



FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH ON ANCIENT AMERICA

THELONA D. STEVENS, CHAIRMAN / 202 SOUTH PENDELTON AVE. / INDEPENDENCE, MO. 64050

NEWSLETTER NO. 23

May 11, 1976

Greetings, Members and Friends:

The annual meeting of the Foundation was held on February 1, 1976, Richard A. DeLong, Ph.D., being the speaker. Having just returned from another trip to Mexico, he was fired with greater zeal than ever. His subject was "New Interpretations from Palenque." His talk was so well delivered and so well received that we asked that he share it with our newsletter readers. This he agreed to do, and below is a condensed version of what he delivered in person at our meeting.

The past year has seen a definite move toward a specialized library for the Foundation. Our library is housed in the Auditorium Research-Archives Library, thus making it available to all. During the past year the Foundation spent approximately \$500 on books for this project, and a like amount was appropriated at this meeting for the coming year. On display at the meeting was a number of books purchased last year, some of which were beautifully illustrated.

The Foundation also appropriated \$500 in support of the original drawings which are being prepared to illustrate the new Spanish version of the Book of Mormon, which should be available by the end of this year.

The same staff of officers which served last year were sustained for the year ahead: Thelona Stevens, chairman; Richard A. DeLong, vice-chairman; Linda Baker, secretary; Frances Davidson, treasurer; Maxine Wight, librarian; Audrey Stubbart, manuscript chairman; and Leta Moriarty, publicity chairman.

A responsive group filled the Auditorium South Conference Room April 4, when Clair E. Weldon, Seventy, was the speaker. He spoke on "Book of Mormon, Authentic History or Religious Fiction?--Implications for Faith and Research." Brother Clair seems especially well fitted to deal with such a subject, having been a missionary to Latin America for about twenty years. Much time has been spent in Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina. He spent the last one and one-half years in Argentina, and was called home by the church because of the political disturbances in that country. He was, of course, actively promoting the use of the Book of Mormon while there.

We again invite all to share with us in the advancement of the Book of Mormon through research and study, and by every means possible. We appreciate the membership dues which have been paid this year and invite those who may still wish to participate in meeting the cost of our work to do so. The annual membership dues are \$2.00 for regular member, \$10.00 for family membership, or \$50.00 for working membership. Membership is not required to receive our newsletters, and requests are welcome for copies by interested parties.

---T.D.S.

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The Key, by John Philip Cohane
Crown Publishers, Inc., New York. 1969.
Illustrated; 288 pages. \$7.50

What's in a name? From John Philip Cohane's book, The Key, there is much more than meets the eye. He has spent many years developing his thesis on the evolution of words in place-names and their meanings and origins, and he says he has often been amazed at the vistas opening to him in his studies and travels. His book is a revelation of special interest to students of etymology, geography, and languages. He says:

"A high percentage of the people on earth today are far more closely related than is generally assumed and . . . are bound together by at least one early bloodstream and that is Semitic in origin. . .

". . . in ancient times, before the Phoenicians, the Carthaginians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans, certain key names and words were taken out in all directions from the Mediterranean, in some instances by water routes, and . . . these same names and words can still be found, in spite of corruptions, in the names of rivers, mountains, volcanoes, and waterfalls, lakes, islands, regions, towns and cities, scattered all across the face of the earth. . . for better or worse, all of them figure prominently in ancient Semitic legends and mythology. Most of them are to be found in the Old Testament, notably in Genesis" (pp. 18, 19).

"There have been a number of etymological studies that drew comparisons between Hebrew and certain North American Indian dialects" (p. 27).

"To date these studies . . . have revealed over five hundred specific examples of cultural similarities between the Mediterranean and the Mexican/Central American part of the world" (p. 23).

" high relationships appear to be of common Semitic origin" (p. 19).

"Names are tricky. . . they are subject to phonetic law" (p. 15)

With these quotations from The Key, one is challenged to read what Mr. Cohane has deduced from names and their meanings to prove his conclusion that "there were two dispersions from the Mediterranean, the first truly worldwide, the second petering out along the eastern coast of the Americas in one direction, in Japan, the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand in the other direction" (p. 21).

He uses his first five chapters to set historical and geographic bases for his position. In Chapter Six he launches into the relationship of the pig, or "bar," and the grain, barley, noting that with a twenty-five-mile area that must have once been a single area devoted to the cultivation of barley, where four villages can be identified, "barley villages." He traces the barley trail to Borneo, "the Island of Barley," and to the exact opposite end of the earth.

He says that he "woke up to the fact that the mortality of initial vowels in place-names and words had completely changed the original sense or meaning of those names and words." He uses the Plain of Sharon, which had previously been known as the Plain of Asharon, as an example of this fascinating subject in dropping the initial vowel (p. 73).

(Continued on last page.)

NEW INTERPRETATIONS FROM PALENQUE

by

Richard A. De Long

In 1973 and 1974 Maya scholars met at Palenque in Chiapas, Mexico, for round table discussions concerning Maya art and archaeology. Results of the first and second round table discussions, the Primera Mesa Redonda de Palenque, Parts I and II, 1974, and the Segunda Mesa Redonda de Palenque, Part III, 1976, edited by Merle Greene Robertson, have been published by The Robert Louis Stevenson School, Pebble Beach, California.

No longer must we wonder about the names of Maya rulers carved on stone stelae and lintels, or the names of these Maya rulers buried in pyramids. Decipherments made by Floyd Lounsbury of Yale University, Peter Mathews of the University of Calgary, and Linda Schele of the University of South Alabama have revealed the names of some 15 Palenque rulers. Perhaps the most important identification made by these investigators was that of the famous ruler buried in a sarcophagus deep within the Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque. Hieroglyphs representing his name were translated as Lord Shield Pacal (Figure 1).



Fig. 1 PACAL

Pacal is a Maya word also meaning shield. Lord Shield Pacal ruled from 9.9.2.4.8 in Maya time equivalent to A.D. 615 until 9.12.11.5.18 or A.D. 683. He ascended to the throne at age 12 years 125 days and died at age 80 years 158 days. Soon after Pacal's death his son, Lord Chan Bahlum (Snake Jaguar), ascended to the throne. It is of particular interest to note that the two lords are represented on each of the tablets from the inner sanctuary walls of the Temples of the Cross, Foliated Cross, and Sun. On each tablet the smaller ruler portrayed is Lord Shield Pacal and the larger ruler is his son, Lord Chan Bahlum.

For years Maya scholars and amateurs alike have speculated as to the meanings of the intensely religious rites shown on the tablets. Linda Schele believes that the tablets represent a dedication of the ruler in each of the major roles that he played. On the Tablet of the Cross (Plate 1) the theme concerns the power of the "seat" of the ruler. He partakes of the heavens, the middle world, and the underworld, and rules as a divine mortal. The rites and responsibilities of raising and distributing food are described on the Tablet of the Foliated Cross (Plate 3) while

on the Tablet of the Sun (Plate 2) the theme concerns the waging of war and the rites for the dead and the underworld. Finally on Lord Shield Pacal's sarcophagus cover (Figure 2) the cross behind the ruler represents the sacred ceiba tree with roots in hell, trunk in life, and branches in the heavens where a celestial bird perches. Merle Greene Robertson believes that the Sarcophagus Lid of the Inscriptions Tomb is a "prayer for the rebirth of Lord Pacal. The prayer for rebirth must be at the moment of his falling into the earth from where he will reemerge in a state of eternal divinity after his journey through the underworld."

Several correlations have been proposed to fix dates recorded in Maya time with dates in the Christian calendar. Thus the dates of Lord Shield Pacal's lifetime in the 11.16.0.0.0 or Goodman-Martinez-Thompson Correlation would be A.D. 603 to A.D. 683. A more recent correlation proposed by Charles H. Smiley, Professor of Astronomy at Brown University, would place these dates about 278 years earlier. Lord Shield Pacal would then have been born in A.D. 325, ascended to the throne in A.D. 337, and died in A.D. 405. These earlier dates would, if correct, place Pacal historically in the latter part of Book of Mormon history.

Throughout the ancient world records of rulers were carved on stone tablets and stelae. George Kubler of Yale University believes that Lord Shield Pacal's accomplishments are portrayed on three large panels of glyphs on the walls of the Temple of the Inscriptions atop the pyramid where Pacal was buried. Of particular interest are six beaded helmet glyphs of Teotihuacan style portrayed on the middle panel (Figure 3). Could they represent Teotihuacan military leaders, armies, or perhaps cities destroyed or captured in battle by Lord Shield Pacal and other Maya rulers? These helmet glyphs (Figure 4) cover a 40-year span of time from A.D. 374 to A.D. 414 according to the Smiley Correlation. In similar fashion on Lintel 2 at Piedras Negras six kneeling warriors are shown wearing the same Teotihuacan-style beaded helmets. On this lintel an eight-year span of time, A.D. 376 to A.D. 384, is represented. Both time spans from Palenque and Piedras Negras fall well within the dates prior to, during, and after the great Nephite-Lamanite battle at hill Cumorah. At present one may only speculate as to whether there is a historical connection.

While the process of deciphering Maya hieroglyphs is a slow one, perhaps in the future some hieroglyphs will be translated giving proper names and place names from the Book of Mormon. Would such a development result in a more serious examination of Book of Mormon claims?

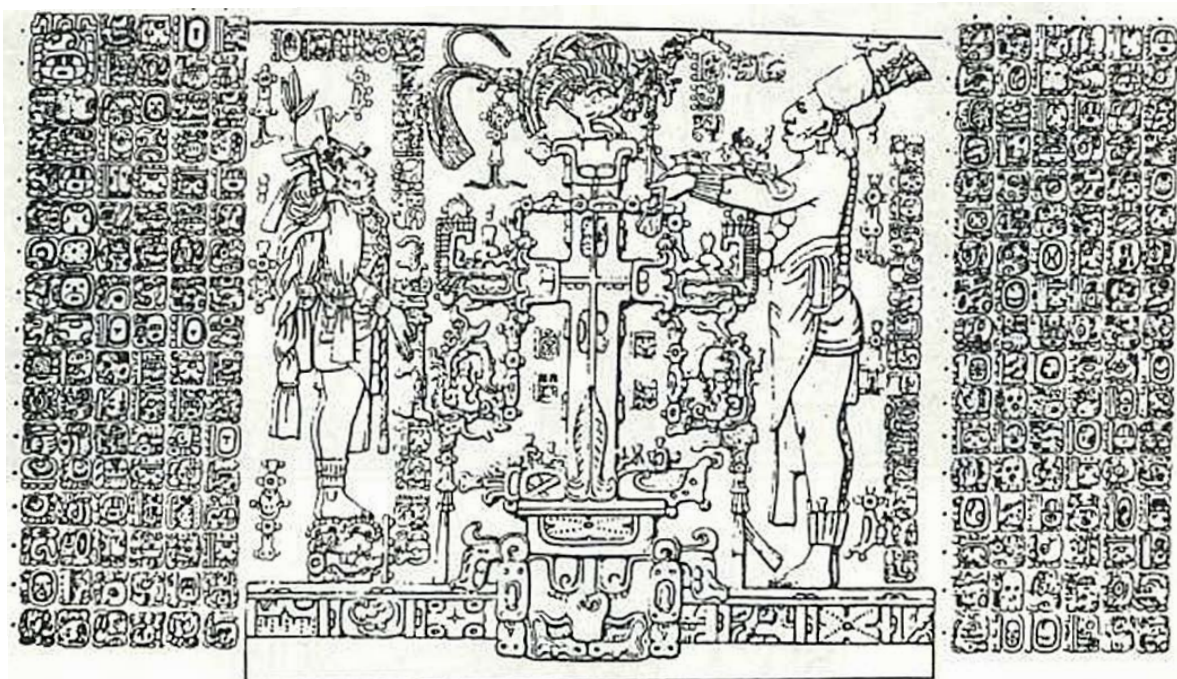


PLATE 1 Temple of the Cross AFTER MAUDSLAY, IV, PL. 36

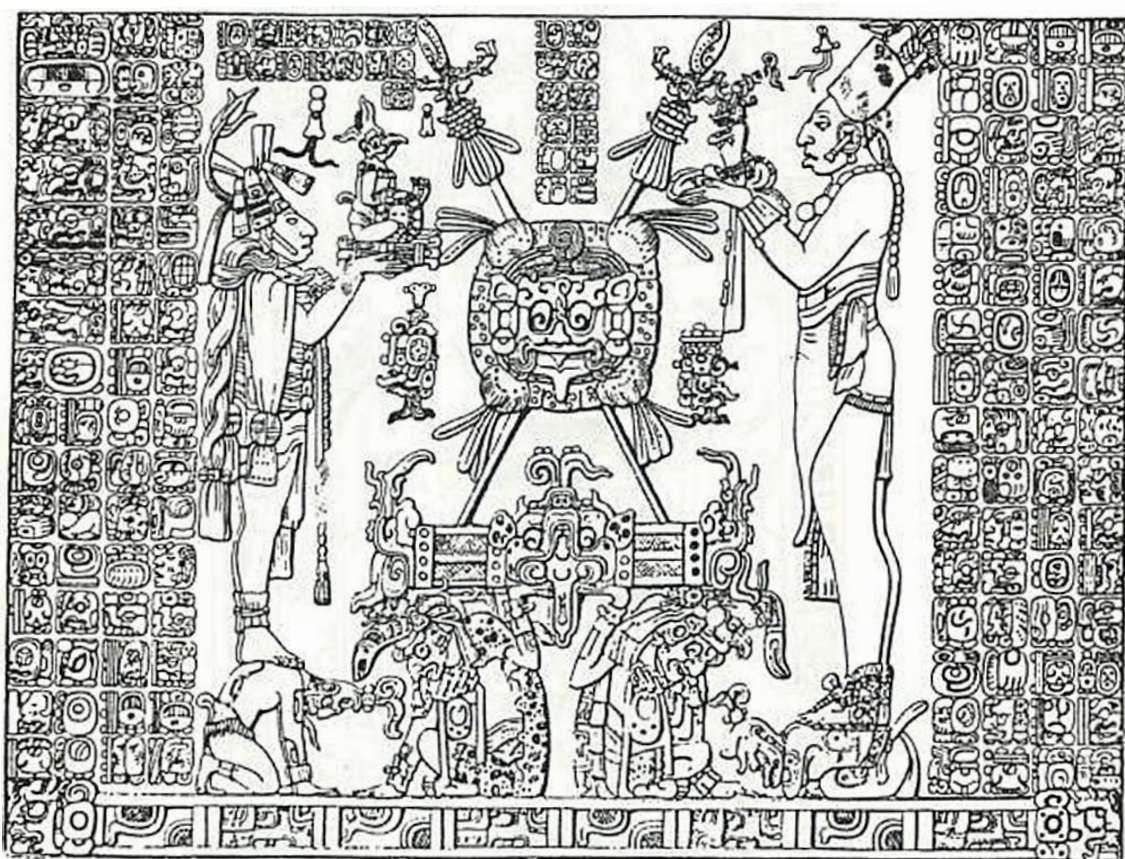


PLATE 2 Temple of the Sun AFTER MAUDSLAY, IV, PL. 38

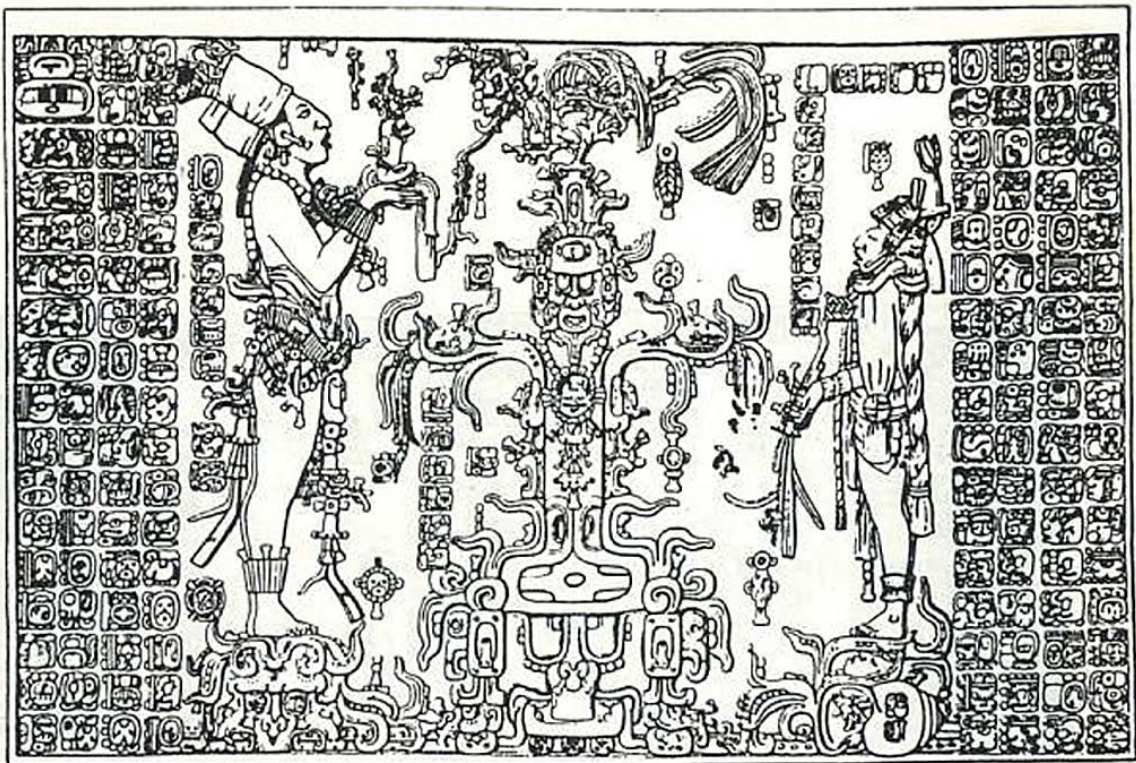


PLATE 3 Temple of the Foliated Cross AFTER DE WEEDE, PL. 81

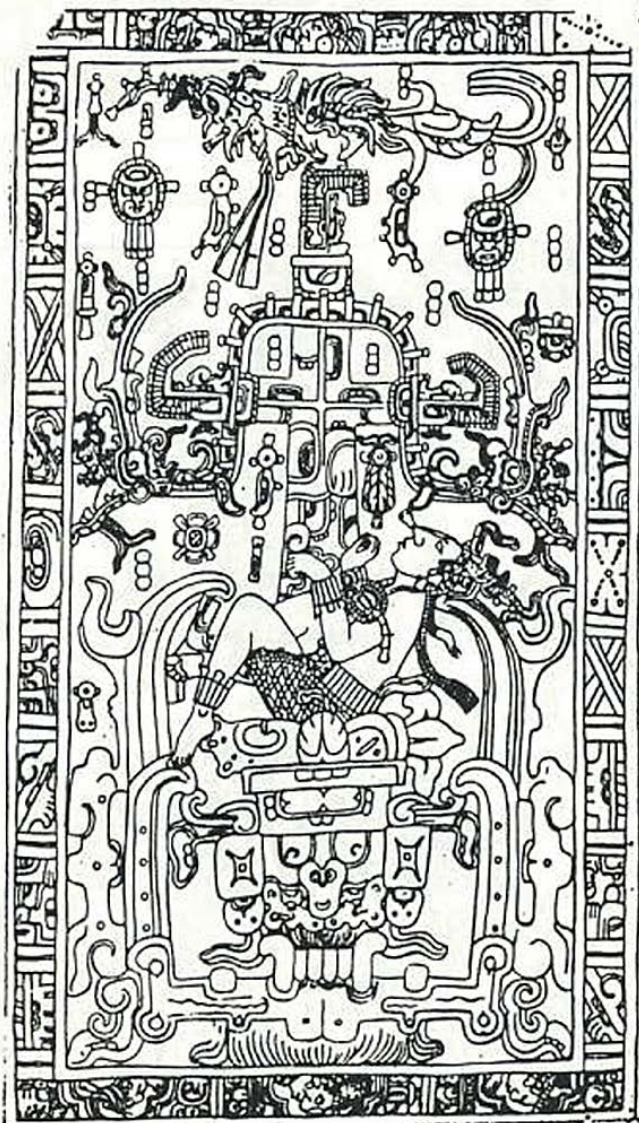


Fig. 2 PALENQUE. Slab from the Secret Sarcophagus of the Temple of the Inscriptions, tracing by Augustin Villagra. (Photo Alberto Ruz Lhuillier.)

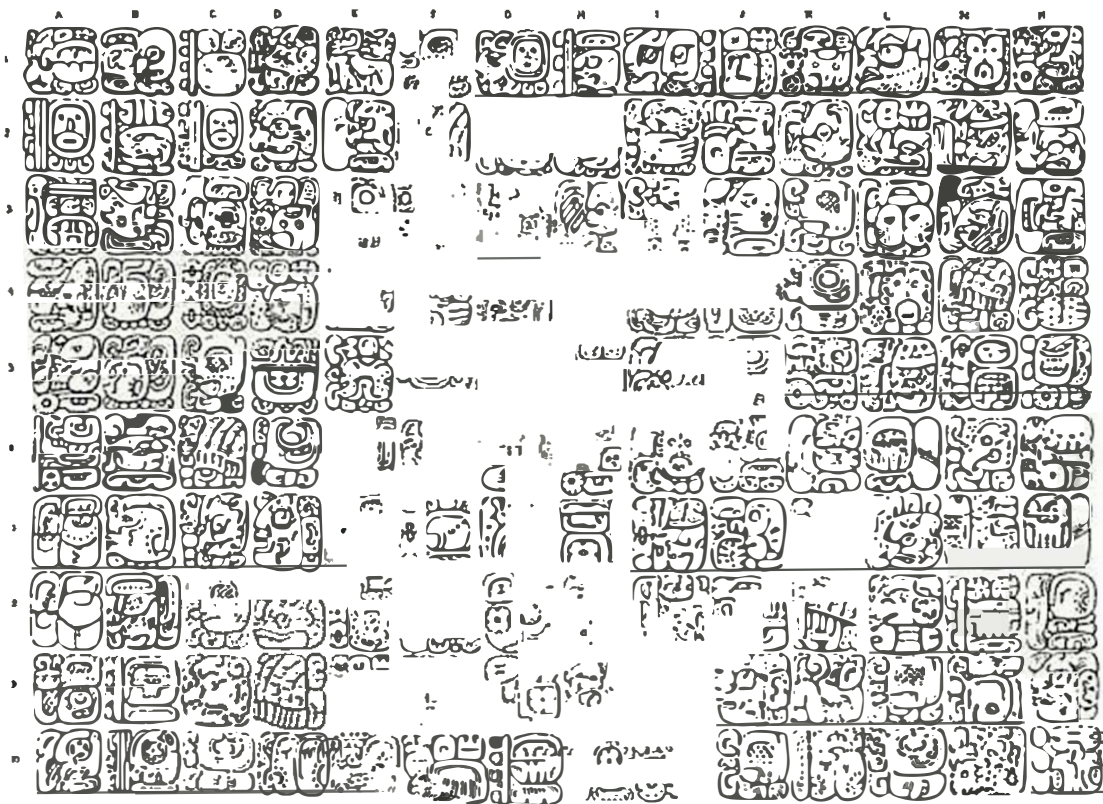


Fig. 3 *Palenque, Temple of the Inscriptions, and the panel* *Am. Mus. Nov. 11, 14* et
 Records 40-year span A.D. 374-A.D. 414 (Smiley Correlation)
 6 Teotihuacan-style helmets at C6, D9, F2, I9, K8, M4
 Glyphs for Lord Shield Pacal occur 3 or more times, C4, E8, G3

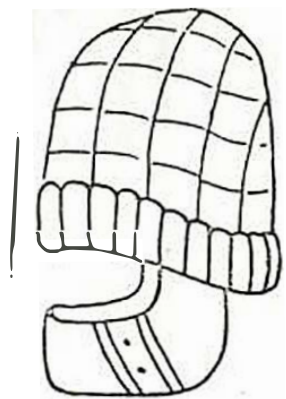


Fig. 4
 Teotihuacan
 Padded Helmet
 Glyph

Chapter Seven follows the development of two names "Haue" and "Oc" into the accepted form "havoc."

In Chapter Fourteen he says, "The most significant place-names in the world in terms of solving the mystery of mankind's prehistory are, in my opinion, a small handful clustered along the coast of New England" (p. 135).

Especially intriguing is the development of "barak," in connection with "Baurak Ale" in Doctrine and Covenants 100:4-6 and 102:5, 8. To quote Cohane: "All the Ibarak/Barak names take on added significance because of the Arabic word or name baraka, 'A quality of holiness, both in people and such things as tombs of saints, bread, trees, wells, springs, rocks, and caves. . . . Predating the Arab word baraka is an even earlier Semitic one meaning "blessing" or "benediction": berhech' " (p. 224).

John Cohane in The Key has opened a wide vista of speculation on names and places which is of special enticement to Latter Day Saints.

It is highly recommended for reading for both pleasure and enlightenment.

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The following books are available in our library and are recommended for all interested persons.

Riddles in History, by Cyrus H. Gordon
Crown Publishers, Inc., New York. 1974
Illustrated; 188 pages. \$7.95

Anasazi, Ancient People of the Rock, Photographs by David Muench
Text by Donald G. Pike
American West Publishing Co., Palo Alto, Calif. 1975
191 pages. \$18.50

Seed to Civilization, The Story of Man's Food, by Charles B. Heiser, Jr.
W. H. Freeman and Co., San Francisco. 1973
Illustrated; 243 pages. Cloth \$7.50 Paper \$3.50

America's Ancient Treasures, Travel Guide to Archaeological Sites and Museums
of Indian Lore, by Franklin Folsom
Rand, McNally and Co., New York. 1974
Illustrated; 202 pages. \$4.95

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