darkroom or Adobe Photoshop).

At least 16 megabytes of RAM (less memory will cause viewing to be extremely slow).

A monitor larger than 13-inches will insure that you can expand the viewing area so that even the largest images can be seen without scrolling.

NOTE for IBM/DOS computer users

If you are considering purchasing, the CD-ROM set you need to know that in order to use the CD-ROMs on IBM/DOS compatible computers you must have a 40MHz 80386 DX or higher processor with at least 8 MB of RAM (16 MB recommended), a gray scale or color monitor, a CD-ROM drive, and software that will allow you to view the TIFF images.

Although the CD-ROMs were created using the ISO-9660 file format which can be read by both PCs and Macintosh computers, the file names on the CD-ROMs do not have .tif extensions following each name. Without this some IBM graphics applications will not open them. One very slow way to get around the problem is to copy a file to your hard drive, rename it with .tif following the number, and then open that file.

Adobe Photoshop 2.5 for the IBM will open the files from the CD-ROM if you choose the **Open as...** option, instead of **Open**. Aldus Pagemaker for the IBM will allow you to **Place** the images so that you can print them as part of a Pagemaker document, but on the screen you will see a very low quality image.

If you know of a shareware program for viewing TIFF images that will open the files without .tif, please send us information about it. We are currently working to develop a new version of ToolBook program that will let you view the images the same way as the Macintosh HyperCard program. In the meantime, if you are not experienced in using IBM graphics programs, you may want to put off purchasing the CD-ROMs.

ToolBook Iconographic Database v1.0 for Windows 3.1 is an iconographic guide for the rubbings of Maya Sculpture on CD-ROM. This application is a simple database which holds information and iconographic data for each image, it **does not open the images** on the CD-ROM.

Package contents:

- * One 3.5" diskette entitled ToolBook Runtime.
- * One 3.5" diskette entitled Iconographic Database.
- * Documentation for Iconographic Database v1.0, the pamphlet with use instructions.

System Requirements for the Database Program

- * PC with 80206 or higher processor.
- * Microsoft Windows version 3.1 or higher.
- * 1.5 megabytes of memory (2 MB recommended).
- * 1.44 megabytes (3.5") disk drive and hard disk with at least four MB of disk space.
- * Graphics adapter card (VGA, SVGA or other Windows compatible card).
- * Windows-compatible mouse or other pointing device.

VISIONS TO ANOTHER WORLD by KENT REILLY

Michael Guillen

Kent Reilly gave the *Friends of Ethnic Arts Land Memorial Lecture* at the H.M. de Young Museum in San Francisco on July 8 to a packed auditorium. He told of recent breakthroughs in Maya studies including theories of interweavings of history, political ideology and cosmology. Reilly proposed that these systems existed amongst the Olmec during the Middle Formative (900-500 B.C.)

For example, the three stars we name Alnitak, Saiph and Rigel make up a constellation that the Maya perceived as the Three Hearthstones of Creation. In between them the Orion nebula was seen as the smoke of the fire. Mayanists now believe that Creation

involved bloodletting by First Father who was transported to this Three Stone Place by attendant *Paddler Gods*. His spilled blood fertilized the sacred space between the Three Hearth Stones causing maize to sprout. The sprouting maize served as an *axis mundi* or world tree, lifting the sky off the earth, allowing light to enter creation.

Psychologically this can be viewed as the difference of consciousness. Further, the embodied maize plant is the Young Maize Lord, an avatar of First Father, and it is from maize that human beings are fashioned. Thus, whenever a Maya king bloodlet, he identified himself with the creator god First Father, whose willing sacrifice sponsored creation; but, he also identified himself with First Father's manifestation as the Young Maize Lord. Why else, Reilly pointed out, would Pacal have had himself rendered as a young man on his sarcophagus cover? His idealized portrait was not meant to show Pacal at the true age of his death. Rather, Pacal wanted to be identified with the Young Maize Lord who exemplified the Maya ideal of youthful beauty and resurrection.



MERLE'S NOTES

I will be leading a tour for Mary Dell Lucas and Far Horizons to Oaxaca and Central Mexico over the 1993 Christmas holidays (Dec. 14-27, 1993). Some of the archaeological sites we will be visiting are Teotihuacan, Monte Alban, Mitla, Yagul, Cholula, which had 40,000 homes at its height and Cacaxtla with its spectacular murals depicting realistic battle scenes and human-sized gods. New murals have been uncovered, so this will be a highlight of the trip.

Most of the time will be spent in the Valley of Oaxaca, staying at the Mision de Los Angeles for seven nights. From here day trips will take us to many relatively unvisited sites, numerous craft villages and to regional puebla special holiday festivals (including the famous "Radish Festival"). This should be a real "fun" trip for all of us. Contact Far

Horizons P.O.Box 91900, Albuquerque, NM 87199-1900 .Tel. (800) 552-4575.

While I am in France painting and gathering the final material for the Sculpture of Palenque, Vol. V, it will be better to write, as the mail will be taken care of regularly and I will be in contact.

THE PALENQUE ROUND TABLE VOL. X Proceedings of the

1993 Mesa Redonda de Palenque

Volume X of the Round Table series is being edited by Martha Macri. Victoria Bricker has forwarded all manuscripts to her. Correspondence from authors regarding the preparation of this volume should be directed to Martha Macri at Native American Studies, UC Davis, Davis, CA 95616.

MONOGRAPH 5: A SIGN CATALOG OF THE LA MOJARRA SCRIPT

Monograph 5 by Martha Macri and Laura Stark is currently in press and will be mailed in September. This catalog contains all occurrences of each sign, selected references to previous interpretations, a commentary on selected signs by the authors, a comprehensive bibliography, and corrected drawings of some signs based on Merle's rubbing of the sculpture.

EXHIBITIONS

The Ancient Americas: Art From Sacred Landscapes
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Through August 15, 1993

One of the most important and comprehensive exhibitions of Precolumbian art ever assembled, this exhibit features over 200 works, many shown for the first time in the United States.

Teotihuacan: City of the Gods
H.M. de Young Museum, San Francisco
Through October 31, 1993
Wed.-Sun. 10 am- 5 pm.

This spectacular landmark exhibited curated by Kathleen Berron and Esther Pasztory features more than 200 objects from national collections in Mexico, Europe and the United States. Many examples have only been excavated in the last decade, and encompass diverse media.

Ceramics of Ancient Peru
Fowler Museum of Cultural History, UCLA, Los Angeles
Through January 23, 1994

250 stunning examples from Moche, Huaru and Inca compose this exhibit.

Colors of the Dawn/invisible People: Arts of the Amazon
The Bowers Museum of Cultural Art, Santa Ana, CA
Opens August 25

Features the colorful feather and sculptural art of more than 30 Amazonian tribes.

EVENTS

H.M. de Young Museum, San Francisco
Goddesses of the Western Hemisphere: Women and Power.

Sept. 26. 11 am to 4:30 pm in the Trustees Auditorium of the de Young Museum. Tickets \$15. for members, \$20. non members, \$8, students 415.750 3624.

Speakers: Esther Pasztory, Columbia, Cecelia Kline, UCLA, Jeanette Peterson, UC, Berkeley, Amalia Mesa-Bains, MacArthur fellow.

Maya Hieroglyphic Writing Weekend Workshops at Humboldt State University. Prof. Tom Jones Director.

Sept 10-12	Introductory Workshop
Sept. 17-19	Intermediate Workshop
Sept. 24-26	Advanced Workshop
Sept. 27-28	Extended Workshop

Info. HSU Maya Workshops Coordinator, P.O.Box 4686, Arcata, CA 95521, (707) 822 1515.

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The Pre-Columbian Art Research Institute is a non-profit institution organized 1) to provide facilities for research and exploration of Mesoamerican civilization, art and architecture; 2) to organize the Palenque Round Table conferences and oversee publication of the conference papers; 3) to provide scholarships, fellowships, and research association affiliations; and 5) to make library and research material available to scholars, universities, and museums. Our F.I.D. No. is 94-276060

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 - 3 for \$12. or 6 for \$18 \$18.00

- Maya Cards, sets of 6 \$ 5.00
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- CD ROM sets for MacIntosh \$500.00
- SPECIAL PRICE before distributor
- Includes: 10 CD ROM disks of Maya Rubbings from 89 sites
Monograph 6
Floppy for Macintosh
Manual for Mac Computers

CD ROM sets for DOS /IBM computers \$500.00

See NOTE if ordering for IBM/DOS systems NOT our Publications

- Sculpture of Palenque will be shipped in October
- Sculpture of Palenque** Merle Greene Robertson
Princeton University Press
- Vol. II (Early Building of the Palace) \$165.00
- Vol. III (The Late Buildings) \$165.00
- Vol. IV (The Cross Group) \$150.00

- Ulama: The Ballgame of the Maya and Aztecs**, ed. Leyenaar and Parsons \$40.00
- Mesoamerican Ballgame**: Leyenaar International Ballgame, Leiden, \$75.00
- NEWSLETTER \$20.00

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TOURISTS, TOMBS, AND TRASH The 1993 Field Season at Caracol

The Chases

The 1993 Caracol Project ran from mid-February through early June and involved a crew of 60. Some 4000 people visited the site during this time. This touristic surge was particularly appropriate given the improved road to the site and the fact that the majority of the season's funding came from the Government of Belize (with the remainder from the University of Central Florida).

The foci for the 1993 were the summit of Caana and the Central Acropolis with additional work being undertaken on two "vacant terrain" buildings, Structure B118 in the "walled area," and the northwest plaza corner of the Barrio group.

Extensive work was undertaken on the summit of Caana. The northeastern palace complex was completely exposed and recorded, a process first started in its southern rooms two years ago. Extensive trash deposits were recovered in the interior plaza area and the rooms of several buildings.

The western building of this palace compound had been constructed over the eastern side of Structure B19, had been residentially used, and then had been sealed shut; its plastered floors produced more than 20 *in situ* Late Classic vessels.

The summit of Caana's northern pyramid, Structure B19, was also cleared, revealing the remains of a tandem-room vaulted temple. The partial remains of two children were found on the floor in the front room of this building. An axial trench penetrated more than 8 meters into the latest version of Structure B19 and yielded a series of earlier building episodes as well as 9 caches. A majority of these caches were "finger bowls," lip-to-lip vessels containing partial human digits.

Significantly, the earliest formal version of Structure B19 used huge sascab blocks, something rare at Caracol, but reminiscent of the style found in the central Peten at sites like Tikal. Work under the front stairway of Caana's eastern pyramid, Structure

B20, yielded a deeply-buried tomb of a single individual with a painted text dateable to A.D. 537; this is the earliest of the 4 tombs in this building.

In the Central Acropolis, excavation continued on the southern palace as well as in the eastern Structure A38 area. The southern building, Structure A39, proved to have 3 central tandem rooms bounded by transverse rooms. While some trash was recovered on the floor of this building (including a Sahcaba Modeled-Carved bowl), axial excavation revealed no deposits.

A collapsed tomb was excavated in Structure B118. It contained an intact burial dating to the onset of the Early Classic. A test pit in front of this structure recovered burials and caches. Among the artifacts found here was an exquisitely carved bone pin.

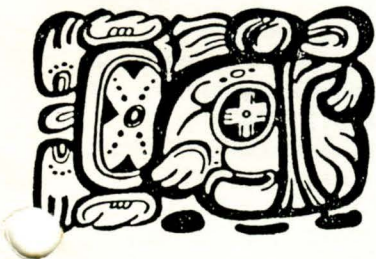
Exposure of the northwest corner of the Barrio plaza produced a substantial deposit of *in situ* garbage, including a partial Pabellon Modeled-Carved vessel.

C. Lynn Coultas (FAMU) continued work on Caracol soils, Ron Bishop (Smithsonian) tested over 500 Caracol vessels for paste sourcing via neutron activation, Joe Ballay (Carnegie Mellon) continued his architectural studies of Caana, and Bill Feld (Tulane) continued his work on caves in the Caracol area.

The 1993 season resulted in a new understanding of Caana's building sequence and demonstrated that the construction of Caana's basic summit plan was begun at approximately the same time as Caracol's antagonisms with Tikal. Two early tombs were recovered, the positioning and occupants of both have striking implications for Caracol's social order.

In particular, the 1993 B20 tomb suggests a need to assess critically the relationships between architecture, burial location, and hieroglyphically known individuals. Finally, significant stabilization was carried out in two central areas of the site. The 4000 visitors serve as a harbinger of the role that Caracol will play in Belize's future.





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