



Smithsonian

National Museum of Natural History

Guide to the Emilio Herbruger photographs

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	
Administrative Information	1
Biographical / Historical	2
Scope and Contents	2
Arrangement	3
Names and Subjects	
Container Listing	

Collection Overview

Repository:	National Anthropological Archives
Title:	Emilio Herbruger Photographs
Date:	Circa 1860-1880
Identifier:	NAA.PhotoLot.175
Extent:	44 Photographic prints (albumen)
Language:	English, Spanish, Castillian
Summary:	The Emilio Herbruger Photographs consist mostly of full length portraits of Mayan people in Guatemala. The photos depict adults and children, sometimes demonstrating a domestic task, or wearing garments indicating leadership status or for special occasions.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

There is currently no information available regarding the provenance of this collection.

Related Materials

Information about the articles of clothing worn by the subjects of these photos is available in the NAA vertical file.

Photographs by Emilio Herbruger are also held by the Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamérica in the Fototeca Guatemala, and the Archivo Fotográfico of the Biblioteca Pública Piloto in Colombia. Sheet music by Emil Herbruger is held by the Library of Congress.

Processing Information

The photographs in this collection were separated from Photo Lot 97, having been identified as the work of Emilio Herbruger in Guatemala. The prints are organized by the archivist according to the ethnicity of the photographed individual(s) as written on the back of the photo, followed by the town referenced.

Processed by Lisa Carney, July 2022.

Restrictions

The Emilio Herbruger Photographs are open for research.

Access to Emilio Herbruger Photographs requires an appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

Biographical / Historical

Emilio ("Emil") Herbruger, Sr. was born in Rheda-Wiedenbruck, Germany in 1808 and died in New Jersey in 1894. Principally a daguerreotypist, ambrotypist, and photographer, he was also a composer, musician, and pharmaceutical agent. After immigrating to New Jersey as a young man, he lived and worked in several Latin American countries beginning in the 1840s. These include Cuba, Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, Honduras, and Panama. He is considered the first commercial photographer in Guatemala, where he established a gallery in Guatemala City around 1846. His photographs often depict local people, nature, and city scenes. He worked on occasion with his sons, Florencio C. Herbruger and Emilio Herbruger, Jr., also known as Emilio Herbruger Rietbrok. Additionally, the noted Guatemalan photographer Alberto Valdeavellano studied with the Herbrugers in Antigua, Guatemala.

Sources Consulted

Cruz, Keneth. "Día Mundial de la fotografía: ¿Por qué se celebra el 19 de agosto?" *Prensa Libre*. 19 August 2019. <https://www.prensalibre.com/vida/escenario/dia-mundial-de-la-fotografia-por-que-se-celebra-el-19-de-agosto/>

Garzon Díaz, Valia. "Panamá a través de la lente de Emil Herbruger Wheling (1808-1894)," *Mesoamérica* 45 (Enero-Diciembre 2003), Pp. 85-99.

Palmquist, Peter, and Thomas Kailbourn. "Herbruger, Emil, Sr.," *Pioneer photographers of the far west: A biographical dictionary, 1840-1865*, 295-296. Stanford UP, 2000.

Chronology

1808 April 24	Born in Rheda-Wiedenbruck, Germany
1834	Emigrated to U.S. Participated in exhibition in Louisville, Kentucky
1840	Travelled through Cuba, Mexico, and Central America
1846	Established a gallery in Guatemala City, Guatemala
1849-1951	Lived in Colombia
1852-1857	Traveled in Peru and Brazil
1861	Opened <i>Emilio Herbruger e Hijos</i> in Panama City, Panama
1866	Opened gallery in Guatemala City, Guatemala
1868	Displayed at exhibition sponsored by Sociedad Económica Published polka composition "La Unión"
1868-1870	Worked and traveled through Honduras
1871	Established <i>Fotografía Imperial</i> gallery in Guatemala City, Guatemala
1870s	Operated gallery with son Emilio Herbruger, Jr. in Panama City, Panama
1894	Died in Egg Harbor, New Jersey

Scope and Contents

The Emilio Herbruger Photographs consists of 44 carte de visite photographs taken in Guatemala of Mayan peoples, principally from the Kaqchikel, Quiché, and Tz'utujil ethnic communities. Many of the prints are hand labeled with a description of the ethnicity and place of origin of the person(s) photographed. It is not known if Herbruger traveled to take the photographs, nor if he provided any part of the regalia or objects depicted in them.

Please note that the contents of the collection and the language and terminology used reflect the context and culture of the time of its creation. As an historical document, its contents may be at odds with contemporary views and terminology and considered offensive today. The information within this collection does not reflect the views of the Smithsonian Institution or National Anthropological Archives, but is available in its original form to facilitate research.

Arrangement

The materials are arranged in alphabetical order, first by the name of the ethnic and linguistic community of the person(s) photographed, then by town of origin, when indicated. It is not known whether the location reference refers to the location the photo was taken, or the origin of the subject of the photo. Prints lacking specification are located at the end.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- K'iche' Maya (Quiché)
- Kaqchikel Maya (Cakchiquel)
- Pipil
- Tz'utuhil Maya (Tzutuhil/Zutigil)

Cultures:

- K'iche' Maya (Quiché)
- Kaqchikel Maya (Cakchiquel)
- Pipil
- Tz'utuhil Maya (Tzutuhil/Zutigil)

Places:

- Guatemala

Container Listing

Kaqchikel	
Box 1, Folder 1	04384300: Women and children from Santa María outside building 1 Photographic print Image(s): Group of Women and Children from Santa Maria, Sacatepequez In Costume, Some Women Carrying Children, Outside Stucco Building Image(s): Group of Women and Children from Santa Maria, Sacatepequez In Costume, Some Women Carrying Children, Outside Stucco Building
Box 1, Folder 1	04384400: Two women and two girls from Santa María 1 Photographic print Image(s): Two Women and Two Young Girls from Santa Maria, Sacatepequez In Costume Image(s): Two Women and Two Young Girls from Santa Maria, Sacatepequez In Costume
Box 1, Folder 1	04384500: Four men from Santa María wearing hats, playing drums and whistle at building entrance 1 Photographic print Image(s): Four Men from Santa Maria, Sacatepequez Playing Drums and Flute Outside Stucco Building Image(s): Four Men from Santa Maria, Sacatepequez Playing Drums and Flute Outside Stucco Building
Box 1, Folder 1	04384100: Man from Santa María, Minister of Justice, standing by column 1 Photographic print Image(s): Man, Minister of Justice of Santa Maria de Jesus, Sacatepequez, in Costume Near Stucco and Wood Column Image(s): Man, Minister of Justice of Santa Maria de Jesus, Sacatepequez, in Costume Near Stucco and Wood Column
Box 1, Folder 1	04384200: Man from Santa María, Minister of Justice, holding cane and straw hat 1 Photographic print Image(s): Man, Minister of Justice of Santa Maria de Jesus, Sacatepequez, in Costume and with Straw Hat and Cane of Office Outside Stucco Building Image(s): Man, Minister of Justice of Santa Maria de Jesus, Sacatepequez, in Costume and with Straw Hat and Cane of Office Outside Stucco Building
Box 1, Folder 1	04382900, 04391600: Seated man from Tecpán 2 Photographic prints Image(s): Portrait of Man from Tecpan, Chimaltenango in Costume Image(s): Portrait of Man from Tecpan, Chimaltenango in Costume Image(s): Portrait of Man from Tecpan, Chimateno in Costume Image(s): Portrait of Man from Tecpan, Chimateno in Costume
Box 1, Folder 1	04383000: Woman and young child from Tecpán seated

1 Photographic print

Image(s): Portrait of Woman with Young Child from Tecpan, Chimaltenango Girl In Costume

Image(s): Portrait of Woman with Young Child from Tecpan, Chimaltenango Girl In Costume

Box 1, Folder 1

04383100: Seated man from Tecpán, Minister of Justice

1 Photographic print

Image(s): Portrait of Young Man, Minister of Justice of Tecpan, Chimaltenango, in Costume

Image(s): Portrait of Young Man, Minister of Justice of Tecpan, Chimaltenango, in Costume

Box 1, Folder 1

04383700: Seated man from Tecpán, Minister of Justice

1 Photographic print

Image(s): Portrait of Young Man, Minister of Justice of Tecpan, Chimaltenango in Costume

Image(s): Portrait of Young Man, Minister of Justice of Tecpan, Chimaltenango in Costume

Box 1, Folder 1

04383200: Man from Tecpán holding hat

1 Photographic print

Image(s): Portrait of Man, Governor of Tecpan, Chimaltenango, in Costume and with Straw Hat

Image(s): Portrait of Man, Governor of Tecpan, Chimaltenango, in Costume and with Straw Hat

Box 1, Folder 1

04383300: Woman from Tecpán, holding what is probably a spindle and bowl of cotton

1 Photographic print

Image(s): Portrait of Woman from Tecpan, Chimaltenango in Costume And with Spindle and Bowl Full of Cotton

Image(s): Portrait of Woman from Tecpan, Chimaltenango in Costume And with Spindle and Bowl Full of Cotton

Box 1, Folder 1

04383400: Woman from Tecpán, possibly demonstrating how to wash clothes

1 Photographic print

Image(s): Woman in Costume from Tecpan, Chimaltenango with Two Clay Jars and Clothing

Image(s): Woman in Costume from Tecpan, Chimaltenango with Two Clay Jars and Clothing

Box 1, Folder 1

04383500: Three men standing from Tecpán, policemen; two holding canes, hats, and possibly leather whips

1 Photographic print

Image(s): Three Men, Policemen from Tecpan, Chimaltenango, in Costume; Two with Sticks and Leather Whips?

Image(s): Three Men, Policemen from Tecpan, Chimaltenango, in Costume;
Two with Sticks and Leather Whips?

Box 1, Folder 1 04383600: Young man, policeman from Tecpán, seated holding cane, hat and possibly leather whip
1 Photographic print
Image(s): Young Man, Policeman from Tecpan, Chimaltenango, in Costume with Stick and Leather Whip?
Image(s): Young Man, Policeman from Tecpan, Chimaltenango, in Costume with Stick and Leather Whip?

Box 1, Folder 1 04383800: Woman from Tecpán seating holding bundle, probably an infant
1 Photographic print
Image(s): Portrait of Old Woman from Tecpan, Chimaltenango; Infant Or Bundle in Huipile (Blouse)
Image(s): Portrait of Old Woman from Tecpan, Chimaltenango; Infant Or Bundle in Huipile (Blouse)

Box 1, Folder 1 04383900: Seated woman from Tecpán, probably demonstrating chocolate-making with large rectangular tray
1 Photographic print
Image(s): Portrait of Old Woman from Tecpan, Chimaltenango in Costume And with Ingredients for Chocolate and Gourd? in Wood Tray
Image(s): Portrait of Old Woman from Tecpan, Chimaltenango in Costume And with Ingredients for Chocolate and Gourd? in Wood Tray

Quiché

Box 1, Folder 2 04390600: Man from Panajachel, prisoner, standing with shackles around waist and ankle
1 Photographic print
Image(s): Man, Prisoner, in Costume and with Shackles Around Ankle And Waist Outside Stucco Building
Image(s): Man, Prisoner, in Costume and with Shackles Around Ankle And Waist Outside Stucco Building

Box 1, Folder 2 04390200: Five men from Patzicia, managers of the property of the town's patron saint, holding staffs and flowers
1 Photographic print
Image(s): Group of Men from Patzicia, Chimaltenango, Managers of Property of Patron Saint, Santiago, in Costume and with Ceremonial Staffs of Office Near Wood Column of Stucco Building

Box 1, Folder 2 04390300: Woman from Patzicia, squatting and holding infant
1 Photographic print
Image(s): Portrait of Women from Patzicia, Chimaltenango in Costume And with Infant

Box 1, Folder 2 04390500: Seated woman from Quetzaltenango

1 Photographic print
[Image\(s\): Portrait of Woman from Quezaltenango in Costume](#)

Box 1, Folder 2
04390700: Seated man, alcalde (mayor) of San Bartolo, holding cane and wearing hat
1 Photographic print
[Image\(s\): Portrait of Old Man, Mayor, from San Bartolo, El Quiche In Costume and with Cane of Office](#)

Box 1, Folder 2
04390400: Old woman from Santa Apolonia, seated holding small bundle
4,390,400 Photographic prints
[Image\(s\): Portrait of Old Women from Santa Apolonia in Costume](#)

Box 1, Folder 2
04384000, 04389900: Man from Santa Cruz del Quiché standing in front of bench, next to a hat on the ground
2 Photographic prints
[Image\(s\): Young Man from Santa Cruz Del Quiche in Costume with Straw Hat Outside Stucco Building](#)
[Image\(s\): Portrait of Young Man from Santa Cruz Del Quiche in Costume And with Straw Hat](#)

Box 1, Folder 2
04390000: Standing woman from Santa Cruz del Quiché
1 Photographic print
[Image\(s\): Portrait of Woman from Santa Cruz Del Quiche in Costume](#)
[Image\(s\): Portrait of Woman from Santa Cruz Del Quiche in Costume](#)

Box 1, Folder 2
04390100: Man from Santo Tomás standing with arms crossed next to hat on the ground
1 Photographic print
[Image\(s\): Portrait of Man from Santo Tomas, Izabel in Costume and With Straw Hat](#)
[Image\(s\): Portrait of Man from Santo Tomas, Izabel in Costume and With Straw Hat](#)

Tz'utujil

Box 1, Folder 3
04382500: Woman from Antigua with goiter seated on ground
1 Photographic print
[Image\(s\): Portrait of Woman from Antigua in Costume and with Large Tumor Under Chin](#)
[Image\(s\)](#)

Box 1, Folder 3
04382600: Old woman from Sololá seated next to a column with cane and small bundle
1 Photographic print
[Image\(s\): Old Woman from Solola in Costume with Bundle and Cane Near Wood Column of Stucco Building on Cobblestone Street](#)

Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 3	04382700: Old man, Governor of Sololá, seated on chair next to a hat on the ground, holding cane 1 Photographic print Image(s): Portrait of Man, Governor of Solola, in Costume and with Cane of Office Image(s): Portrait of Man, Governor of Solola, in Costume and with Cane of Office
Box 1, Folder 3	04382800: Young woman from Sololá, seating and holding bundle that is probably an infant 1 Photographic print Image(s): Portrait of Young Woman from Solola in Costume Image(s): Portrait of Young Woman from Solola in Costume
Mayan ethnicity not specified	
Box 1, Folder 4	04384700: Seven men seated in two rows, Secretary, Governor, Alcalde (Mayor) and municipal officers from San Pedro Carchá 1 Photographic print Image(s): Portrait of Group of Men, Secretary, Mayor, and Municipal Officers, from San Pedro Carcha?, Alta Verapaz; in Costume and with Canes of Office
Box 1, Folder 4	04384600: Three men standing, Governor and two others, possibly from Rabinal, wearing hats and center man with arm around the shoulders of other two who hold canes 1 Photographic print Image(s): Portrait of Man, Governor, and Two Men from San Pedro Carcha?, Alta Verapaz?, and in Costume; Two with Canes of Office
Box 1, Folder 4	04390800: Man, probably Quiché, Kaqchikel, or Tz'utujil, standing with cane in front of balustrade with decorative textile 1 Photographic print Image(s): Portrait of Old Man, Mayor?, in Costume and with Cane of Office
Box 1, Folder 4	04384800: Five men, probably Quiché, Kaqchikel, or Tz'utujil, standing with column to their right 1 Photographic print Image(s): Group of Men from Solola? in Costume and with Canes of Office and Straw and Felt Hats Outside Stucco Building
Box 1, Folder 4	04390900: Man, probably Quiché, Kaqchikel, or Tz'utujil, standing in front of bench and next to hat on ground 4,390,900 Photographic prints Image(s): Portrait of Man in Costume and with Straw Hat
Box 1, Folder 4	04391000: Man, probably Quiché, Kaqchikel, or Tz'utujil, holding cane and wearing hat

	1 Photographic print Image(s): Portrait of Man, Mayor? in Costume and with Cane of Office
Box 1, Folder 4	04391100: Man, probably Quiché, Kaqchikel, or Tz'utujil, seated holding cane and bundle of rope 1 Photographic print Image(s): Portrait of Man in Costume with Straw Hat and Bundle of Rope
Box 1, Folder 4	04391200: Two young men, probably Quiché, Kaqchikel, or Tz'utujil, with one seated and other squatting, holding a small, square-shaped item 1 Photographic print Image(s): Portrait of Two Young Men in Costume and with Box?
Box 1, Folder 4	04391300: Man, probably Quiché, Kaqchikel, or Tz'utujil, seated with hand on check, probably holding fireworks 1 Photographic print Image(s): Portrait of Man in Costume and with Blow Darts?
Box 1, Folder 4	04391400: Man, probably Quiché, Kaqchikel, or Tz'utujil, holding walking stick and wearing cacaste frame on his back 1 Photographic print Image(s): Portrait of Man in Costume and Carrying Cacaset (Carry-All) With Tumpline, Gourd Jug, and Staff

Pipil

Box 1, Folder 5	04384900: Woman from Capetillo, kneeling and grinding corn for tortillas, surrounded by various items 1 Photographic print Image(s): Portrait of Young Woman from Near Antigua in Costume And Grinding Corn with Mano and Metate; Pottery Bowl Nearby
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Origin not specified

Box 1, Folder 5	04391500: Group of men, three standing, two seated holding canes 1 Photographic print Image(s): Five Men in Costume, Two with Canes of Office, Outside Stucco Building Image(s): Five Men in Costume, Two with Canes of Office, Outside Stucco Building
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Box 1, Folder 5	04391700: Young boy in suit and tie standing next to tasseled chair 1 Photographic print Image(s): Portrait of Young Boy Image(s): Portrait of Young Boy
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