

This object, now in the collection of the Princeton University Art Museum, shows an unusual sculptor's signature. The text appears just above its base and seems to disappear under the rump of the Itzam. Such sly positioning is common for signatures. Present but unobtrusive, the inscription could only be read by lifting the piece...at which point the reader discovers that the glyphs were incomplete! The first glyph block records an unusual spelling of "He of the carving" (**AJ-?-lu-yu**, with reversed elements), followed by the name of the carver, **CHAK-TIL-MO'**. The **CHAK**, "red, great," glyph is an early form, its bony features evident, and the macaw head, **MO'**, has a set of marks just below the eye. (A macaw that kindles fire recalls such a bird on page 40b in the Dresden Codex.) Just after comes the **ya-na-bi-*IL**, an expression that links a sculptor to the lord who "possesses" him. That lord's name appears at the very end. All that remains of this exalted personage is a possible fragment of an **AJAW** sign--the so-called "Ben" glyph--and a prefixed element that would have identified his place or kingdom of origin. The style of the glyphs points to a time in the second half of the 6th century AD.