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Encoder: 

Creator of Collection: Robert J. Squier

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Abstract: During 1968-1972, Robert J. Squier traveled to Mexico for personal vacation, archaeological reconnaissance and field work. In 1968-1969, he visited numerous archaeological sites, some of which were along the Rio Uzpanapa River and the Santiago region of Tuxtla. He took photographs and wrote descriptions of the sites in a field book. This was non-project related, but descriptions from his notes reveals that he had intended to propose grants in the future for archaeological research of these sites.

In 1969, Robert J. Squier prepared National Science Foundation (NSF) grant proposals to perform archaeological field work in the Rio Uzpanapa Region of Veracruz. The archaeological site of Ceiba Bonita was planned to be the field camp headquarters with archaeological investigations beginning in that locality. However, the approved funding season did not match up with optimal conditions for field work and the project did not proceed.

From 1970 to 1972, Robert J. Squier partnered with Francisco Beverido Pereau of the University of Veracruz on a two year NSF funded project titled, “A Survey of Olmec Sites in the Los Tuxtlas Region, Veracruz.” Robert J. Squier hired two KU students as assistants, Paul and Susannah Katz. The project region was divided into a west and east region. The
division occurred on a north-south line starting in the south at the city of Juan Diaz Covarrubias. From there, the line went north to Laguna Catemaco and terminated at the Bay of Sontecomapan on the Gulf coast. The 1970 portion of the survey project occurred in the western division and the 1971 portion occurred in the eastern division. Headquarters for the researchers was in Santiago Tuxtla in 1970 and Jaun Diaz Covarrubias in 1971.

In 1970, the crew mapped Tres Zapotes. In 1971, the crew mapped Laguna de los Cerros. In addition to surveying, the crews performed test excavations as they deemed sites to be representative of the Olmec culture. Notable sites where work took place in 1970 include Cobata de Cabeza, Dos Mangos and Tres Zapotes. The 1971 sites that were tested or had a significant amount of surface material collected include El Picayo, Matacapan, Matacanela, Besoapan, La Mechuda, Arroyo de Liza, Tres Zapotes, Matalapan de Arriba, Tulapan, La Victoria, Matalapa de Abajo, and Kilometer 92 (KM 92). In addition to field work, the crew spent several months each year cataloging the material in labs. One of the most significant finds during this project was a colossal stone Olmec head at the site of Cobata de Cabeza.

**Access Restrictions:** Prior notification to ARC staff is required.

**Use Restrictions:**

ARC staff may determine use restrictions dependent upon the physical condition of the document. Researchers may be required to either purchase or use photocopies of fragile documents

**Extent:** 3 Linear Feet

**Dimensions:** Six 5”x12”x11” Boxes

**Associated Records:** Field Notes, Photograph Logs, Site Descriptions, Maps, Catalogs, Grant Applications, Financial, Correspondence, Media, Curriculum Vitae, Miscellaneous Notes

**Biographical Name:** Robert J. Squier

**Biographical Note:** Robert Squier was born in 1918 in Decatur, Michigan. He received his PhD from the University of California, Berkeley where he trained under Robert F. Heizer and
John H. Rowe, and was initially exposed to California and Mesoamerican archaeology. He joined the University of Kansas faculty in 1958 as an instructor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and research associate with the Natural History Museum. He became an assistant professor of anthropology when the discipline was formed into a separate department in 1962, and advanced to professor of anthropology by 1968. He held the position of department chair numerous times between 1964 and 1982. Robert Squier’s research interests focused on the formative period of Mesoamerica, dynamics of cultural growth in the archaic civilizations of the new world, cultural ecology, and history of anthropology. His fieldwork spanned 1949 to 1971 and included investigations in northern California, Nevada, and eastern Kansas in the United States, and Tabasco, Cuicuilco, and Veracruz in Mexico. Robert Squier’s fieldwork and research significantly added to the body of knowledge on Olmec archaeology in Mesoamerica and he frequently corresponded with other renowned Mesoamerican archaeologists such as Matthew W. Sterling, Phillip Drucker, Michael D. Coe, and Tatiana Proskouriakoff. Additionally, his research added to the collections and created a legacy in Mesoamerican archaeological research at KU that continues today.

Scope and Contents:

This collection is divided into four series based on unique projects spanning different years. This includes documents related to Robert J. Squier’s personal trips to Mexico in 1968-1969, the cancelled Rio Uzpanapa project proposed for 1969, and funded archaeological investigations in Los Tuxtlas region of Veracruz from 1970-1972.

Series 1: Mexico Trip 1968-1969

During 1968-1969, Robert J. Squier made personal trips to Mexico and visited numerous archaeological sites. He took an extensive amount of photographs of sites and recorded the descriptions in a field notebook. This trip was partially a personal vacation and archaeological reconnaissance for projects he intended to propose for funding through the National Science Foundation.

The documents in this series consist mainly of photograph records and descriptions. It includes two field notebooks, one contains the descriptions for rolls of pictures, and the other contains various site descriptions with corresponding photograph descriptions. The sites included are along the Rio Uzpanapa River and in the Santiago, Tuxtla region. Descriptions for numerous sites are noted and include Arroyo de las Bodegas, Mimagua, La Venta, Dos Amates, Sontecamapan, Tres Zapotes, Rancho el Zapote, and Los Mangos among others.

Series 2: Rio Uzpanapa / Ceiba Bonita 1969 (Project Cancelled)

In 1969, Robert J. Squier applied for and received NSF funding for an archaeological project to be based at the site of Ceiba Bonita near the Rio Uzpanapa region of Veracruz. The timing of the funding and the optimal excavation season did not match. Robert J.
Squier decided not to carry out the investigations. Instead, he hoped to come back in 1970 and start a work on a NSF funded project in the Los Tuxtlas region of Veracruz.

Documents associated with the Rio Uzpanapa / Ceiba Bonita project include copies of the NSF grant application, notes on preparation costs, start dates and research objectives. Correspondence includes topics of preparing the NSF grant and the cancellation of the project. One topographic map of Ceiba Bonita concludes the documents in this collection.

**Series 3: Proyecto Olmeca de los Tuxtlas 1970 (A Survey of Olmec Sites in the Los Tuxtlas Region, Veracruz)**

During 1970-1971, Robert J. Squier and Francisco Beverido Pereau co-directed a NSF funded project in the Los Tuxtlas region of Veracruz, Mexico. Numerous archaeological sites, known and unknown at the time, were surveyed and test excavated in in two separate field seasons. For this reason, the project has been split into two series. This series contains documents associated with preparation and the first field season in 1970. Notable Olmec and other cultural affiliated sites associated with this project include Tres Zapotes, Laguna de los Cerros, Cobata de Cabeza, Dos Mangos, El Picayo, Matacapan, Matacanela, Besoapan, La Mechuda, Arroyo de Liza, Matalepan de Arriba, Tulapan, La Victoria, Matalapa de Abajo, and Kilometer 92 (KM 92).

Documents in this series include preparatory NSF grant proposals and financial estimates, applications of concession for archaeological materials, curriculum vitae, work contracts, vehicle documentations and associated authorization forms. Field notebooks of Robert J. Squier, Paul Katz, and Susannah Katz. Catalog inventories for material from Cobata de Cabeza and Dos Mangos. Correspondence between Robert J. Squier and Francisco Beverido Pereau (who also went by “Paco”), Robert J. Squier and NSF, KU, and Mexico authorities regarding budgets, project approval and associated activities, leave of absence and travel requests. One media newspaper clipping about the discovery of a colossal head at Tres Zapotes concludes the documents in this series.


This series contains documents pertaining to the second field season of the 1970-1972 NSF funded archaeological project in the Los Tuxtlas region of Veracruz. Documents related to the field season and laboratory work of 1971 are included here along with post project documents from 1972. Notable Olmec and non-Olmec culturally affiliated sites associated with this project include Tres Zapotes, Laguna de los Cerros, Cobata de Cabeza, Dos Mangos, El Picayo, Matacapan, Matacanela, Besoapan, La Mechuda, Arroyo de Liza, Matalapan de Arriba, Tulapan, La Victoria, Matalapa de Abajo, and Kilometer 92 (KM 92).

Documents in this series include preparatory contracts for field workers, Mexico State and Federal authorities’ permission letters (in regards to the project) sent to local authorities. Two field notebooks of Robert J. Squier. Superficial survey descriptions of
collections made at archaeology sites. Site specific ceramic registers and profile drawings for El Picayo, Matacapan, Matacanela, Besoapan, La Mechuda, Arroyo de Liza, Matalapan de Arriba, Tulapan, La Victoria, Matalapa de Abajo, and Kilometer 92 (KM 92). One fragmentary rough draft of a 1971 fieldwork report. A Paper by Paula H. Kroster titled “Preliminary View of the Ceramics from 4 Sites in the Region of Tuxtlas,” dated March 1972. Financial notes for the end of the project budget and expenses. Correspondence between Robert J. Squier and the INAH and NSF about reports and budgets. Correspondence between Robert J. Squier and Francisco Beverido Pereau (Paco), Robert J. Squier and local Mexico laborers, Robert J. Squier and KU, and miscellaneous non-project related correspondence. The final documents in this series are correspondence letters between Robert J. Squier and Michael D. Coe regarding basalt samples from the Los Tuxtlas region.

Separated Material: Photographs, Slides, Material Collections from the Excavations

Subject Terms: Mesoamerica / Olmec / Archaeology / Rio Uzpanapa / Santiago Tuxtla / Ceramics / Arroyo de los Bodegas / Mimagua / La Venta / Dos Amates / Sontecamapan / Tres Zapotes / Rancho el Zapote / Los Mangos / El Picayo-Pollinapan / Matalapan / Matacanela / Besoapan / La Mechuda / Arroyo de Liza / Matalpande Arriba / Tulapan / La Victoria / KM 92 / Matalapa de Abajo

Geographic Locations: Mexico / United States / Veracruz / Rio Uzpanapa / Tuxtla


Corporate Names: The University of Kansas / National Science Foundation (NSF) / Instituto Nacional de Antropologia e Historia (INAH)

Language: English and Spanish

Acquisition Information: Deposited with the University of Kansas on completion of the projects. Materials were donated by the estate of Robert J. Squier.

Custodial History: Contents of the home of the late Robert J. Squier.

Inventory:

Series 1: Mexico Trip 1968-1969

FIELD NOTES / PHOTOGRAPH LOGS
Box 1

Folder 1 Robert J. Squier’s Field notebook #1. Contains descriptions of sites and some corresponding photograph descriptions. Region and sites described: Rio Uzpanapa, Santiago Tuxtla, Arroyo de los Bodegas, Mimagua, La Venta, Dos Amates, Sontecamapan, Tres Zapotes, Rancho el Zapote, and Los Mangos.

Folder 2 Photocopies of Folder 1 documents.

Folder 3 Robert J. Squier’s Field notebook #2. Contains photograph records with descriptions.

Folder 4 Photocopies of Folder 3 documents.

Series 2: Rio Uzpanapa / Ceiba Bonita 1969 (Project Cancelled)

PREPARATORY

Box 1

Folder 5 NSF grant proposals (2 copies).

Folder 6 Photocopies of Folder 5 documents.

Folder 7 Robert J. Squier’s preparatory notes for the projects research objectives, possible start dates, and costs.

Folder 8 Photocopies of Folder 7 documents.

CORRESPONDENCE

Box 1


Folder 10 Photocopies of Folder 9 documents.

MAPS

Box 1
Folder 11  One black and white topographic map with the location of Ceiba Bonita.

Folder 12  Photocopies of Folder 10 documents.

**Series 3: Proyecto Olmeca de los Tuxtlas 1970 (A Survey of Olmec Sites in the Los Tuxtlas Region, Veracruz)**

**PREPARATORY / FINANCIAL**

**Box 1**

Folder 1  NSF grant applications (two copies). Application for Concession (for the INAH).

Folder 2  Photocopies of Folder 1 documents (1 of 2).

Folder 3  Photocopies of Folder 1 documents (2 of 2).

Folder 4  NSF grant applications (three copies/drafts). Bibliography for the NSF application.

Folder 5  Photocopies of Folder 4 documents (1 of 2).

Folder 6  Photocopies of Folder 4 documents (2 of 2).


Folder 8  Photocopies of Folder 7 documents.

Folder 9  Notes of estimated wages and salaries. Vehicle budget summary. NSF budget.

Folder 10  Photocopies of Folder 9 documents.

**Box 2**

Folder 1  KU vehicle use forms. Paul Katz authorization forms. Vehicle title and other related documents.

Folder 2  Photocopies of Folder 1 documents.

**FIELD NOTES**
Box 2


Folder 4  Photocopies of Folder 3 documents (1 of 2).

Folder 5  Photocopies of Folder 3 documents (2 of 2).


Folder 7  Photocopies of Folder 6 documents (1 of 2).

Folder 8  Photocopies of Folder 6 documents (2 of 2).


Folder 10  Photocopies of Folder 9 documents.

Folder 11  Miscellaneous notes.

Folder 12  Photocopies of Folder 11 documents.

CATALOGS

Box 3

Folder 1  Inventory list of boxes containing material from Cobata de Cabeza and Dos Mangos.

Folder 2  Photocopies of Folder 1 documents.

CORRESPONDENCE

Box 3

Folder 3  Robert J. Squier and Mexico authorities regarding project approval.

Folder 4  Photocopies of Folder 3 documents.

Folder 5  Robert J. Squier and Francisco Beverido Pereau (logistics, NSF grant, project updates).

Folder 6  Photocopies of Folder 5 documents.
Folder 7  Robert J. Squier with the NSF and KU administration (budgets, leave of absences, travel requests, and project employees).

Folder 8  Photocopies of Folder 7 documents.
Folder 9  Robert J. Squier and Francisco Beverido Pereau (Excavation, Finances).

Folder 10  Photocopies of Folder 9 documents.

Folder 12  Photocopies of Folder 11 documents.

Folder 14  Photocopies of Folder 13 documents.

**MEDIA**

Box 3

Folder 15  Copies of Mexico Newspaper articles covering the discovery of a new Colossal Olmec head in the Santiago Tuxtla region. It is attributed to being found in the archaeological zone of Tres Zapotes. Francisco Beverido Pereau sent these copies to Robert J. Squier. (Spanish)

Folder 16  Photocopies of Folder 13 documents.

**PHOTOGRAPH RECORDS**

Box 3

Folder 17  Photograph records in journal books of Robert J. Squier and Katz (Two books).

Folder 18  Photocopies of Folder 17 documents (1 of 2).

Folder 19  Photocopies of Folder 17 documents (2 of 2).


**PREPARATORY**
Box 1

Folder 1  Contracts for field workers. Mexico state and federal project permission letters sent to local Mexico authorities.

Folder 2  Photocopies of Folder 1 documents.

FIELD NOTES

Box 1

Folder 3  Robert J. Squier’s field notebooks (two).

Folder 4  Photocopies of Folder 3 documents.

CATALOGS

Box 1

Folder 5  Superficial Survey Collection/descriptions made per site.

Folder 6  Photocopies of Folder 5 documents.

Folder 7  Site specific ceramic register and profile drawings: Lab #1, El Picayo-Pollinapan.

Folder 8  Photocopies of Folder 7 documents.

Folder 9  Site specific ceramic register and profile drawings: Lab #2, Matacapan.

Folder 10  Photocopies of Folder 9 documents.

Folder 11  Site specific ceramic register and profile drawings: Lab #3, Matacanela.

Folder 12  Photocopies of Folder 11 documents.

Box 2

Folder 1  Site specific ceramic register and profile drawings: Lab #4, Besoapan.

Folder 2  Photocopies of Folder 1 documents.

Folder 3  Site specific ceramic register and profile drawings: Lab #5, La Mechuda.

Folder 4  Photocopies of Folder 3 documents.
Folder 5  Site specific ceramic register and profile drawings: Lab #6, Arroyo de Liza.

Folder 6  Photocopies of Folder 5 documents.

Folder 7  Site specific ceramic register and profile drawings: Lab #7, Tres Zapotes.

Folder 8  Photocopies of Folder 7 documents.

Folder 9  Site specific ceramic register and profile drawings: Lab #8, Matalapan de Arriba.

Folder 10  Photocopies of Folder 9 documents.

Folder 11  Site specific ceramic register and profile drawings: Lab #9, Tulapan.

Folder 12  Photocopies of Folder 11 documents.

Folder 13  Site specific ceramic register and profile drawings: Lab #10, La Victoria.

Folder 14  Photocopies of Folder 13 documents.

Folder 15  Site specific ceramic register and profile drawings: Lab #11, KM 92

Folder 16  Photocopies of Folder 15 documents.

Folder 17  Site specific ceramic register and profile drawings: Lab #12, Matalapa de Abajo.

Folder 18  Photocopies of Folder 17 documents.

**MANUSCRIPTS**

Box 2

Folder 19  Rough draft of 1971 fieldwork report (incomplete fragment). Paula H. Kroster’s paper “Preliminary View of the Ceramics from 4 Sites in the Region of Tuxtlas.”

Folder 20  Photocopies of Folder 19 documents.

**FINANCIAL**

Box 2
Folder 21  End of project budget notes. Expenses accrued. Some correspondence associate to these documents are included.

Folder 22  Photocopies of Folder 21 documents.

CORRESPONDENCE

Box 2

Folder 23  INAH and NSF to Robert J. Squier regarding the project and final budget updates. Robert J. Squier and Francisco Beverido Pereau. (English and Spanish)

Folder 24  Photocopies of Folder 23 documents.

Folder 25  Robert J. Squier and Barbara Pirtle regarding photography purchases and inventories.

Folder 26  Photocopies of Folder 25 documents.


Folder 28  Photocopies of Folder 27 Documents.

Folder 29  Miscellaneous correspondence (food to eat in Mexico, individuals expressing interest in project).

Folder 30  Photocopies of Folder 29 documents.

PHOTOGRAPH RECORDS

Box 2

Folder 31  Robert J. Squier’s Photograph record (journal/book).

Folder 32  Photocopies of Folder 31 documents.

Folder 33  Color photograph Roll List and descriptions 1971.

Folder 34  Photocopies of Folder 33 documents.