Lord Pacal (or Pakal)

A resemblance, perhaps only superficial, can be noted between the depiction, as shown below, of the Mesoamerican figure, Lord Pacal (Mayan, Pakal, shield), and modern astronauts. (Pacal, peace be upon him, may have lived in the seventh century A.D.) The artifact, which is allegedly a feature of Pacal’s sarcophagus, was discovered by archaeologist Albert Lluillier in 1952. Vertically, the photograph in the middle is a speculative diagram (not drawn by me) of the artifact. The photo at the bottom displays a carving by model-maker Paul Francis from 2011. Here are the images:
The Palenque Astronaut
Inscription on a Tomb-lid (base-relief) in the Sacred Temples of Palenque

"God from the Skys", guiding the spacecraft

"The New World Found—Human beings are present and the Mayan peoples make a home"

Symbol for "crossing into a new galaxy"

Symbols representing extraterrestrials

Symbol for "extraterrestrial"

Symbol for "Baby Mayan" indicating that the travelers "left their seed on the New World"

Thought to be symbols for planets in other galaxy

Are these controls to the spacecraft?

Thought to be "ignition" and/or "Braking System"

Symbol for "Two-Moon Planet"

"This is our world—containing human beings as ourselves, this is where the people start"

"Fuego" or in English: Fire! Signifies Combustion Engine powered vehicle

The Palenque Astronaut Translated
Ocellus 2006
K'inich Janaab' Pakal

"Pakal" and "Pacal" redirect here. For other uses, see Pakal (disambiguation).

**K'inich Janaab' Pakal**

Ajaw of Palenque

Pacal the Great

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reign</th>
<th>July, 615 – August, 683 CE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full name</td>
<td>K'inich Janaab' Pakal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>9.8.9.13.0 - March 603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>9.12.11.5.18 - August 683 age 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buried</td>
<td>Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predecessor</td>
<td>Sak K'uk'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successor</td>
<td>K'inich Kan B'alam II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>K'inich Kan B'alam II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K'inich K'an Joy Chitam II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>K'an Mo' Hix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Sak K'uk'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

K'inich Janaab' Pakal (Mayan pronunciation: [kʰiniːtʃ xanːaːb pakaːl]) (March 603 – August 683) was ruler of the Maya polity of Palenque in the Late Classic period of pre-Columbian Mesoamerican chronology. During a long reign of some 68 years — the longest known regnal period in Western Hemisphere history, and the 27th longest worldwide — Pakal was responsible for the construction or extension of some of Palenque's most notable surviving inscriptions and monumental architecture.
Name

Before his name was securely deciphered from extant Maya inscriptions, this ruler had been known by an assortment of nicknames and approximations, including Pakal Wikipedia:Manual_of_Style/Pronunciation (or Pacal), "Sun Shield", "8 Ahau", and (familiarly) as Pakal the Great. The word pakal means "shield" in the Maya language.

In modern sources his name is also sometimes appended with a regnal number,[2] to distinguish him from other Janaab' Pakals that either preceded or followed him in the dynastic lineage of Palenque. Confusingly, he has at times been referred to as either "Pakal I" or "Pakal II". Reference to him as Pakal II alludes to his maternal grandfather (who died in 612) also being named Janaab' Pakal. However, although his grandfather was a personage of ajaw ranking, he does not himself appear to have been a king. When instead the name Pakal I is used, this serves to distinguish him from two later known successors to the Palenque rulership, Upakal K'inich Janaab' Pakal (ruled c. 742, aka "[K'inich Janaab'] Pakal II") and Wak Kimi Janaab' Pakal (aka [Janaab'] Pakal III), the last-known Palenque ruler, who acceded in 799.

Biography

Pakal ascended the throne at age 12 in July, 615 - Long Count 9.9.2.4.8 5 lamat 1 mol,[3] and lived to the age of 80. He expanded Palenque's power in the western part of the Maya states and initiated a building program at his capital that produced some of Maya civilization's finest art and architecture. He was preceded as ruler of Palenque by his mother, Lady Sak K'uk'. As the Palenque dynasty seems to have had Queens only when there was no eligible male heir, Sak K'uk' transferred rulership to her son upon his official maturity.

After his death, Pakal was succeeded by his son K'inich Kan B'alam II. A younger son, K'inich K'an Joy Chitam II, succeeded his brother K'inich Kan B'alam II. After his death, Pakal was deified and was said to communicate with his descendants; he was buried within the Temple of Inscriptions. Though Palenque had been examined by archaeologists before, the secret to opening his tomb — closed off by a stone slab with stone plugs in the holes, which had until then escaped the attention of archaeologists—was discovered by Mexican archaeologist Alberto Ruz Lhuillier in 1948. It took four years to clear the rubble from the stairway leading down to Pakal's tomb, but was finally uncovered in 1952.[4] His skeletal remains were still lying in his coffin, wearing a jade mask and bead necklaces, surrounded by sculptures and stucco reliefs depicting the ruler's transition to divinity and figures from Maya mythology. Traces of pigment show that these were once colorfully painted, common of much Maya sculpture at the time.

Whether the bones in the tomb are really those of Pakal is under debate because analysis of the wear on the skeleton’s teeth places the age of the owner at death as 40 years younger than Pakal would have been at his death. Epigraphers insist that the inscriptions on the tomb indicate that it is indeed K'inich Janaab' Pakal entombed within, and that he died at the age of 80 after ruling for around 70 years. Some contest that the glyphs refer to two people with the same name or that an unusual method for recording time was used, but other experts in the field say that allowing for such possibilities would go against everything else that is known about the Maya calendar and records of events. The most commonly accepted explanation for the irregularity is that Pakal, being an aristocrat, had access to softer, less abrasive food than the average person so that his teeth naturally acquired less wear.[5] Despite the controversy, it remains one of the most spectacular finds of Maya archeology. A replica of his tomb is found at the National Museum of Anthropology and History in Mexico City.
Iconography of Pakal's sarcophagus lid

The large carved stone sarcophagus lid in the Temple of Inscriptions is a unique piece of Classic Maya art. Iconographically, it is closely related to the large wall panels of the temples of the Cross and the Foliated Cross centered on world trees. Around the edges of the lid is a band with cosmological signs, including those for sun, moon, and star, as well as the heads of six named noblemen of varying rank.\(^6\)

The central image is that of a cruciform world tree. Beneath Pakal is one of the heads of a celestial two-headed serpent viewed frontally. Both the king and the serpent head on which he seems to rest are framed by the open jaws of a funerary serpent, a common iconographic device for signalling entrance into, or residence in, the realm(s) of the dead. The king himself wears the attributes of the Tonsured maize god - in particular a turtle ornament on the breast - and is shown in a peculiar posture that may denote rebirth.\(^7\) Interpretation of the lid has raised controversy. Linda Schele saw Pakal falling down the Milky Way into the southern horizon,\(^8\) a view that would not appear to have found general acceptance among scholars.

Pakal and his sarcophagus in popular culture

Erich von Däniken's "Maya Astronaut"

Pakal’s tomb has been the focus of attention of some “ancient astronaut” enthusiasts since its appearance in Erich von Däniken's 1968 best seller, *Chariots of the Gods*. Von Däniken reproduced a drawing of the sarcophagus lid, incorrectly labeling it as being from “Copán” and comparing Pacal's pose\(^9\) to that of Project Mercury astronauts in the 1960s, interpreting drawings underneath him as rockets, and offering it as possible evidence of a supposed extraterrestrial influence on the ancient Maya.

In the center of that frame is a man sitting, bending forward. He has a mask on his nose, he uses his two hands to manipulate some controls, and the heel of his left foot is on a kind of pedal with different adjustments. The rear portion is separated from him; he is sitting on a complicated chair, and outside of this whole frame, you see a little flame like an exhaust.\(^10\)

Von Däniken's claim is not considered a credible interpretation by any professional Mayanist. For example Ian Graham responded, “Well I certainly don't see any need to regard him as a space man. I don't see any oxygen tubes. I see a very characteristically drawn Maya face.” Wikipedia:Citation needed
José Argüelles’ "Pacal Votan"

See also: Votan

Another example of this carving's manifestation in pseudoarchaeology is the identification by José Argüelles of "Pacal Votan" as an incarnation named "Valum Votan," who will act as a "closer of the cycle" in 2012 (an event that is also significant on Argüelles’ "13 Moon" calendar). Daniel Pinchbeck, in his book 2012: The Return of Quetzalcoatl (2006), also uses the name "Votan" in reference to Pakal. However, this name is not used for Pakal by Mayanist researchers such as academic archaeologists, epigraphers, and iconographers. Argüelles claims a connection between Pakal and the semi-historical Toltec figure Topiltzin Ce Acatl Quetzalcoatl, but this is not supported by archaeological or epigraphic evidence. New Age interpretations of Pakal's tomb are a cornerstone of contemporary Mayanism.

Notes
[1] These are the dates indicated on the Maya inscriptions : in Mesoamerican Long Count calendar, 9.8.9.13.0 and 9.12.11.5.18 .
[2] Maya rulership titles and name glyphs themselves do not use regnal numbers, they are a convenience only of modern scholars.

References
• Stuart, David, and George Stuart, Palenque, Eternal City of the Maya. Thames & Hudson 2008.

External links
• Drawings of the sarcophagus of Pacal the Great (http://www.mesoweb.com/palenque/monuments/TL_sarcophagus/index.html)
• Photo of the sarcophagus of Pacal II (http://www.7is7.com/otto/travel/photos/20030404/palenque_62_pacaltombstone2_p.html)
• Mesoweb's description of the discovery of Pacal II's tomb (http://www.mesoweb.com/palenque/features/sarcophagus/pakals_tomb.html)
• Michael Finley's "T (http://web.archive.org/web/20080412070747/http://members.shaw.ca/mjfinley/vondaniken.html)
• 3D Sculpture Kinich Janaab Pakal (Sculptor Juan Carlos Varela (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=En1_sMTtuTho&list=TLEvEbps59rFgWk30uBQyUYTifBpnOOGm1t)

Regnal titles
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preceded by</th>
<th>King of Palenque</th>
<th>Succeeded by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sak K’uk’</td>
<td>July, 615 – August, 683</td>
<td>K’inch Kan B’alam II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Article Sources and Contributors


Image Sources, Licenses and Contributors

(A.Skromnitsky (talk))


License

Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0
Creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/